

SMOKY HILL EXPRESS

Elbert County Historical Society & Museum Newsletter

SPRING 2021

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THE MUSEUM IS OPEN
THURSDAY THRU SUNDAY
1:00 TO 4:00 PM EVERY WEEK
DURING THE SUMMER!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Museum Host Orientation
 Saturday, May 22, 10:00 am
 Elbert County Museum Office

Elbert County Museum
2021 Opening Day
 Sunday, May 30, 1:00 - 4:00 pm

Pioneer Fourth Celebration
 Sunday, July 4, 10:00 am - 3:00 pm
 Elbert County Museum Grounds

Annual Membership Meeting
 Saturday, September 11, 10:00 am
 Elbert County Museum Office

DONATE NOW
 THROUGH
[COLORADOGIVES.ORG](https://coloradogives.org)



CELEBRATING 100 YEARS

It only happens once every four or five generations –the opportunity to celebrate a centennial. This year the Elbert County Historical Society is honored to announce the 100th Anniversary of the Elbert County Museum building, formerly the Kiowa High School. During the spring, volunteers were busy sprucing up the exterior of the grand old schoolhouse with a fresh coat of paint; while inside a new exhibit was designed celebrating the history of the building, and its transformation from small town high school to county museum.

Constructed in an era when one-room school districts were merging to form larger ones, the schoolhouse was built to accommodate the sudden influx of students seeking to further their education within the newly created Kiowa Consolidated School District C-2. The building with its unique Spanish Colonial Revival-themed architecture faithfully served its intended purpose for 70 years before the ECHS acquired the aging landmark in 1991.

This year's Pioneer Fourth Celebration will include a special tribute to the building and commemorate the laying of the cornerstone on July 5, 1921.



ELBERT COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

JOE MARTELL

President

LUCY HOFFHINES

Secretary

PATSY NORTH

Board Member at Large

CARLA MARTELL

Past President

HANK SMITH

Vice President

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Treasurer

MONTY ASHLIMAN

Board Member at Large

ELBERT COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

515 Comanche Street • PO Box 43
Kiowa, Colorado 80117

ElbertCountyMuseum.org

The Elbert County Museum is owned and operated by the Elbert County Historical Society, a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization.

MISSION STATEMENT

To record and maintain the history of Elbert County, Colorado from the earliest settlement.

To work for the establishment of appropriate vaults and archives for the preservation of original manuscripts, documents, photographs and artifacts which may come into the possession of the Society.

To maintain, preserve and house the above stated articles in the Elbert County Museum.

WHO AM I?

1. Where did my family settle?

- a) Bijou Basin
- b) Cedar Point
- c) Gomer's Mill

2. Which influential merchant did I marry?

- a) Daniel Cort
- b) Russell Gates
- c) William Reilly

3. What was my profession?

- a) School Teacher
- b) County Official
- c) Bank President



Answers on page 5

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

Individual -\$15

Student/Senior -\$8

Family -\$20

Volunteer -Donation of six (6) hours of volunteer time or participate in two (2) functions and/or events.

SEASON SPONSORSHIPS

Museum Season Sponsorships are collected annually and expire at the end of each calendar year. Sponsorships support the general operating fund, new and permanent exhibits, development of educational initiatives and public programs, and the historic museum building and its infrastructure.

Season sponsorships are available at four different levels and are identified by icons of early Elbert County industry

LOCOMOTIVE-

Contributions of \$200 cash/merchandise or more will receive:

- acknowledgment as a Season Sponsor on all exhibit and event flyers (including Pioneer Fourth)
- recognition on signage inside the museum and at the Pioneer Fourth
- inclusion in the newsletter(s) and
- on our website



PONDEROSA PINE-

Contributions of \$100 cash/merchandise or more will receive:

- recognition on signage inside the museum
- inclusion in the newsletter(s) and
- on our website



WINDMILL-

Contributions over \$25 cash/merchandise will receive:

- recognition on signage inside the museum
- inclusion in the newsletter(s)



CULTIVATOR-

Contributions of \$250 cash or more through the **East Central Enterprise Zone**** will receive:

- acknowledgment as a Season Sponsor on all exhibit and event flyers (including Pioneer Fourth)
- recognition on signage inside the museum and at the Pioneer Fourth
- inclusion in the newsletter(s) and
- on our website



**East Central Enterprise Zone

By making a \$250 or more cash donation, **contributors receive 25% of that amount as a credit against their state tax liability (i.e.: \$250 donation = \$62.50 credit).** The contribution also may be itemized on their federal tax return.

For additional details on the different levels of **membership** or **sponsorship**, forms can be picked up at the museum's visitors desk or printed off our website at ElbertCountyMuseum.org.

MUSEUM HOST ORIENTATION

Saturday, May 22, 10:00 am
Elbert County Museum Office

If you have been a museum volunteer in the past or would like to become one, please join us! This is a great opportunity to meet new people and learn about the changes that have taken place since 2019. Everyone is welcome to attend so feel free to invite family and friends.



PIONEER FOURTH CELEBRATION

Sunday, July 4 from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm
Elbert County Museum Grounds

Mark your calendars so you can plan on spending a fun-filled time celebrating Independence Day with new and old acquaintances, neighbors, and visitors. Enjoy live music, games, silent auction and viewing the exhibits inside the Museum. Don't miss out on the traditional BBQ lunch prepared fresh during midday. The cakewalk and pie auction will provide everyone the opportunity to take a delicious homemade pie or cake with them. Local artisans will be demonstrating their talents again this year in various locations throughout the grounds.

SHARE THE MUSEUM

Planning a family reunion, birthday party, alumni reunion, church event, homeowner's association meeting or other special occasion this summer? Please keep the museum in mind. Doors are open four days a week- **Thursday through Sunday from 1:00 to 4:00 pm**. This would be an excellent opportunity to share with others the rich history of Elbert County.



RECURRING DONATIONS: GIFTS WE CAN COUNT ON!

Your recurring donation to **Elbert County Historical Society and Museum** is support we can count on!

When you use this option, you are making a commitment to donate a particular amount over a specific period of time. You can give as little as \$10 per week, month, quarter or year. Simply set up your donation schedule and your deductions will happen automatically, straight from your credit card, debit card or bank account.

To learn more about recurring donations, contact ECHS Treasurer Donna Smith at info@elbertcountymuseum.org, or visit www.ColoradoGives.org FAQs.

THE STATELY OLD PINE TREES

Have you ever wondered if there was a story behind the pine grove in front of the museum? Turns out there is...

As reported by Floyd Lemmon's *Divide Review* newspaper on April 24, 1925, it was a beautiful spring day -Arbor Day to be exact- and the high school students had spent much of the morning measuring, digging and working the soil in front of the schoolhouse, getting it ready to plant one hundred yellow pine seedlings.

Around noon the work was completed and the school kids, parents and town folk enjoyed a fine lunch inside the high school building. An Arbor Day program followed, complete with skits, recitations and choreographed drills. The newspaper gave high praise for the program stating: *"All the numbers were very good. The drill given by sixteen of the girls was very well done, and fitting for the occasion... Those who missed seeing the program missed a lot. Come out to school affairs. We need your support."*

The following week the paper gave a brief update to events that transpired shortly after the Arbor Day event: *"May 1, 1925. The man who ran over the tiny pine trees at the H.S. Building should be thoroughly ashamed of himself, since the trees were unable to get out of his way. The students have classed him at the head of the list of mean men."*

Never-the-less, the majority of the seedlings survived and thrived in the years that followed. Some have succumb to disease and others simply to the ravages of time, but as the pine grove nears its centennial about thirty trees remain from the original one hundred.



AN EARLY LOOK AT THE YOUNG PINE GROVE, 1920'S

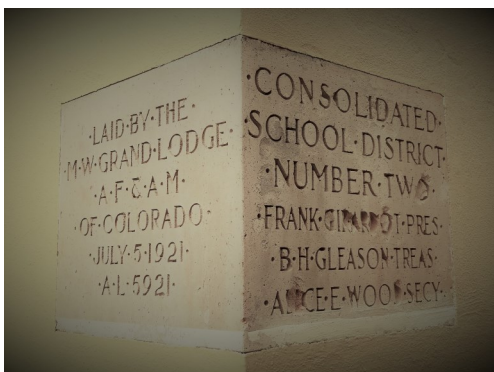


THE GROVE ALONG THE NEWLY PAVED HIGHWAY 86, 1956

LAYING THE CORNERSTONE

The cornerstone of the schoolhouse (museum) building was laid on July 5, 1921. A large crowd turned out that afternoon to witness the ceremony and watch members of the Masonic Lodge place the stone in position.

After the opening prayer, the dedication was performed by Acting Grand Master L.D. Crane, Grand Secretary W.W. Cooper and officers of the local lodge. Following the dedication, the school children led the crowd in the singing of "America", after which Mr. Crane made a short address in which he paid tribute to our schools as being the great temples of civilization. However it's reported that he had to cut his talk short as threatening clouds were coming up, "which was a great disappointment, as he was a good talker and had the attention of young and old".



Who am I?

Continued from page 2

Answers: a) Bijou Basin; c) William Reilly; a, b & c)
School Teacher, County Official and Bank President

Annie C. Reilly was born in Sacramento, California, on August 26, 1858, the daughter of Thomas and Martha (Hardy) Shockley. As a child, she and her younger brother were baptized into the Catholic church and her early education was received in a convent. Her scholastic attainments braced a fine knowledge of French, German, Spanish, and Latin. She was a very talented musician and an artist of note. Annie's father, Tom, died when she was eleven, and her mother remarried the following year to Stephen Holden. The family moved to Colorado shortly thereafter and settled near Bijou Basin, where five more daughters were born.

During the late 1870's, Ms. Shockley taught in schools along Running Creek. On July 1, 1879, she was united in marriage to Haskel Willard at Bijou Basin, to which union were born three children: a daughter, Eva Louise, and two sons, George and Thomas "Fern". George was the only one to grow to adulthood. In 1902, Annie was granted a divorce from Haskel.

Annie's educational qualifications were put into service in Elbert County around the turn of the century, when she was



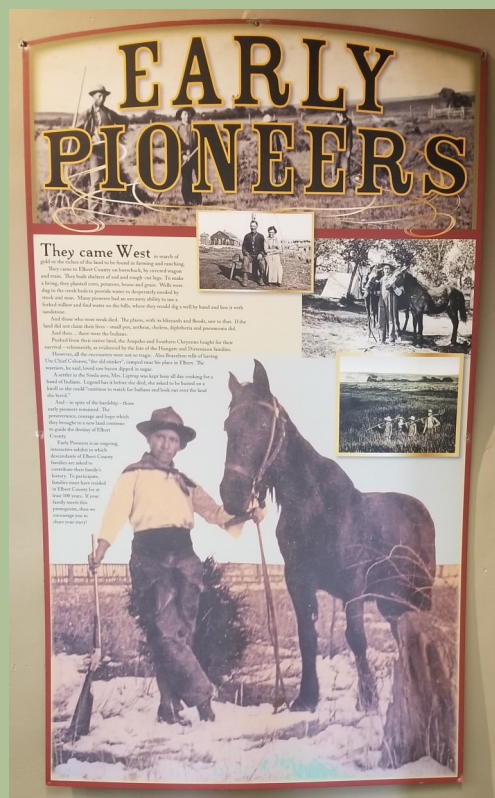
elected County Superintendent of Schools and served for six years, from 1896 to 1902.

In 1902 she was united in marriage to Kiowa merchant king, William D. (W.D.) Reilly.

As Kiowa and Elbert County grew and thrived in the early 1900's, the Reilly's were active in many community organizations and business endeavors. W.D. was Kiowa's first mayor and they both worked for the upbuilding and well being of the town. From 1914 to 1918, he was a member of the Colorado State Senate. In 1920, William and Annie traveled to San Francisco where he was one of Colorado's delegates to the Democratic National Convention. At the time of his death in 1924, he was President of the Kiowa State Bank, an officer of the Elbert County Bank and the Elizabeth State Bank. After his passing, Annie went on to serve as the first and only female president in the history of the Kiowa State Bank.

More than sixty years of her life were spent in Elbert County, where she knew almost everyone and everyone knew her. It may be truly said that her interests in public welfare were very wide, sincere and helpful. Her charitable heart won the love and respect of many people. After her death, the children of Kiowa and the surrounding area especially missed her at Christmas time, which for many years, it was her practice to distribute gifts to each and every child in the community.

Mrs. Reilly died at the home of her son at Ovid, Colorado, on October 9, 1936. The Reilly's are buried at Evergreen Cemetery in Colorado Springs.

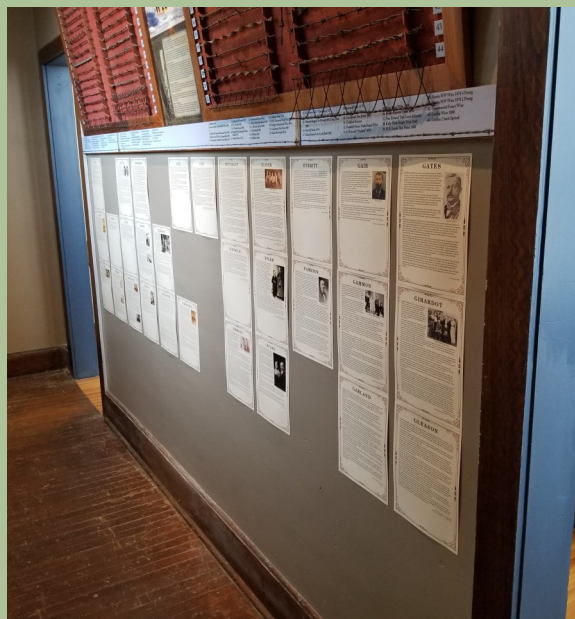


EARLY PIONEERS EXHIBIT

The early settlers came on horseback, by covered wagon and train. They built shelters of sod and rough-cut logs. To make a living, they planted corn, potatoes, beans and grain. Wells were dug in the creek beds to provide water so desperately needed by stock and man.

And in spite of the hardships, those early pioneers remained. The perseverance, courage and hope which they brought to a new land continues to guide Elbert County today.

The **Early Pioneers** exhibit features over 80 family biographies; some of whom became the namesakes of early settlements and post offices, while others became local or state officials.





ELBERT COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

PO Box 43 • KIOWA, COLORADO 80117



ELBERT COUNTY MUSEUM SPONSORS

While the museum receives funds through monetary donations given at the museum and with annual historical society memberships; Season Sponsorships and the Pioneer Fourth celebration are the main areas of income which allow the Elbert County Historical Society to develop exhibits and educational opportunities and to improve and maintain the museum building.

Thank you for your commitment to the educational and historical importance of the Elbert County Museum!

LOCOMOTIVE

All Wired Up Electric
Anonymous Donor
Bino's Pizza
Laurel Brown
Ben & Laurie Duke
Front Range Kubota
Christian Hertneky
High Plains Food Store
High Prairie Survey Co.
Lucy Hoffhines
Intermountain Rural
Electric Assn (IREA)
JR's Village Repair
Katee & Rick Kolm
Legacy Plow & Trailer
Jim & Carla Martell
Mountain View
Electric Assn (MVEA)

(LOCOMOTIVE CONT.)

Murdoch's -Parker
Ann Pidgeon
Marta Railsback
Sawmill Bar & Grill
Sun Valley Electric Inc.
Pattie Thayer
True Value -Elizabeth
Mindy Webb

PONDEROSA PINE

360 Diesel & Auto Repair
AAC Enterprises
Angie's Cuttin Corner
Monty & Phyllis Ashliman
Margie Ashura
Big R -Elizabeth
Buzzard's Pizza
Elizabeth Locker Plant

(PONDEROSA PINE CONT.)

Hamacher Well Works Inc.
Integrity Auto Repair
Jill's Feed & Country Supply
Kiowa Alumni Association
Tom & Marge Mottinger
Patty Ann's Cafe
Royal B Threads, LLC
Skadoodles Ladies Boutique

WINDMILL

Adriana's
Mexican Restaurant
Advance Quality Auto Repair
America's Most
Lovable Painters
Anonymous Donor
Bernie's Kitchen
Catalina's Diner
Cost Cutters -Elizabeth
Dusty Plains
Veterinary Service
El Rinconcito -Elizabeth
Elizabeth Floral
Forty Mile Feed
Lynn & Ronald Hayes
Sharon Hoffhines
HomeSmart Realty Group
-Karen Berends
Betty Hood
Iron Horse Equine Medical
& Surgical Services
Kings Kars

(WINDMILL CONT.)

Kiowa Creek Community
Church Foodbank
KW Home Accents
-Karin Royston
MK Liquors
Patsy North
Once Upon A Tan
Parker Port-A-Potty
Tom & Linda Peterson
Running Creek Auto Center
Safeway -Elizabeth
Karen Sear
Sizzor Magic -Betty Haulman
Sweet Alfas
William Thomas
Walmart -Elizabeth

CULTIVATOR

Glaser Gas &
Equipment Co. -Kiowa
Harold Heckman
HOO Motors
JC Martell
John & Sherry Metli
RE/MAX Accord
-Tammi Schneider
Smith Ranches