

SMOKY HILL EXPRESS

Elbert County Historical Society & Museum Newsletter

SPRING 2025

IN THIS ISSUE

25th Annual Pioneer Fourth	3
Centennial Ranches Banquet	3
Historic Puzzles	3
Host Orientation	3
Mapping the Past	4
Memberships/Sponsorships	2
Museum Sponsors	6
Pioneer Planning Meeting	3
Special Thanks	5
Who Am I	2

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

Museum Host Orientation
 Saturday, May 17, 9:00 am
 Elbert County Museum
 Assembly Room

Elbert County Museum
2025 Opening Day
 Sunday, May 25, 1:00 - 4:00 pm

Pioneer Fourth Celebration 2025
 Friday, July 4, 10:00 am - 3:00 pm
 Elbert County Museum Grounds

Annual Membership Meeting 2025
 Saturday, September 6, 9:00 am
 Elbert County Museum Office

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



LIVING HISTORY IN KIOWA:

LEGENDARY LADIES CAPTIVATE WITH COLORADO'S PIONEERING WOMEN

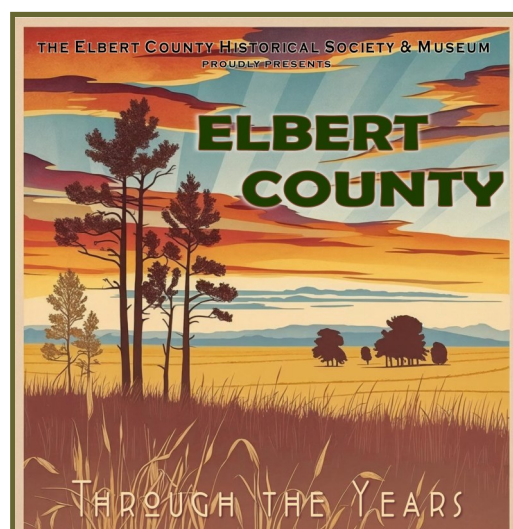
On Saturday, March 1, 2025, the Elbert County Historical Society hosted six members of the Legendary Ladies for an afternoon of storytelling and historical reenactment at the Fellowship Hall of Kiowa Creek Community Church.

Founded in 1992, the Legendary Ladies organization is dedicated to sharing the stories of dozens of the West's boldest women through dramatic, research-based performances.

The Kiowa event featured Dr. Susan "Doc Susie" Anderson, a frontier physician who served Fraser, Colorado, through the devastating 1918 influenza pandemic and beyond; Augusta Tabor, who rose to prominence during the silver boom but later showed remarkable grace and charity after personal heartbreak; and Harriet Fish Backus, the "Tomboy Bride," whose memoir captures the rugged life of mining camps across Colorado and the West. Also highlighted were Maud Nelson, a pioneer in women's baseball and a trailblazer for female athletes; Anne Evans, daughter of Colorado Territorial Governor John Evans and a founding force behind the Denver Art Museum; and Margaret Tobin Brown, famously "The Unsinkable Molly Brown" (a name she never used), who survived the Titanic disaster and dedicated her life to humanitarian causes.

Each lady's performance offered a vivid glimpse into the hardships and triumphs of women who helped build Colorado's identity. Their stories of resilience, courage, and influence still resonate today.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the Legendary Ladies, Kiowa Creek Community Church, and all who attended for making this a memorable afternoon of history and community. Events like this help preserve and celebrate the people and stories that continue to shape the American West, including Elbert County, Colorado.



ELBERT COUNTY - THROUGH THE YEARS
 OPENING MAY 25, 2025. AN ENCORE EXHIBIT
 FEATURING ELBERT COUNTY 150 YEARS!



ELBERT COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

JOE MARTELL

President

DEBBIE SCOGGIN

Secretary

PATSY NORTH

Board Member at Large

CARLA MARTELL

Past President

DONNA SMITH

Vice President

HANK SMITH

Treasurer

SARAH MALERICH

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. What was my profession?
 - a) Bank Director
 - b) Builder
 - c) Butcher
2. I filed an application to name what?
 - a) A post office
 - b) A railroad
 - c) A school
3. In 1884 I moved my family where?
 - a) Agate
 - b) Central City
 - c) Denver



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 17, 9:00 am
Elbert County Museum Assembly Room

If you have been a museum volunteer in the past, or would like to become one, or just curious about what is involved, please join us! It's a great way to meet new, like-minded (history-loving) people, and at the same time learn the ins and outs of the museum, as well as any changes that have taken place since last year. Everyone is welcome!

PIONEER FOURTH PLANNING MEETING

Saturday, May 17, 10:00 am
Elbert County Museum Assembly Room

Immediately following host orientation there will be a planning meeting to discuss and plan this year's event.

EXPLORE THE MUSEUM GIFT SHOP

Be sure to visit the gift shop for fun and unique gift giving ideas. In addition to a variety of local and regional books, a new assortment of puzzles have just arrived.

Choose from three one-of-a-kind designs featuring classic photographs.



CENTENNIAL FARMS & RANCHES BANQUET

Saturday, July 26, 6:00 pm
Elbert County Fair Grounds Exhibit Building

Spring has sprung and that means summer is just around the corner! Some say the best days of summer are those spent at the annual Elbert County Fair! This year the Elbert County Fair and Elbert County Historical Society in partnership with the Elbert County Fair Foundation are excited to announce the second annual *Centennial Farms & Ranches Banquet*, an evening honoring our Western Heritage.

This special event will celebrate the five new Elbert County family farms and ranches to have been designated through History Colorado's Centennial Farm & Ranch Program and will include a delicious beef entrée dinner and program that is sure to entertain, as well as educate. The *Centennial Farms & Ranches Banquet* will take place on Saturday, July 26, 2025, at the Exhibit Building on the Elbert County Fair Grounds, with doors opening at 6:00 PM and dinner served at 6:30 PM by Elbert County 4-H program members. The evening will feature the toe-tapping, feel-good music of FRESH APPLES, featuring Doc Rolland & Meryl Brown, and include a special presentation through the Elbert County 4-H Art of Ranching project.

This "must not miss" event is open to the public with pre-purchased tickets, and anyone who would like to celebrate the contributions of Elbert County's historic farming and ranching families is invited to attend. **Tickets are limited and will not be available at the door.** Please plan to make an evening out of it and join us on Saturday, July 26.

For more information or to purchase tickets, visit www.ElbertCountyFair.com.



25TH ANNUAL PIONEER FOURTH CELEBRATION

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

Plan on spending a fun-filled time celebrating Independence Day with new and old acquaintances, neighbors, and visitors in historic Kiowa. Enjoy live music, games, silent auction and museum open house. Don't miss out on lunch prepared fresh during mid-day; and the cakewalk and a pie auction will provide everyone the opportunity to take a delicious homemade treat home with them!

Entries for the homemade pie baking contest are welcomed and encouraged, with a \$50 first place prize for adults (21 and older) and \$25 first place prize for kids (20 and younger). Pies must be entered by 11:30 am (no cream pies please). Judging starts at noon and the auction follows at 1 pm with the proceeds going to the museum. For complete pie contest guidelines visit:

ElbertCountyMuseum.org/pioneer-fourth.



ABOVE: AN EARLY VIEW OF THE AUGUST BEUCK HOMESTEAD, 1890s

MAPPING THE PAST: A GUIDE TO ELBERT COUNTY'S HISTORIC LANDSCAPE

After two years of methodical research and passion-fueled dedication, the Elbert County Historical Society & Museum is proud to present the latest edition of our historic sites map of Elbert County. Originally debuted last season, the map has been expanded and refined for 2025, now including even more locations and stories that tell the rich, complex history of our county. Though still a work in progress, it has already become one of the most comprehensive efforts we have ever undertaken.

A Labor of Love

This project has been no small feat. Over the course of two years, countless hours were spent digging into archives, chasing old survey records, studying satellite imagery, EagleView orthomosaics (orthogonal aerial imagery), and LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) data, visiting sites around the county, searching through newspapers and other historical records, and cross-referencing dozens of maps, books, and documents. It has required meticulous research, determination, and teamwork. The result is something we are truly proud of: a detailed, county-wide view of the layers of history that crisscross our landscape. The map was constructed atop more than fifty 7.5-minute USGS topographical maps, painstakingly stitched together digitally.

What Is Included

The updated map now covers a wide and fascinating range of sites:

- The Three Branches of the Smoky Hill Trail that ran through Elbert County.
- The Leavenworth & Pike's Peak Express Company stage line, which carried passengers, freight, and mail through the region in the 1860s.
- Three Historic Railroads that once crisscrossed the county, lifelines that connected towns, transported cattle, and drove economic growth.
- Stage stops and cattle trails that tell stories of long journeys, ranching heritage, and early settlement.
- Sites of tragedy and conflict, including the Hungate Massacre, the Dietemann Massacre, and Hangman's Point, are each solemn reminders of the violence and volatility of frontier life.
- World War II and Cold War history, including the location of a North American B-25 Mitchell bomber crash and a nuclear missile silo.
- Military Sites, such as former training areas and encampments used by militias and soldiers, including connections to the Sand Creek Massacre!
- Post Offices and Former Townsites, many of which have faded into memory but once thrived with general stores, schoolhouses, and saloons.
- A list of the five Native American tribes who once called Elbert County home.
- Cemeteries, each a resting place filled with untold stories of early (and modern) Elbert County families.
- And more!

A Living Document

The map is not a finished product, though we expect it to be next season, just in time for Colorado's 2026 Sesquicentennial. History is always evolving as new stories are discovered, hidden sites are uncovered, and local knowledge is brought to light. We consider the map a living document, one that will continue to grow and improve season by season.

We welcome tips, memories, and leads from the community. If you know of a site, a story, or a long-lost landmark that should be included, let us know. Your knowledge helps preserve the past for future generations.

Visit the Museum to Explore

The map is on display at the Elbert County Museum, and we invite you to come explore it this season. Whether you are a lifelong resident tracing your family's path or a visitor curious about the road beneath your wheels, the map offers a powerful way to connect with the land and the lives of Elbert County's past.



THE HISTORIC SITES MAP MADE IT DEBUT LAST SUMMER AND QUICKLY BECAME A HIT WITH VISITORS.

Who am I?

Continued from page 2

Answers: a, b and c) Bank Director, Builder and Butcher;
a) A post office; c) Denver

Henry Gebhard was born in Baden, Germany, on February 12, 1846, as was his parents Adam and Susan (Geiger) Gebhard, and grandfathers, Henry Gebhard and Conrad Geiger. He was the second oldest out of a family of five children. When he was seventeen, Henry began to learn the builder's trade, which he followed for some years, before leaving for America in 1868. After landing in New York, he went to Chicago, then on to the Lake Superior region and began working in Hancock, Michigan.



In 1869 he came to Colorado and located in Central City, where he secured employment at his trade. Three years later he went into partnership with Barnabas Huber, and they opened Huber & Gebhard, a butcher and meat market business.

Henry married Emilie Jackson in Central City in 1874. Miss Jackson was born in 1850 in Cuxhaven, Germany, and came to the United States with her brothers when she was a little girl. The Gebhards moved to Elbert County shortly thereafter and took up a homestead near the future Agate townsite, where Henry embarked in the cattle business to supply fresh beef to his business venture in Central City. The couple had three children: Charles, Harry and Minnie, while living on the "Two Circle Bar Ranch". It was also during this time that Henry served one term as a county commissioner, and then as a member of the State Legislature from 1878 to 1882.

In 1881, an application was made for a new post office under the name Gebhard about a half-mile northwest of the center of present day Agate, likely on or near the Gebhard Ranch. However, due to a clerical error it was discovered another office already existed with a similar name, so the name was changed to agree with the railroad station at Agate.

Henry sold the ranch in 1884 and moved his family to Denver and into a newly built mansion completed the year before. Here three more children were born: Paul, Otto and Margaret. In 1890 he organized the Colorado Packing and Provision Company, which grew to become the largest packers of pork and beef in the state. The packing house contained the very latest in modern equipment. The meat was cut up on the second floor and dropped to the cellar, where it was cured and hams smoked. On the third floor was the cooling or chilling room and on the fourth floor was the sausage factory. The meat was distributed in Denver and shipped to the mountain towns of Colorado, also to New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, Idaho, California, Nevada, Oregon and Washington.

Mr. Gebhard was a member of the Colorado Cattle Growers Association. He also founded the Stockyards National Bank, was a longtime director of the Denver National Bank, and was a well-known Denver philanthropist. Henry Gebhard passed away on May 29, 1922, after a short illness, Emilie died in 1932.

Today the Gebhard Mansion at 2253 Downing Street, Denver, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and considered to be one of Denver's finest examples of the Italianate style.

*Portrait and Biographical Record of Denver and Vicinity, 1898-99
JCM, 2025*

SPECIAL THANKS TO AAC ENTERPRISES AND HIGH PRAIRIE TREE & TURF

Last summer Alan Crippen, owner of AAC Enterprises, inspected and evaluated the historic pine tree grove out in front of the museum for pine beetles and sadly determined ten of the eastern-most trees were either dead or infested. He along with his hard-working crew, spent the day sawing down the diseased trees, cleaning up and removing them. Thank you Alan, Julie and Bailey for all your work. We appreciate it!

This summer ECHS is working with Ray Hardy, owner of High Prairie Tree & Turf Inc., to spray and treat the remaining trees to hopefully save them. Thanks Ray and your crew for your work and expertise!

The pine tree grove turned one hundred years old earlier this spring. About twenty trees are all that remain of the one hundred yellow pine saplings that were planted on Arbor Day, April 24, 1925, by the Kiowa High School student body and teachers. The trees were awarded as a first place prize for an essay writing contest sponsored by a nationwide insurance company that the high school students had submitted their written entries to earlier in the school year.





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

A Cowgirl's Heart
Boutique & Gallery
AAC Enterprises, Inc.
Alan Lasater Fund
Beuck Land Company
Bino's Pizza
Laurel Brown
CORE Electric Cooperative
Douglas County Septic
Ben & Laurie Duke
Elbert County Democrats
Elizabeth Locker Plant
Front Range Kubota
Carl Gottbehuet
High Plains Food Store
High Prairie Survey Co.
High Prairie Tree & Turf Inc.
Lucy Hoffhines
Innovative Eyecare
Integrated Electrical
Contractors
JR's Village Repair
Just Peach Day Spa
Kamerzell Bros
Well & Pump Service
Kiowa Car Wash
Kiowa Outdoor Adventures
Katee & Rick Kolm
Legacy Plow & Trailer
Jeff & Connie Lehman

(LOCOMOTIVE CONT.)

Keith LeTourneau
Lifetime Properties Inc.
Lowes -Castle Rock
Jim & Carla Martell
Mountain View
Electric Assn (MVEA)
Patty Ann's Café
The Prickly Pear
Prism Builds, LLC
Tom & Debbie Scoggin
Sun Valley Contractors, LLC
Betty Taylor
Timberline
Family Dentistry, LLC
Todd Collins &
Associates, LLC
Town of Elizabeth
-Historic Advisory Board
Town of Kiowa
True Value -Elizabeth

PONDEROSA PINE

360 Diesel & Auto Repair
Bare Bear Country Cuts
Carriage Shoppes Vendors
Elbert County Republicans
Fox's Pizza Den
Galt, Inc.
Gigi's Pet
Grooming & Supplies

(PONDEROSA CONT.)

Gayle & John Gardner
Gordon Insurance Agency
Hamacher Well Works, Inc.
Christian Hertneky
HOO Motors
Pat Huddleston
IC Threads, Inc.
Jill's Feed & Country Supply
Vikki Johnson
Daniel Jordan
Kiowa Alumni Association
Diane McMahan
-Medicare Enthusiast
Tom & Marge Mottinger
Murdoch's Ranch &
Home Supply -Parker
Napa -Elizabeth
Patsy & Jason North
Outback Liquor
Parker Port-A-Potty
Rock Bottom Propane
South 40 Bar and Grill
Marnie Tilkens
Mindy Webb

WINDMILL

1897 House "The Nest"
Adriana's Mexican Restaurant
All Wired Up Electric
Tammy Bentrutt
Big R
Carriage Shoppes Tea Room
Dairy Queen -Elizabeth
Dusty Plains
Veterinary Service
Elizabeth Tack Trunk
Freddy's -Castle Rock
Deb Golder
Betty Haulman
Home Depot -Castle Rock
Home Depot -Parker
Betty Hood
Debra Jacobs

(WINDMILL CONT.)

King Soopers -Stroh Ranch
KW Home Accents
-Karin Royston
Lisa Lawrence
Lowes- Parker
Deborah Maul
Mountain Man
Fruit & Nut Co. -Elizabeth
Murdoch's Ranch &
Home Supply -Castle Rock
Randy's Antiques & Art, LLC
Running Creek Chapter DAR
Sam's Club -Castle Rock
Cissy Simms
Sprouts
Farmers Market -Parker
William Thomas

CULTIVATOR

Advanced Quality
Auto Repair
American Family Ins.
-Zach Bough Agency
Catalina's Diner
David & Linda Ehmann
Farmers State Bank -Kiowa
Glaser Gas &
Equipment Co. -Kiowa
JC Martell
Raylene Owen
RE/MAX Accord -Elizabeth
Smith Ranches
Unbridled Contractors, LLC