

C O L O R A D O

# Heritage



The Magazine of History Colorado

Spring 2020



## History in the Making

Meeting the Moment: Innovative Programs and Real-Time Collecting

Good Luck and Good Judgment: Lessons from the 1918 Influenza Outbreak

Making Theater History: Antoinette Perry, Mary Coyle Chase, and Harvey

COLORADO  
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The Magazine of History Colorado Spring 2020

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**ON THE COVER**

Denver artist Austin Zucchini-Fowler honored medical professionals on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic with this mural just off East Colfax Avenue. In some of the pages in this issue, we look at the ways Coloradans have faced up to crises—the current one, and some historical precedents. Photo by Jason Hanson.

**Our doors may be closed through May, but our mission lives on because of you, the owners of Colorado's history. Please consider making a \$10 donation today at [h-co.org/donate](https://h-co.org/donate).**

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**Facing page (left to right, top to bottom):**

Skiers maintain "snowcial distancing" at Crested Butte with their chairs six feet apart. By Cathy Carpenter Dea. PH.COVID.0167

Heather Hernandez poses at home on Palm Sunday, wearing her facemask. Many routines and events have been shuffled by social distancing. By Heather Hernandez. PH.COVID.0017

At the King Soopers near Capitol Hill in Denver, only a few rolls remain after a run on toilet paper. By Jason Hanson. SPH.COVID.0081

The women's group "Dena's Mask Making Army" makes masks at home for health-care workers on the front line of the pandemic. By Mary Carson. PH.COVID.0034

An employee of a veterinarian's office does lab work. Caring for pets is still essential work during quarantine. By Mary Carson. PH.COVID.0037

Marissa Page and her son make chalk drawings on a neighborhood sidewalk to pass the time and lift spirits during the stay-at-home order. By Marissa Page. PH.COVID.0001

A little gardening makes for a great activity when stuck at home. Even without a flower bed or garden patch outside, egg crates can get the job done. By Taryn LaNae Galow. PH.COVID.0012

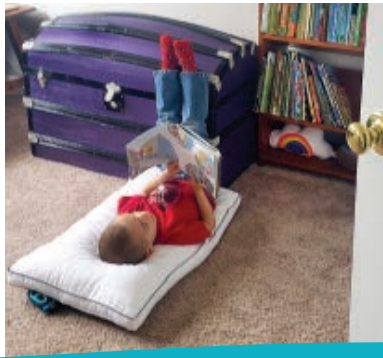
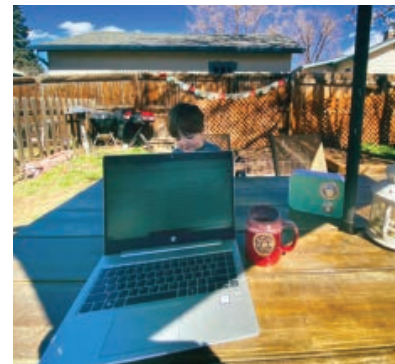
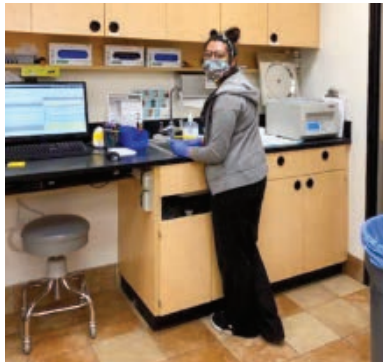
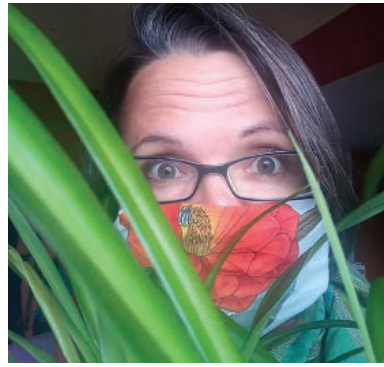
In an increasingly familiar sight, shoppers line up—alone together—to stock up on food amidst the lockdown. By Andrea Salas. PH.COVID.0019

A sign at a Salida playground tells passersby of its closure during the lockdown. By Medley Strickland. PH.COVID.0045

Working remotely from home in the backyard, with a little company. By Marissa Page. PH.COVID.0003

Jonathan's son relaxes with a good book during the stay-at-home order...when he's not having LEGO® fun. By Jonathan Fisher. PH.COVID.0043

The photographer's father passed away just as Colorado's lockdowns came into effect. The funeral had to be postponed indefinitely; flower arrangements and cards still cross the lines of quarantine. By Marissa Page. PH.COVID.0004



**Coloradans around the state shared these photos to help History Colorado document history in the making over the past two months. Please consider helping us. More details at [HistoryColorado.org/COVID-19](https://HistoryColorado.org/COVID-19).**

COLORADANS RESPOND TO COVID-19

## COVID-19

How has the pandemic changed your life?

Share your experience with us.



**#DoingOurPartCO**

**H**istory Colorado turns 141 years old this summer. As we collectively endure this historic pandemic, I'm especially mindful of the incredible legacy of our organization. History Colorado has been around long enough to survive a number of unprecedented

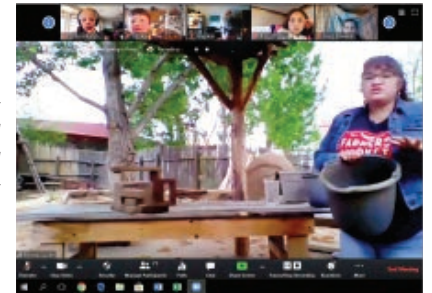
moments and global calamities, such as the Panic of 1893, 1918 epidemic, two World Wars, and the Great Depression. (Interestingly, History Colorado was the first state historical society to apply for federal assistance that provided jobs for unemployed people under the auspices of the New Deal.)

As I reflect on our organizational history and the history of Colorado, I can't help but be inspired by the resilience of our predecessors in times of struggle. I'm happy to report that we carry on this tradition. Despite these uncertain times, History Colorado is fortified by a strong team—from our persistent and dedicated Board of Directors to our passionate and nimble staff. We're collectively working hard to ensure that History Colorado remains a mission-centered cultural cornerstone that will serve our state for many more decades to come.

At History Colorado, we know that the study and understanding of history is necessary to humanity. Civic engage-

ment, museums, and cultural experiences are important ingredients for a functioning society. These elements are even more consequential in times of crisis. Though our museums are shuttered and we've had to cancel in-person events, History Colorado has met this moment by taking our educational programs, collecting efforts, exhibitions, and historical content straight into people's homes. We're grateful to our members, audiences, volunteers, and supporters who've stood with us during this time, but we miss seeing you in real life. Soon enough, we'll be able to connect with you again in our museums and at our events. I'm looking forward to it.

Steve W. Turner, Executive Director and State Historic Preservation Officer



Tamara Trujillo at our El Pueblo History Museum teaches how to make adobe to a virtual audience of kids from around Colorado as part of our new Virtual Field Trip program.

**MISSION**

*History Colorado creates a better future for Colorado by inspiring wonder in our past.*

**OUR SITES**

**History Colorado Center, a Smithsonian affiliate**  
1200 Broadway, Denver  
303/HISTORY, HistoryColoradoCenter.org

**Center for Colorado Women's History at the Byers-Evans House Museum**  
1310 Bannock Street, Denver  
303/620-4933, ByersEvansHouseMuseum.org

**El Pueblo History Museum**  
301 North Union, Pueblo  
719/583-0453, ElPuebloHistoryMuseum.org

**Fort Garland Museum & Cultural Center**  
East of Alamosa off U.S. 160  
719/379-3512, FortGarlandMuseum.org  
Open: March 1 to October 31.

**Fort Vasquez**  
13412 U.S. 85, Platteville  
970/785-2832, FortVasquezMuseum.org

**Georgetown Loop Historic Mining & Railroad Park®**  
Georgetown/Silver Plume I-70 exits  
1-888/456-6777, GeorgetownLoopRR.com

**Grant-Humphreys Mansion**  
770 Pennsylvania Street, Denver  
303/894-2505, GrantHumphreysMansion.org

**Healy House Museum and Dexter Cabin**  
912 Harrison Avenue, Leadville  
719/486-0487, HealyHouseMuseum.org  
Open: May 18 to October 8, or by appointment.

**Pike's Stockade**  
Six miles east of La Jara, near Sanford, just off Highway 136  
Closed for the season.

**Trinidad History Museum**  
312 East Main Street, Trinidad  
719/846-7217, TrinidadHistoryMuseum.org

**Ute Indian Museum**  
17253 Chipeta Road, Montrose  
970/249-3098, UteIndianMuseum.org

**Stephen H. Hart Research Center**  
At the History Colorado Center  
303/866-2305, h-co.org/collections

# Staying Connected

BY DAWN DIPRINCE



The tragic circumstances of this pandemic have forced History Colorado to shutter our museums and cancel in-person programming. We're a mighty, community-centered organization, and we've missed interacting in real life with our communities, schoolkids, volunteers, and each other.

With museum doors closed, History Colorado staff—working safely from couches, kitchen tables, back patios, and home offices—immediately innovated new ways to connect with our long-beloved communities. Here are ten ways (out of many) that we're staying connected:

## Hands-On History @ Home

Our popular Hands-On History program serves working families when kids aren't in school—normally, kids who have school only four days a week or who need after-school or summer care. We quickly moved the program to the digital realm, offering daily workshops for kids learning from home. [HistoryColorado.org/hands-history-home](https://HistoryColorado.org/hands-history-home)

## History in the Making

We've launched an inclusive collecting campaign to capture this historic moment. There are myriad ways to contribute. Anyone can share their story by completing a survey (in English or Spanish), creating and sharing a journal, leaving a voicemail, submitting photos and videos, or donating objects. [HistoryColorado.org/covid-19](https://HistoryColorado.org/covid-19)

## Weekly Digest

With so many isolated at home, we created a weekly digest to share insightful resources from us and our friends, all with a dose of cheer. The digest is welcomed into at least 25,000 inboxes. [HistoryColorado.org/enewsletter](https://HistoryColorado.org/enewsletter)

## ZOOM Lectures + Book Clubs

Rather than cancel some of our lectures and book clubs, we've transformed them into digital experiences—and it's found us new audiences across the country. It's easy to join, even if you aren't tech savvy. [HistoryColorado.org/digital-experiences](https://HistoryColorado.org/digital-experiences)

## Virtual Field Trips

When we couldn't host students for field trips, we brought the field trips to them. Our guided, standards-aligned virtual field trips bring third- and fourth-graders to our museums and historic sites around the state to explore Colorado's history, people, and environment. [HistoryColorado.org/virtual-field-trips](https://HistoryColorado.org/virtual-field-trips)

## Podcasts

Our award-winning *Lost Highways: Dispatches from the Shadows of the Rocky Mountains* shared a bonus episode on the 1918 epidemic.

*COauthored* features oral histories like an archival interview with the son of a Greeley undertaker looking back on 1918. And *UnPacked* shares recordings of our nationally recognized lecture speakers, like Andrés Reséndez on “The Other Slavery” and Gustavo Arellano on “Mexican Food in the Borderlands.” [HistoryColorado.org/podcasts](https://HistoryColorado.org/podcasts)

## Crowdsourcing Collections

We've launched an opportunity for volunteers—from the safety of home—to transcribe suffrage-related documents and handwritten letters. Anyone can help us create new resources for understanding the role of Colorado in women's suffrage. [HistoryColorado.org/transcribing-womens-suffrage-colorado](https://HistoryColorado.org/transcribing-womens-suffrage-colorado)

## Connecting with Teens

We host incredible history-based programs for teens across the state. Hands-On History at Denver's Morey Middle School, Bridging Borders for Young Men of Color at Aurora's South Middle School, and Antonito Youth Memory Project have all moved to a digital learning space—helping teenagers feel connected and supported as they learn from home.

## Supporting Communities with State Historical Fund Grants

Our State Historical Fund fast-tracked grants for preservation projects to ensure that economic support arrives when it's needed most. Staff awarded 25 grants totaling \$618,000 across the state from Sugar City to La Plata County. These investments come at a key time as local economies face the challenges of this pandemic.

## Meeting Needs Across Colorado

Our El Pueblo History Museum collected supplies for elders; our Fort Garland Museum is an access site for San Luis Valley college students to connect to online classes; our teams donated masks and gloves to the medical effort; and our Hands-On History program is planning ways to safely serve the child care needs of Colorado's families.

**Dawn DiPrince is the Chief Operating Officer of History Colorado.**

# Frances Wisebart Jacobs and National Jewish Hospital

## From Tuberculosis to COVID-19

BY CORI IANNAGGI



Portrait of Frances Wisebart Jacobs.  
Courtesy Beck Archives, University of  
Denver Libraries, B063.08.0016.00002

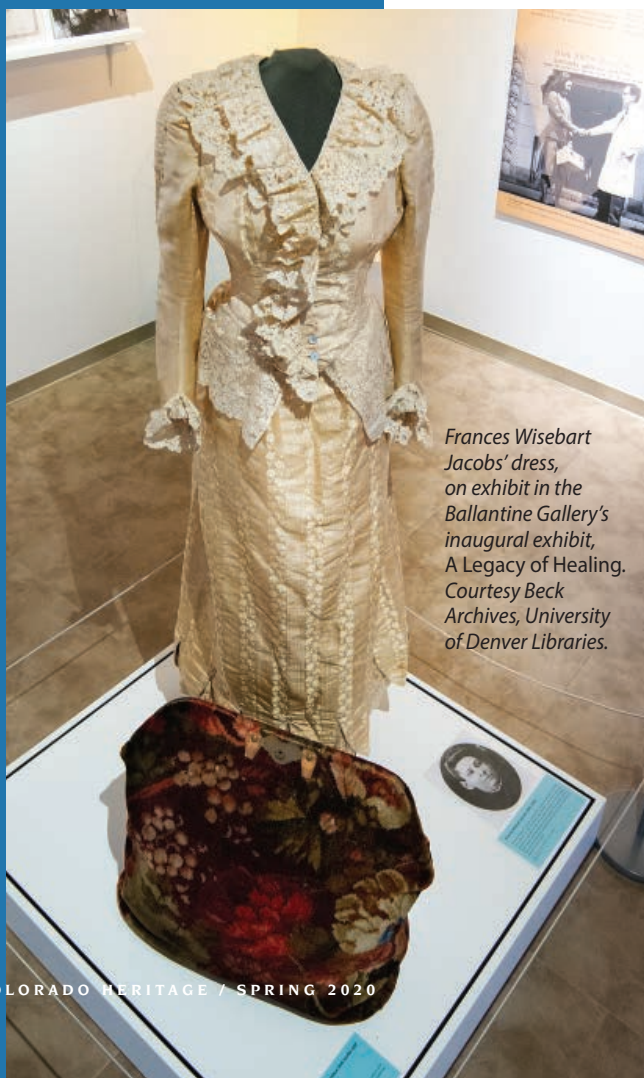
**A**s Coloradans sheltered in place and worked to find a new normal in this time of uncertainty, our mission at History Colorado has been more important than ever: to create a better future for Colorado by inspiring wonder in our past. What can we learn from past public health crises to help us cope with our current one?

*This isn't the first time the United States has faced a pandemic. We've seen the COVID-19/Spanish flu comparison time and again, but if we go back a little farther into the 1800s, we see the United States confronting another great health challenge: tuberculosis.*

**A**t the History Colorado Center, the exhibit *A Legacy of Healing: Jewish Leadership in Colorado's Health Care*, largely about the tuberculosis pandemic, opened in November in our new Ballantine Gallery. Guest curator Dr. Jeanne Abrams, director of the Rocky Mountain Jewish Historical Society and Beck Archives at the University of Denver, shared her knowledge about tuberculosis and the growth of Jewish health care institutions to battle the disease. In an odd twist of fate, that exhibit had to close a little early—due, of course, to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Tuberculosis, or consumption, was the leading cause of death in the United States during the late 1800s and early 1900s. Similar to COVID-19, TB in its most common form is a respiratory infectious disease spread from one person to another by tiny droplets expelled by coughing and sneezing. Historians estimate that 110,000 Americans died yearly from TB. Long before a cure was in sight, doctors prescribed a healthy diet, rest, and fresh air to combat the disease. Colorado saw an opportunity to take advantage of its abundant sunshine and dry climate, and began marketing itself as a health resort. By 1890, about 30,000 people arrived every year looking for a cure.

While the demand for suitable accommodations for tuberculosis patients increased, many patients still lacked access to basic lodging and proper medical care.



Frances Wisebart Jacobs' dress, on exhibit in the Ballantine Gallery's inaugural exhibit, *A Legacy of Healing*. Courtesy Beck Archives, University of Denver Libraries.

Recognizing a need in the community, Frances Wisebart Jacobs started searching for a solution.

**B**orn in Harrodsburg, Kentucky, in 1843, Jacobs moved to Colorado with her husband and brother in 1863 in search of new opportunities. Known as Denver’s “Mother of Charities,” Jacobs was an advocate for the less fortunate, often seen carrying her carpet bag filled with food and soap to hand out to people on the street. During her time in Denver, she helped establish a free kindergarten, the Hebrew Benevolent Ladies Aid Society, and the Denver Charity Organization Society, the forerunner of the national United Way.

In order to address the growing concern of infected people coming to Colorado, Jacobs partnered with Rabbi William S. Friedman of Congregation Emanuel to launch a fundraising campaign for a new hospital to care for those suffering from TB. Sadly, just a month after construction began, Jacobs fell ill with pneumonia. She died in November of 1892 at the age of 49. Completed in 1893, the hospital—named in Jacobs’ honor—sat vacant due to financial challenges until 1899. With assistance from the International Order of B’nai B’rith, a Jewish-led service organization, it reopened as the National Jewish Hospital for Consumptives. It was the first facility in Colorado to treat impoverished tuberculosis patients free of charge and touted the motto, “None may enter who can pay—None can pay who enter.”

Jacobs was inducted into the Colorado Women’s Hall of Fame in 1987 and the National Women’s Hall of Fame in 1994. She is also one of only sixteen Coloradans memorialized in

the Colorado State Capitol’s stained-glass rotunda. A bronze statue sits in the lobby of the National Jewish Medical and Research Center with her carpet bag of medicines and soaps.

National Jewish Hospital went on to treat thousands of TB patients from around the country. It created the first self-contained facility for treating children with TB, and started the nation’s largest and most advanced program for the study and treatment of TB. Clinical studies held on-site were crucial to the development of the first effective antibiotics for treating the disease.

Today, National Jewish Health is a world leader in treating respiratory illness—including COVID-19. On March 23, the hospital issued a press release stating that it has developed a COVID-19 diagnostic test and has established an Acute Respiratory Clinic for suspected and confirmed COVID-19 patients. In addition, research teams are leading three clinical trials to test the effectiveness of different medications for treatment, as well as studying the effects of the disease on patients with asthma, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, youths who are vaping, and patients with Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome.

Like so many health care providers and first responders who are at the front lines of today’s pandemic, the center launched in Frances Wisebart Jacobs’ name is working to bring much-needed testing directly to the community.

CORI IANNAGGI is the Ballantine Gallery Manager at the History Colorado Center. She earned her master’s in library and informa-



tion science with a specialization in museum studies, and started her museum career at the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. Before joining History Colorado she embarked on a road trip across the country, where she visited all fifty states and toured over 250 museums.



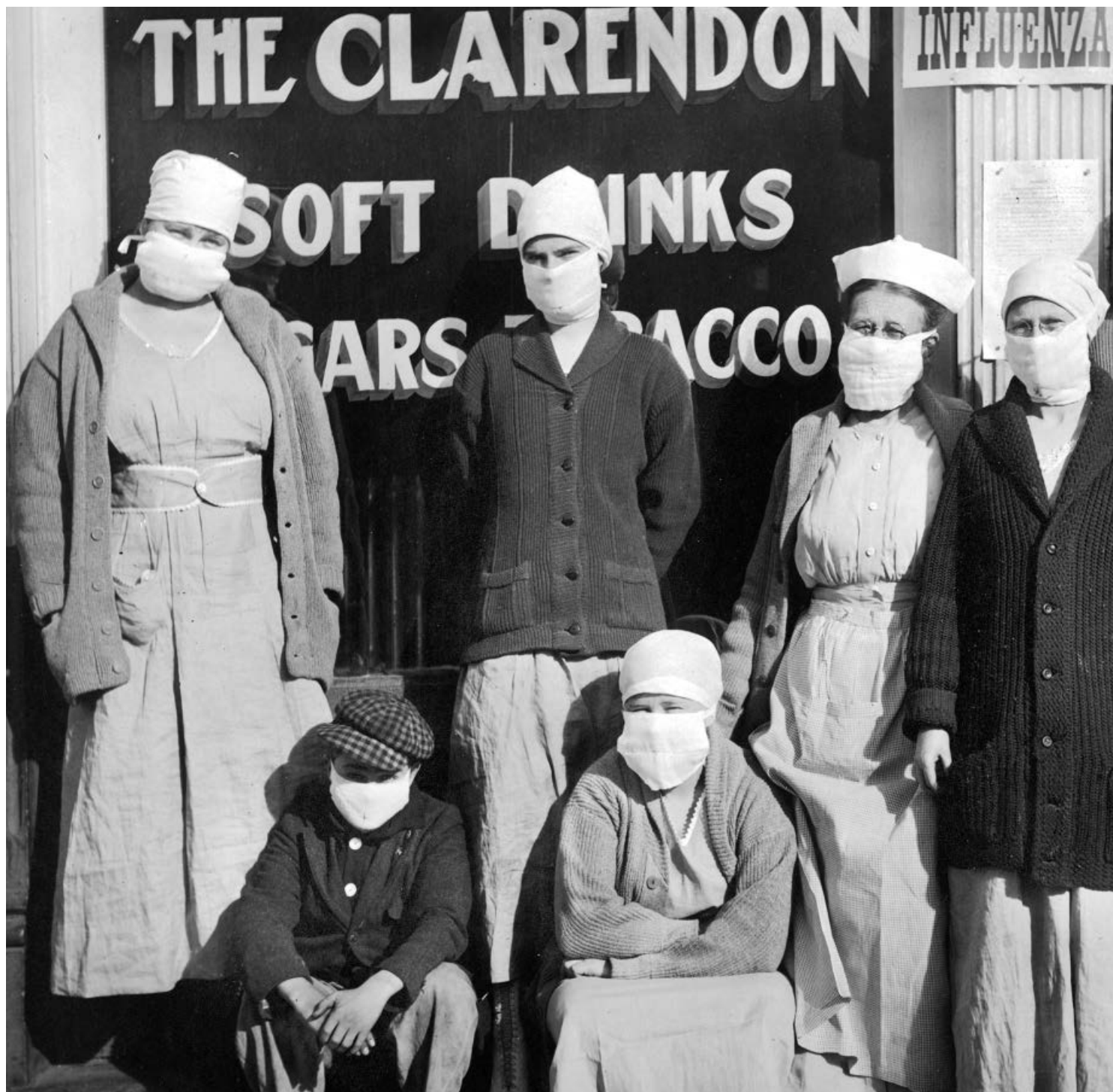
Graphic from National Jewish Hospital of Consumptives (now National Jewish Health) illustrating the spread of patients cared for at the hospital. Courtesy Beck Archives, University of Denver Libraries.

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# “Maybe They Should Call It the Kansas Flu”

Colorado and the Spanish Flu Outbreak of 1918

BY NOEL BLACK AND TYLER HILL





**W**hen the Spanish flu hit Colorado in the late summer of 1918, it hit hard and it moved fast, even in remote mountain towns.

“I suppose you could say they didn’t know anything about it, because this was an entirely new type of flu, a new type of virus that had never really hit before,” says Duane Vandebusch, professor of history at Western

Nurses and children stop for a photo outside Leadville’s Clarendon Hotel during the Spanish flu outbreak. The entirely new strain of influenza spread fast, even to remote mountain towns like Leadville at an elevation of two miles high. 10025909



Colorado University in Gunnison and a member of the Colorado State Historian’s Council. “So what you’re learning is what you’re learning on the fly.” And, he adds, “it is pretty tough to learn on the fly when a lot of people are dying around you. Hotchkiss was hit very hard. Trinidad was hit very hard. Cimarron was hit very hard. They only knew that it was very infectious.”

Despite the fact that there were only 1,500 residents in the central mountain town of Steamboat Springs, there were so many cases that they stopped trying to keep track, says Derek Everett, who teaches at both Colorado State University and Metropolitan State University of Denver. “The newspaper in Steamboat Springs stopped printing the list of people with influenza, not because they were being targeted for discrimination or anything. But according to the newspaper, if they printed a list of the people who had the Spanish influenza, they would essentially be printing the city directory every day.”

**B**ut one mountain town got hit harder than all the others, says Everett. “The biggest blow from the influenza was in the first outbreak in October into November of 1918, in large part because of the town’s isolation. And once that virus got in there, it spread rapidly, particularly because it affected some of the most important people in town—like the doctor and the undertaker. People who would be responsible for helping deal with a public health crisis were suddenly out of commission.”

This article is an adaptation of History Colorado’s *Lost Highways* podcast of the same title, available anywhere you get your podcasts.

A Podcast Presented by

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Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this podcast, do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.



The combination of high altitude, minimal health care resources, and already-compromised lung capacity was a deadly combination for the many miners in the Silverton area. Pictured here is the Gold Prince Mill in Gladstone, between around 1907 and 1917. 20007705



Pueblo—shown here in 1918—was one of the growing Colorado cities hit hard by the Spanish flu that year. Photo by John W. C. Floyd. 20005411

Professor Stephen Leonard, who also teaches history at Metropolitan State, says the mountain towns were often acutely susceptible to the virus. “There were a lot of miners in Silverton or the Silverton area; high altitude, combined with people whose lungs were probably already somewhat compromised or maybe largely compromised and not sufficient health workers to take care of the problem. And even with sufficient health workers, it really wouldn’t have been possible to take care of the problem. All that, combined, created a situation in which they had a huge number of deaths.”

By the time the first wave of Spanish flu made its way through Silverton and the surrounding areas, about 250 people died, says Everett. “The estimate is that roughly half of the population of the town contracted influenza and about 10 percent of the residents of Silverton died as a result of it. And Silverton is considered to be one of the most affected communities per capita in the entire country as far as the Spanish influenza is concerned.”

Despite the fact that the population of Colorado was still under a million at the time, it had one of the highest rates of death in the entire United States. Some of that was due, no doubt, to the number of tuberculosis patients who’d come to Colorado to convalesce. And the altitude didn’t help, either. But, says Stephen Leonard, Silverton was just the poster child for the many high mountain towns that suffered.

And yet, during the first two waves of the Spanish flu outbreak of 1918, there was one small Colorado mountain town where not a single person died.

**T**he only thing certain about where the Spanish flu started is that it *didn’t* start in Spain. “Most evidence indicates that it began in Haskell County, Kansas,” says Duane Vandebusch.

“Maybe it should be called the Kansas flu,” notes Stephen

Leonard, who points out that there was also an early outbreak at a military outpost called Camp Funston in Kansas. But there are other theories that it could have started in northern France. From there it easily would have infected soldiers in military camps during World War I, who could have brought it back to Kansas when they returned from Europe. Either way, says Leonard, “it’s a misnomer to call it Spanish because it really didn’t originate in Spain.”

Derek Everett says that the deadly virus got the name “Spanish Influenza” because of restrictions on what newspapers could report in the countries fighting in World War I. Spain was neutral and had no such restrictions on the press. “And so the word gets out and Spain essentially gets labeled with this disease for the rest of time since it wasn’t restricting its press the way other countries more actively involved in the war were. It’s horrifying for poor Spain. And the shocking scale of it made everybody think Spain must be harder hit than my country even though your country is probably being just as brutally affected. You just didn’t know it because the press was more restricted.”

And it didn’t help that Alfonso XIII, the King of Spain himself, came down with the flu.

But whether it started somewhere in Europe or in Kansas (and there are other theories), all of the historians agreed that troop movements during World War I helped it spread quickly. “And then when American soldiers went over to Europe in World War I, they carried it with them,” says Vandebusch.

It’s likely that troops from Kansas first brought the Spanish flu to Colorado, says Everett. “As far as we can tell, the first cases of the Spanish influenza in Colorado were at the University of Colorado in Boulder, and they came to the university through U.S. Army students who were stationed there at the school and training as students there.”

But it wasn’t just troops spreading the virus. Blanche Kennedy, a student at the University of Denver, likely brought it back on the train from Chicago. For some reason, the Spanish flu was particularly deadly for those in their 20s and 30s, and Kennedy became the first fatality in Denver. Once it arrived in Denver, it was only a matter of time before the Spanish flu spread throughout the state.

This was due in no small part to the fact that Denver was the central hub for the railroad in Colorado at that time, says Everett. “You’ve got a lot more trade, a lot more business going on, a lot more movement going on because of the wartime demands. And so the same issues that are helping it spread globally help it spread in the state of Colorado as well.”

Trains were a huge factor in how the Spanish flu spread, not only into the mountain towns, but up and down the Front Range. Growing communities like Pueblo, Colorado Springs, and Greeley were quickly overrun by the virus.

Once symptoms began to manifest, it often tore through the lungs, sometimes killing its hosts within hours. The virus infected the upper respiratory tract, Vandebusch says, “and then it went deep into the lungs with viral or bacterial pneumonia. And people didn’t last very long after contracting it. There were examples of people getting on a subway feeling ill in New York, and in an hour when they tried to get off, they were dead.”

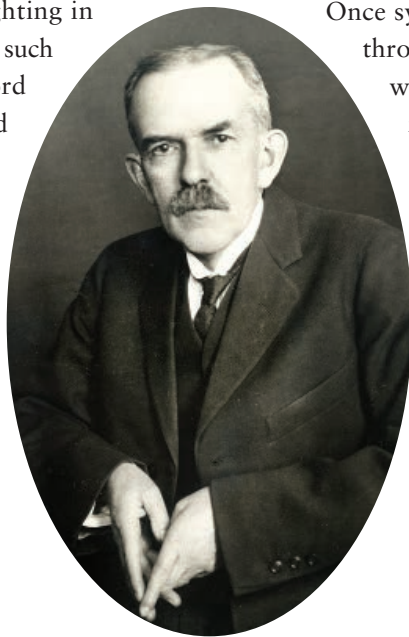
Sometimes health professionals like doctors and coroners were the first to go. Even worse, nobody fully understood how the virus spread. But it was commonly presumed that it passed through close proximity or contact with the sick.

Colorado Governor Julius Gunter and Denver’s manager of public health, Dr. William Sharpley, eventually recommended social distancing measures not unlike those practiced in 2020 during

the COVID-19 outbreak, says Vandebusch. “Churches closed, saloons closed, theaters closed, everything closed.” But while it was recommended that coughs and sneezes be covered, there was little understanding of handwashing or the fact that asymptomatic carriers could still spread the infection—not to mention the fact that most people believed the virus couldn’t be spread outdoors, making asymptomatic transmission a big problem.

“When they let kids out of school, especially older kids in Denver, some of them went out to work harvest and, in various places in the state, thereby spread the flu in other other sections,” says Stephen Leonard. “So there was a lot of contact. Railroad tracks ran through a huge number of towns in Colorado. So it was just about impossible to contain it.”

John Allnutt was fifteen years old when the Spanish flu



*Denver Manager of Public Health Dr. William Sharpley urged social distancing measures much like those put in place during the COVID-19 outbreak in 2020. Courtesy Denver Public Library, Western History Collection. Z-4967*



*The Spanish flu hit just as soldiers were returning at the end of World War I. Though its exact origins remain unknown, troops from Kansas likely brought the flu to Colorado after contracting it in Europe. Here, a soldier poses with his sweetheart in Denver in a photo by Charles S. Lillybridge. 20000191*



*Adapting to the reality of their situation much as youth have done during the 2020 coronavirus pandemic, two boys work on projects in their Junior Red Cross “back yard workshop” on May 24, 1919, while school remains closed due to influenza. Courtesy American National Red Cross photograph collection, Library of Congress.*

ravaged Greeley, Colorado. The son of an undertaker, Allnutt witnessed some of the worst of it firsthand. In an oral history from the mid-1960s in History Colorado’s archives, Allnutt remembered how the confusion and helplessness led some to grasp for solutions.

That was before the days of antibiotics or the use of oxygen and things like that. And the doctors were as much at a loss as anyone. And each doctor, I think, had a different pet theory about how to treat it. Some thought a lot of whiskey would do that. It was hard to come by because the country had gone dry. Almost everyone that died had a flannel pad on their chest, too, saturated with camphorated oil. And a pharmacist, after they closed the store at night, would heat up a gallon or two of olive oil and then melt a big block of camphor in that and bottle it up and have it all sold out by the next day.

Colorado newspapers ran ads promoting all manner of quackery and snake oil, or the regular consumption of onions, bowel cleanses, and bicycle rides. But people were

desperate. “Almost without exception, every pregnant woman who got the flu had a miscarriage,” said Allnutt, “and I can remember so many times putting a baby in a casket with her mother. And it was almost invariably fatal to the mother.”

Funerals in Greeley sometimes happened back-to-back every half hour, said Allnutt, and casket makers could barely keep up with demand.

We were so busy that we got some express man who would load up these outside boxes, the pine boxes, crossways on his truck, three high and seven long, so he could take twenty-one boxes out to the cemetery, which would be enough for, oh, sometimes a week and sometimes less than a week. And it would be quite a sight to see that load of—we call them rough boxes—going out to the cemetery that way.

Though most of Colorado was rural, Denver had already become a small metropolis. And with a growing population of more than a quarter million, Dr. William Sharpley, director of public health, had to figure out how to keep so many people from getting sick. “There was considerable knowledge about



*Revelers throng downtown Denver to celebrate the end of World War I in November 1918. Armistice Day festivities, the end of social distancing, and the reopening of businesses sparked another outbreak of Spanish flu. Courtesy Denver Public Library, Western History Collection. Z-83*

containing diseases,” says Stephen Leonard. “They knew that it was a highly communicable disease. They knew that it was a good idea to wash your hands and to not cough on other people. And they had an idea that masks would be a good idea, So they used masks. But beyond that, they didn’t really know.”

Just as with the coronavirus in 2020, businesses, schools, theaters, and churches got shut down and people were ordered to stay home. But unlike 2020, there was no understanding of the necessity of social distance outdoors. In fact, people believed that fresh air was the best thing for it no matter how many of them or how close together they might be. “They had mass rallies for selling war bonds,” Leonard says. “They just didn’t recognize it. You know, if you sneezed on somebody outside, it could be just as deadly as if you sneezed on somebody inside. So essentially, their response was not as effective as it might have been had they realized how serious it was and they kept their distance.”

And just as with COVID-19, the economy suffered and people got restless. After the first wave of Spanish flu hit

Denver in October of 1918, many believed the worst was over and called for an end to the quarantines and closures. The owners of the theaters, in particular, had had enough. “There was tremendous commercial pressure in Denver,” Leonard says. “They closed the theaters, and theaters were incredibly important forms of entertainment. And it was just a total loss to the theater owners. So they were very upset at that. I think they were one of the major factors in getting the closing order lifted in Denver.”

At that same time, says Leonard, nearly 20,000 people gathered in Cheesman Park on November 11 to celebrate the armistice of World War I. “They were standing right next to each other,” he says. “So it was incredibly, incredibly bad.”

Then, not long after Armistice Day, the end of social distancing, and the reopening of Denver businesses, there was another outbreak. Governor Gunter and Dr. Sharpley tried to issue another quarantine order to slow the second outbreak. But citizens and business owners who’d already been cooped up for months weren’t having it. In a scene



Hear the full interview with John Allnutt of Greeley, the undertaker's son who later shared his memories of the 1918 flu outbreak, on History Colorado's *COauthored* podcast. Find it at [HistoryColorado.org/coauthored](https://HistoryColorado.org/coauthored).

that foreshadowed 2020, there were immediate protests outside the State Capitol.

Gunter and Sharpley quickly reversed the order. Instead, they required everyone to wear gauze facemasks in public. Sharpley knew the masks probably wouldn't do much, and they didn't. And by the time it was over, the second outbreak was even worse than the first.

**W**hen the Spanish flu outbreak finally began to slow in early 1919, the young Centennial State of just under a million had roughly the same rate of infection as other states. But, says Stephen Leonard, "Colorado seems to have had a higher death rate. I should point out that many states did not have good reporting. And so it's very slippery when you talk about the death rates. But Colorado seemed to suffer more than most."

Duane Vandebusch agrees. "Colorado eventually had 49,000 cases," he says, "and 8,000 people died of the flu." But despite these numbers, and the tragic 10-percent death rate in Silverton, Colorado also had one mountain town that made it through the first two waves of the Spanish flu without a single death and hardly any infections. Only 100 miles northeast of Silverton, many factors helped Gunnison have the *lowest* death rate in the United States.

One of those factors was luck, and one was quick thinking. "Gunnison had a combination of extreme good luck and being isolated," says Stephen Leonard. "Evidently, they didn't have an infection in Gunnison early on." Because Silverton and other parts of the state got hit so hard so early, he says, the mayor and sheriff of Gunnison saw what was coming if they didn't act fast. And since they only had one road in and one road out, it was easy to regulate traffic with the exception of the train.

"They realized that they were in a position to sort of blockade themselves and not allow anybody to come in," says Leonard. "And so they did that."

Unlike Silverton and so many other mountain towns, Gunnison wasn't a mining community. There was a teaching college, and a number of businesses. But beyond that it was

mostly small farms and ranches. That meant there weren't a lot of people trying to come in from outside the community. This allowed the mayor and sheriff to enforce a harsh lockdown. As Derek Everett says:

You'd have to drive skirting around the edges of Gunnison rather than driving right through the middle of town. And automobile traffic was not allowed to stop in Gunnison. Train service still did. But every time a train arrived in Gunnison, a law enforcement officer from the town would get on the train wearing a mask and protective clothing to inform anyone who was planning to get off the train that they would be required to spend at least four days in a town-run quarantine. You could not get off the train and just go to your sister's house or to the store or whatever. Anybody who got off a train went into a town-run quarantine.

And if you didn't like that? "Then," says Everett, "you were not allowed off the train. And so Gunnison put in one of the strictest measures to try to prevent outsiders from potentially bringing the Spanish influenza into town that any community in the country could have."

"At one point," adds Stephen Leonard, "one of their citizens died and was shipped back in a coffin, and they wouldn't allow the coffin to be opened. It was very carefully sealed so that nothing could get out." Had the town seen an early case or two, they might not have been so lucky. "But," says Leonard, "they were lucky and smart."

Once the blockade and the orders to stay at home went into effect, Gunnison residents were already mostly spread out, and they were accustomed to hunkering down for long winters. "This is a ranching area," explains Duane Vandebusch, "and people mostly had their own food. They had gardens in the summertime. They [could] put things in blockhouses. They had their own milk." These factors, along with the sheer luck that the virus didn't arrive sooner, gave Gunnison a head start on neighboring mountain towns. But that didn't mean it was easy. The strict quarantine meant residents also had to amuse themselves indoors for months on end.



“What they did was they read, they wrote in their diaries. Many of them had home-schooled their children anyway,” says Vandebusch. “So they obviously didn’t do much, but they hadn’t been doing much before the Spanish flu hit. It’s not like today, where people flew all over the place and took vacations and had television and radio, went to movies and so on.”

The residents of Gunnison spent close to four months in quarantine, and all of it was essentially under de facto martial law. “There was an article in the paper that said that the people of the Gunnison country were 100 percent in favor of what the mayor, the council, and the law enforcement people were doing,” Vandebusch says. “They realized how bad this could be. And they were in total support.”

Then, just as it began to look like the Spanish flu had run its course across the state of Colorado, Gunnison relaxed its restrictions in February of 1919. “Quarantine was lifted and then, unfortunately, a third wave hit,” says Vandebusch. “And in March of 1919, there was a headline of the Gunnison paper that said, ‘Flu Gets Us At Last.’ And one hundred cases appeared . . . around Gunnison. There were a total of nine people who died by the end of March, early April.”

But even with the 100 infections and nine deaths late in the pandemic, Gunnison was perhaps the least affected place per capita in the United States.

*Gunnison, Colorado, recorded the lowest per-capita death rate from influenza in all of the United States—the result of luck, quick thinking, a strict lockdown, and a farming and ranching populace long accustomed to social isolation and downtime. Here, a man waits for a train on the loading platform of the town’s La Veta Hotel around the time of the outbreak. Courtesy Denver Public Library, Western History Collection. X-9342*



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**G**lobally, the Spanish flu was unlike anything the modern world had ever seen.

“This was a tremendous pandemic,” Duane Vandembusch notes. “And it’s equivalent to the bubonic plague of the Middle Ages. And then the Black Death that occurred around 1350 in Europe, which took out about one third of the population in Europe.” And it’s surprising it wasn’t worse, since scientists knew so little about viruses and their transmission in 1918.

A hundred years later, it’s hard to say if any clear lessons can be drawn from the Spanish flu in Colorado. Yes, Gunnison’s success in isolation and Denver’s failure to keep people indoors clearly show that quarantines work to stop the spread of infectious diseases if we’re all willing to sacrifice. But as Derek Everett notes, it’s not always that simple:

It’s easy to . . . tell people today, you know, if you just do this a few more months, things will be OK. Yeah, it sounds great in retrospect, in hindsight. But when you’re living that—day to day, hour to hour, month to month—it gets wearing; it gets exhausting. And that’s the biggest challenge right now is trying to maintain that balance of safety and mental and social health. How long can we take it? How long can we endure? And yet, if we relax too soon, how quickly is everything going to backfire? For all the restrictions we put in place, how long is it going to take for them to essentially fall apart?

Then there’s the question of whether we can even begin to compare the rural mountain town of Gunnison, population 1,300, and Denver, a city of a quarter million in 1918. Imposing a lockdown on a city that size would have been nearly as impossible then as it would be now. People in the United States place a high value on civil liberties—often even more than on their own lives.

Then there’s luck. If an early infection *had* made it to Gunnison, the town could easily have suffered the same fate as Silverton.

Stephen Leonard says that if the history of Spanish flu in Colorado teaches us one thing, it’s that public health preparedness can’t be ignored:

The biggest lesson that we can carry away from it, and one that we should have carried away in 1918 and really didn’t to the degree that was necessary, was that we simply have to invest more in public health—if only we could come to the realization that we lose huge numbers of people to disease, more people than we lose to wars. In the 1918 epidemic, far more people

worldwide died from the influenza than died because of battlefield deaths. And there were huge numbers of battlefield deaths. . . . The worldwide estimate in 1918 runs as high as 50 million people. In the United States, there were 675,000 “excess deaths.” Those are the deaths over and above what you would normally expect. So . . . we’ve got to constantly be prepared in a public health sense for things like this.

Derek Everett, for his part, cautions that it’s easy to make decisions in hindsight, but that history is made day by day. And often in the midst of enormous pressures from many directions.

However, he adds, “I think the best thing that we can do is trust . . . the people who have been doing the research, the scientists, the epidemiologists whose job it is to try to study these things, whether in the past or in the present, and come up with suggestions on how to make this hurt as little as possible.”

As Everett says, “there’s no way anybody’s getting through this unscathed. It’s just a matter of trying to make the best decisions we can. And that’s why I think it’s so important to trust the people who study this on a daily basis and who have dedicated their lives trying to understand how to make it through a crisis like this as best as we can, keeping our heads above water.”

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# You've Washed Your Hands, You've Worn a Mask. What Can Save You Next? **History Can.**

BY CHRIS GETZAN

**S**peaking a couple of years after the bank crash of 2008, economist Richard Wolff remarked that most of the time, when people needed to get through an upheaval in their lives—personal or political—what they needed first were words and pictures to help them understand the thing. Almost always, Wolff said, the language and imagery are borrowed from a historic calamity: convenient phrases, images, and metaphors from a relatable past point of departure

that could help describe the plight they had suddenly found themselves in.

“We compare [the 2008] crisis with the last time . . . [and] that’s the 1930s. And that had to be brought back because that’s the only standard, the equivalent we have to make sense of what we’re going through now,” said Wolff. “Like with everybody, you make sense of a crisis now if you can think of a similar crisis that you, or your friends, or your family went through at some other point. It’s what we do.”



*An Occupy Denver protest in downtown Denver's Civic Center in October 2011. Courtesy Liz Simmons.*

If we're looking right now for an equivalent to 2020, by far the easiest comparison is to the flu pandemic of 1918: a never-before-encountered respiratory sickness that came from an animal and spread rapidly over the rest of the planet, while in the States its effects exposed an unsound medical system and lack of preparation and understanding from government officials. In fact, Denver's experience with the 1918 pandemic is a prime example of what could happen today if the government and businesses are in too much of a hurry to give an all-clear.

But there's an element of the unreal that also makes direct comparisons more difficult. Between what we're seeing or hearing on the one hand—wrecked lives; pleading emails from local businesses; every day still new diagnoses, more deaths, and breathless declarations the virus now “will change everything”—and what we come across in our day-to-day makes things seem jarring, and unreal; the lights come on,

we can take a hot shower, and if you give it a couple of days, there's usually kitty litter and peanut butter at King Soopers. You can also still go online to shop for entertainment and distraction, for snacks and hand sanitizer (or tactical sights for your .30-06 rifle, 40% off on Amazon), and post updates to social media.

Outside the virtual, outside of quarantine, are the disasters. The thing is, though, they weren't unknown to us. And maybe that's the *most* jarring thing: before coronavirus, trying to see a doctor for a life-threatening illness was already a crapshoot on so many levels, and a majority of us were already a paycheck away from being evicted or losing our cars; before coronavirus, the mega-wealthy could already flee society's crackups in a tricked-out bunker or float away from it all on their superyachts, while far too many of us were living lives way out of step with theirs. The last two months of the outbreak in the States, writes Ben Burgis in *Jacobin* on March 15, have become “an index of social rot,” with the pandemic making problems of power and inequality in our communities even more stark than they were before.

*Unemployed workers under the banner of Coxy's Army demonstrate in downtown Denver in 1894 in the wake of the silver crash and the waning days of the Gilded Age, demanding jobs. Courtesy Denver Public Library Western History and Genealogy Collection. X-21550*



So if we look for words and pictures to help us make sense of crisis, in the case of coronavirus, what we should do is look into those gaps, what's been happening in the ongoing convulsions of the last forty-plus years that many historians and economists were saying had become a second Gilded Age, that's been laid bare by the pandemic. This means that connecting coronavirus to our past isn't just one straight line to a single disaster or worldwide pandemic, but to a diffuse number of moments in our history, when people were faced with what seemed like overwhelming odds, beyond their control, and they came to realize the best solution was to try and get organized.

One of these moments was in 1932, at the height of the Great Depression, the literal granddaddy of all crises of the last one hundred years. A former architect and “self-styled loyal patriot” named Charles Dunwoody started an Unemployed Citizens League, based on a group workers in Seattle had begun, “aimed at cooperative productions and the exchange of skills as members sought to survive within the existing society,” writes Denver historian Phil Goodstein. Though it “existed as a temporary alliance until the good times returned,” Goodstein says, “For a couple of years, the League soared . . . [showing] 84 different occupations . . . and [claiming] to have reached out to approximately 34,000 members in a Denver of about 300,000 residents.”

Occupy Denver was a more recent example of everyday people pushing back against forces that seemed well out of their control. Starting in September of 2011, activists hopscotched between Lincoln Park, across from the Capitol, and Civic Center park, protesting gentrification, homelessness,



*Occupy Denver protesters drew attention to issues they saw worsening amid growing inequities in Denver and Colorado, among them homelessness and gentrification. Their activism led to the creation of the activist group Denver Homeless Out Loud. Courtesy Liz Simmons.*

and the growing inequality in Colorado and Denver. The creation of the activist group Denver Homeless Out Loud, which has been on the frontlines of Denver’s ongoing housing plight (yet another crisis!), was one of the eventual outcomes of the Occupy protests.

In the 1970s, disillusioned health care worker and Presbyterian minister Wade Blank saw a crisis in how Denver, and the rest of the country, were failing to help disabled people live full, dignified lives. He founded the Atlantis Community, an organization “to provide as many of life’s necessities—the necessities often taken for granted by those who do not live with a physical or mental disability—as possible,” writes Denver Public Library researcher Katie Rudolph. To make demands for real change in the midst of this crisis, “Blank and those who resided at Atlantis decided to form an activist group to garner as much attention as possible for disability rights—ADAPT (American Disabled for Attendant Programs Today).” ADAPT famously protested public transport in Denver, but also to expand government health and welfare policies for people with disabilities.

In the spring of 1987, New York author Larry Kramer

and about 300 other activists started a “horizontal” (mostly leaderless) direct-action group, AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP), to enact or change public health policies and raise awareness about the pandemic. However, grassroots AIDS activism across the country had already been gathering momentum. One example of that shift in consciousness happened in Denver at the Gay and Lesbian Health Conference in the summer of 1983. With a manifesto called the “Denver Principles,” activists at the conference planned a network of groups of persons with AIDS across every major city in the country, the “National Association of People With AIDS.” After the conference, local representatives of PWA in Denver were active in lobbying the state legislature on health and AIDS-related issues, becoming the public face of the disease in the city.

The value that comes from the words and pictures we get from history, Richard Wolff says, isn’t just in making sense of how things have gone wrong, but also how we can act in the present. In the case of the Great Depression, Wolff points out that “An interesting thing happened in the 1930s . . .

**“Ride or Die” with Denver’s Gang of 19 in the new episode of *Lost Highways* from History Colorado Studios. Find it at [HistoryColorado.org/lost-highways](https://HistoryColorado.org/lost-highways) or wherever you listen to your favorite podcasts.**

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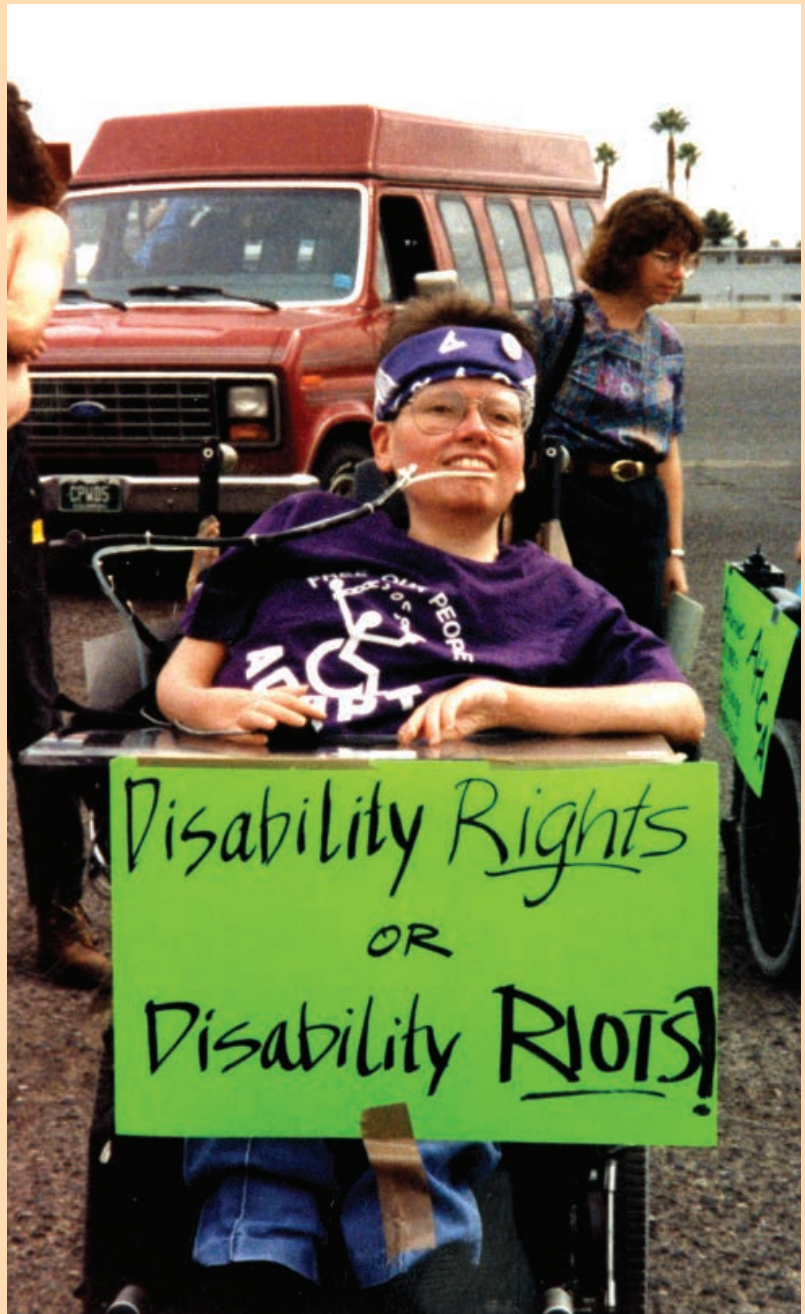
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[their crisis] lasted for years, for twelve years. But there was a big difference [between 2008 and the '30s] . . . the mass of people reacted, and got involved." This meant, Wolff says, "People in the streets. There were demonstrations of tens of thousands, and sometimes hundreds of thousands, in [New York's] Union Square."

Sure, social distancing makes a rally of tens of thousands for Denver's grocery store workers or for Aurora's Amazon warehouse employees or for renters in Civic Center a little harder, but the past also directs us to creative ways of making ourselves heard. People have done so, collectively, and in much more dangerous and unbearable situations than the one we're living in, even under quarantine and all the feelings of instability and despair that have come with it.

Future historians, to coin a phrase, will look back and shake their heads if the legacy of spring 2020 ends up a referendum on the usefulness of cloth masks instead of the era's monstrous inequality, which became even more destructive after the COVID pandemic began. Like Richard Wolff points out, and as the Gang of 19, the Denver Unemployment League, Occupy, PWA, and so many others have already demonstrated, history's already given us the permission to react in a crisis, to get involved in a crisis, to get out and demonstrate in crisis—and most importantly, we do it for one another.

**CHRIS GETZAN** is the public programs manager at History Colorado. Chris loves pro wrestling and horror movies.



*Laura Hershey takes part in the ADAPT protest against the American Health Care Association's 1994 Las Vegas convention. Robin Stephens, Denver Public Library Western History and Genealogy Collection. WH2274-2016-195*

# How Two Colorado Women Brought a Play About an Invisible Rabbit to Broadway and Won a Pulitzer Prize

BY MIMI POCKROSS



Harvey playwright Mary Chase poses with actor Frank Fay (left), who portrayed Elwood P. Dowd in the play, and producer Brock Pemberton during a production at the Central City Opera House in 1947. The play had a wildly successful run on Broadway. Courtesy Penrose Library, University of Denver.

**O**n November 1, 1944, two women from Colorado sat in the audience at the 48th Street Theatre in New York to watch the opening of a new play called *Harvey*. One was the playwright, Mary Chase; the other was Antoinette Perry, the co-producer and director. The two were nineteen years apart in age, but, for a period of time in their careers, their lives enjoyed a parallel path and success in the arts when women were just learning how to make names for themselves.

Antoinette Perry, an already highly successful actress, producer, and director, would go on to be remembered for her contributions to the founding of the American Theatre Wing in support of theater workers and as the namesake of the Tony Award for excellence in New York theater. Mary Chase would become a financial and literary success as a playwright, screenwriter, and children's author and would win a Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 1945. She remains the only Coloradan to have won the award.

*Facing: Antoinette Perry, Harvey's director and producer, sits in her office at the American Theatre Wing in New York City. Dedicated to supporting theatrical excellence, "the Wing" was a branch of the Allied Relief Fund during World War II and later named its famed Tony Award in honor of Perry, its wartime chair. Courtesy Houghton Library, Harvard University. MS Thr 382 (318)*

*Harvey, a tale about the friendship of a slightly tipsy middle-aged man named Elwood P. Dowd and his imaginary friend, a six-foot one-and-a-half-inch rabbit named Harvey, became a phenomenal success. It had a record-breaking run on Broadway of four and a half years. More than seventy-five years after its initial debut, Harvey still attracts a massive, adoring audience. The play has been translated into many foreign languages and remains a popular production choice.*

*In 1950 Harvey was made into a film that starred Jimmy Stewart—a film consistently cited on the American Film Institute's list as one of the all-time best comedies. References to Harvey surface regularly in other movies, including *Field of Dreams*, *The Shawshank Redemption*, and *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*, and on television shows like *The Golden Girls*, *Jimmy Kimmel Live!*, and *The Simpsons*. Among recent Harvey revivals are one starring Big Bang Theory's Jim Parsons in 2012 and a production at Colorado's Arvada Center. Netflix has recently picked up an option to film a new version of Harvey, but no date has yet been determined.*

**N**o two women could have come from more disparate backgrounds. Antoinette Perry grew up privileged and became even wealthier when she married oil magnate Frank Frueauff in 1908. The couple had homes in Denver, Newport, New York, and London. When Frank died, he left Antoinette an estate of thirteen million dollars. Chase, on the other hand, the daughter of a flour mill salesman and an Irish immigrant mother, grew up with little means and was often rejected for her Irish roots; her attempt to pledge a sorority at the University of Colorado met with failure, and she always fought the label of outsider, somewhat in the tradition of Margaret "Molly" Brown, an earlier Irish Colorado resident.

Antoinette Perry was born in Colorado in 1888 to Minnie Hall Perry and William Perry, an attorney. Hall's family were Colorado pioneers and her mother's father, Charles L. Hall, had served as a Colorado senator. The family still owns the Salt Works Ranch in South Park, the oldest working ranch in Colorado and now a designated Colorado landmark. It was Perry's mother's sister Mildred, an actress, and Mildred's actor husband George Wessels who lured Perry into the world of entertainment. She joined her aunt and uncle's touring company in her summers and from the beginning found her home in the theater—much to the dismay of her parents, who considered the theater a lowly profession. After her high school graduation she made the theater circuit, wound up in New York, and was soon the darling of Broadway. She was lured to domestic life with her marriage to Frank Frueauff and, after the birth of their two daughters, left the theater and settled in Denver. With Frank's sudden death, she moved her family back to New York and resumed her theatrical career.

Mary Chase was born in 1907 and grew up on the South Side of Denver, a neighborhood later known as Baker where several other future members of the arts community resided, including jazz conductor Paul Whiteman and screenwriter Gene Fowler, and near the childhood home of film idol Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. She turned to playwriting after she married and retired as a reporter from the *Rocky Mountain News* to raise three sons. She too was beautiful and talented.

Mary Chase began writing *Harvey* in 1942 during the heart of World War II. She and her husband Robert, a young reporter for the *News*, lived in the Congress Park area, where they struggled to support a growing family. Every day as she walked her children to Teller Elementary School, she observed as a woman from the apartment across the street boarded a

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bus to go to work. The woman was a widow who had lost her only son to the war, and, though Chase did not know her personally, she was aware of her story. Each day the woman's pace lessened. Chase wanted to make this woman laugh again, so she went to work to figure out a story that would make it happen.

She strove for months and then, one early morning after dreaming about a rabbit chasing a psychiatrist, she began to write *The Pookah*. A "pookah" was the subject of many Irish legends Chase had learned about from her uncles, who told her stories filled with descriptions of a large animal who stirred up trouble. For two years she sat at her dining room table and typed and typed. The pookah took several forms. At one point it was a canary and at another it was a woman before Chase settled on a six-foot one-and-a-half-inch-tall rabbit. As she developed the play, she set up a paper box stage and used empty thread spools to move her characters around. Meanwhile, her children either played in the backyard and buried Chase's silverware or were tended to by a nanny, who lived in a half-way house for delinquent women.

After two years at the typewriter, *The Pookah* was complete and renamed *The White Rabbit*. For a second time Chase decided to contact Antoinette Perry and her partner, Brock Pemberton. Their first contact had occurred in 1936. Chase had written a political play called *Me Third* that the Federal Theatre Project had produced in Denver as part of the New Deal effort of the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration. The play had been a big hit locally, with opening night bringing out the cream of Denver society dressed in furs and diamonds and the critics unanimous in their praise. Emboldened by the reviews, Chase decided to capitalize on her local success and try to expand her audience to the national scene. She was aware of a fellow Coloradan by the name of Antoinette Perry who was a big hit on Broadway. The *Rocky Mountain News* and *The Denver Post* regularly published news about Perry and had even mentioned the address in Denver where Perry's mother lived. Chase took advantage of that information and one day knocked at the door of Perry's mother, who gave her Perry's address in New York. Shortly after, she sent her *Me Third* manuscript to Perry, along with copies of some of the reviews.

Perry received the manuscript and thought it showed promise, so she handed it over to her partner, Brock Pemberton, a Kansas transplant turned press agent turned producer who, with his brother Murdock, was also a member of the famed Algonquin Roundtable. Perry and Pemberton had already enjoyed a string of successes with lighthearted

comedy hits they called *Skylarks*. Pemberton contacted Chase and said he was interested. Could she come to New York to do the rewrites and then produce the play? Chase had just given birth to her third child and it was Christmastime, but, determined to take advantage of the opportunity, she quickly made babysitting arrangements and took a train to New York.

She stayed at a friend's apartment and, as it was her first trip to the big city, she shied away from exploring the territory. *The New York Times* had a great time spoofing the greenhorn Mary Chase:

The Pemberton office thinks it is pretty remarkable. When its new author, Mary Coyle Davis [*sic*] arrived from Denver 10 days ago to confer about her play, "Me Third," the Pemberton office was ready to grant her a little time. It was her first trip to New York, and, in cases like that the rules say that a visitor gets time to become acclimated—i.e. to see the sights. Not Mrs. Davis. She announced at once that she would lock herself in a hotel to write, and she did.

The play debuted on March 5, 1937, at the Henry Miller Theatre in New York. It closed forty-three days later. Robert Benchley of the *New Yorker* called it an "old story of sex hypocrisy among pious politicians never funny even in the old days." Chase humbly returned to Denver and vowed to only write for her own satisfaction. Perry and Pemberton kept producing new plays but few of them matched their prior successes. They were hungry for a new hit.

Four years after her first failure on Broadway, once again Mary Chase contacted the Perry-Pemberton team. This time, she sent them her *White Rabbit* manuscript. Pemberton loved it, but Antoinette Perry needed a lot of convincing. When Pemberton tried to get backers, most of them initially dismissed him. Preston Sturges, the well-regarded playwright and film director, declared Pemberton himself to be crazy if he tried to produce the play. But eventually, Pemberton was able to convince Perry and enough backers to put Chase's play on the path to Broadway.

This time, when Chase arrived in New York, Perry and Pemberton put her up at the illustrious Algonquin Hotel. There, she spent the next two months writing and rewriting the script for *Harvey*. There were said to be over thirty rewrites. Each day Chase commuted to Perry's spacious Park Avenue apartment with its three pianos and its forty-five-foot-long



living room that accommodated the table where the cast and crew worked. The sessions often lasted ten to twelve hours a day. Mary Chase's nemesis came in the form of Frank Fay, the actor chosen to play Elwood. Having starred in many movies of the 1930s, he was also one of the first standup comedians in night clubs. He had been married to actress Barbara Stanwyck but when she became more famous than he, they divorced. Though gentle in her demeanor, Perry was all business and, with Pemberton, together they ran a tight ship. Fay was not allowed to give his opinions, though he often did anyway. The one exception was the title of the play. He suggested that they call it *Harvey*; and on that one issue, all agreed.

Perry was best at staging and moving the action along. Pemberton's strength was in writing dialogue. While Perry combed over stage directions and quick exits, Pemberton inserted dialogue that enhanced Chase's charming script. Pemberton was responsible for giving Dr. Chumley, the head psychiatrist at Chumley's Rest, the lines he spoke to Elwood: "Don't you have the courage of your convictions?" Chase wrote Elwood's reply: "Years ago my mother used to say to me, she'd say, 'In this world, Elwood—she always called me Elwood—you must be . . . oh so smart or oh so pleasant.' For years I was smart. I recommend pleasant. You may quote me."

There were many controversies, but the one that got the most attention was whether or not Harvey should make an appearance. Chase was insistent that he grace the stage at least one time. Perry and Pemberton disagreed. To acknowledge Chase's wishes, they ordered a costume at a cost of six hundred fifty dollars. It arrived during the Boston tryout of the play, and they used it during a special matinee performance for soldiers. The response was negative, and after that, Harvey never appeared again.

With the exception of one drama critic, the reviews for *Harvey* were laudatory. Said John Chapman of *The Daily News*, "[*Harvey* is] the most delightful, droll, endearing, funny and touching piece of stage whimsy I ever saw."

The play ran on Broadway for 1,775 performances and for two years in London. Altogether there were three touring companies. It debuted in Colorado at Central City in 1947 starring the inimitable Frank Fay, who had since made peace with Chase. The day after the premier of *Harvey*, Fay had called Chase and told her she was a "Dumb, Denver housewife" when she didn't quite grasp the magnitude of *Harvey's* instant success. The play won Drama Critics'



*Mary Chase worked as a Rocky Mountain News reporter before turning to playwriting. Here (at far right), inside the Brown Palace Hotel in Denver, she covers the visit of Queen Marie of Rumania in 1926. Photo by Harry M. Rhoads. Courtesy Denver Public Library, Western History Collection. Rh-860*



*Antoinette Perry enjoyed a storied acting career before moving on to directing and producing. Photo by Charles D. Kirkland. Courtesy Denver Public Library, Western History Collection. Z-6952*

Circle awards for best actor, Frank Fay, and best actress in a supporting role, Josephine Hull. The award for best play went to Tennessee Williams's *The Glass Menagerie*.

Antoinette Perry spent much of her time both before and after *Harvey* working with the American Theatre Wing and establishing a Stage Door Canteen to entertain soldiers. She died of a heart attack in June of 1946 not long after the war's end. To commemorate her contribution to the war effort, in 1948 a committee of the American Theatre Wing was formed to establish the Antoinette Perry award for excellence in the theater with categories for best play, best actor, best director, and various technical achievements.



Mary Chase stands beside a costumed Harvey in 1946. After trying it just once, the producers scrapped the notion of Harvey making an appearance in the play. Courtesy Denver Public Library, Western History Collection. WH2129 Counter Box 1

To this day, the Tony Award, as it came to be known, remains the most prestigious of all theater awards given.

In 1945 Mary Chase received the Pulitzer Prize for Best Drama, winning over *The Glass Menagerie*. It proved a controversial decision, as many supporters of Tennessee Williams felt that his work was much more serious and therefore more worthy of the award. (Williams went on to win the Pulitzer Prize for Drama for *A Streetcar Named Desire* in 1948 and for *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* in 1955.)

Those who were in Chase's corner felt that *Harvey* was just what the country needed during a sad time: a smart comedy with a common touch. It was John Hohenberg, the administrator of the awards at the time, who made no apologies for the selection. *Harvey*, he professed, was just what Americans needed and wanted, "laughter and relief from anxiety in the closing months of World War II."

Theatrical observers have weighed in on what makes *Harvey* endure. Was it Chase's script, Perry's direction, the talents of the actors? The times in which the play was presented?

Many of Chase's observations still ring true seventy-five years later. Chase's character, Elwood P. Dowd, lives in a dream world with his invisible pal, Harvey. Together they ignore the pettiness of society and have a gay old time. When Nurse Kelly asks Elwood why he needs to keep going to Charlie's bar, Elwood responds, "Harvey and I sit in the bars and we have a drink or two and play the jukebox. Soon the faces of the other people turn toward mine and smile. They are saying: 'We don't know your name, Mister, but you're a lovely fellow.' Harvey and I warm ourselves in these golden moments. We have entered as strangers—soon we have friends."

When Elwood's sister tries to commit Elwood to a sanitarium so she can get on with her life and find a suitor for her daughter, the fun begins. All manner of mistaken identities and incidents make the audience wonder who should be the patient: Elwood, who lives in a fantasy world with Harvey, or those seeking to commit him, like his sister and the psychiatrists who process him. In the end, the taxi driver who takes Elwood to be treated for his mental problems comments on how he sees the difference: "I've been drivin' this route fifteen years. I've brought 'em out here to get that stuff [a formula that makes them 'normal'] and drove 'em back after they had it. It changes 'em. On the way out here they sit back and enjoy the ride." But on the way back, he says, "They crab, crab, crab."

Other observations about high society, femininity, mental health, and humanity move the play along and continue to make audiences laugh at themselves. Veta, Elwood's sister, talks to a reporter on the phone about the society tea she is hosting and brags that her mother founded the tradition; her mother, she says, was "a pioneer cultural leader who came to her town [which mirrors the city of Denver] by ox-team." Chase irreverently pokes fun at Veta's claim, which is clearly intended to impress upon the reporter that her mother's journey is in the same category as the high status given to descendants of the *Mayflower*.

As for Chase's lasting contribution to the theatrical world, she is frequently cited for her contributions to fantasy and comedy, and as a woman playwright—although many critics don't consider her a woman playwright, just a playwright. Many have criticized her portrayal of women while others see it as reflective of her times. Innuendos appear throughout *Harvey*. Veta cautions her daughter Myrtle Mae: "Don't be didactic. Men don't like that." Says Veta to Wilson, the sanitarium attendant, "All you guys think about is sex."

In 1945, just before Chase won the Pulitzer Prize, RKO Universal reached out to her with an offer of a million dollars, a record at the time, for the rights to make *Harvey* into a film. Chase served as a co-screenwriter. The movie starred James Stewart, who subsequently said that *Harvey* was his favorite role that he ever played. At Stewart's museum in Indiana, a Harvey Award is annually issued to an outstanding humanitarian. Stewart and actress Helen Hayes starred in a successful revival of *Harvey* in 1971, and other versions of *Harvey* aired several times on television in the fifties, sixties, and seventies.

Chase continued to write until her death in 1981. Although none of her plays were as successful as *Harvey*, four were produced on Broadway: *The Next Best Thing* had a very short run; *Mrs. McThing* starred Helen Hayes; *Bernardine* became a film that featured the debut of singer Pat Boone; and *Midgie Purvis* starred Tallulah Bankhead but was not a success. Chase then wrote several more plays and

two award-winning children's books, *Loretta Mason Potts* and *Wicked Pigeon Ladies in the Garden*. At the time of her death, a musical, *Say Hello to Harvey* starring Donald O'Connor (of *Singin' in the Rain* fame), saw an unsuccessful trial run in Canada. Chase regretted her failures, saying she shouldn't have tried so hard to do better than *Harvey*.

Chase maintained an enduring connection with Antoinette Perry through Perry's daughter, Margaret Fanning—an actress who had appeared in Chase's first play, *Me Third*.

Margaret had married, moved to Denver, and was the mother of four children. All of the Fanning family were frequent visitors to the Denver Country Club mansion that the Chases had bought after the success of *Harvey*. Chase dedicated her first book, *Loretta Mason Potts*, to the four Fanning children, who visited once a week to listen as Chase read aloud a chapter from the book. Chase's own children were grown and no longer interested in hearing the stories their mother had told them since they were babies. To this day *Loretta Mason Potts* remains in publication and is considered a children's classic. The story begins: "Colin was ten years old before he learned he had an older sister. And he never forgot this day—because things were never the same again."

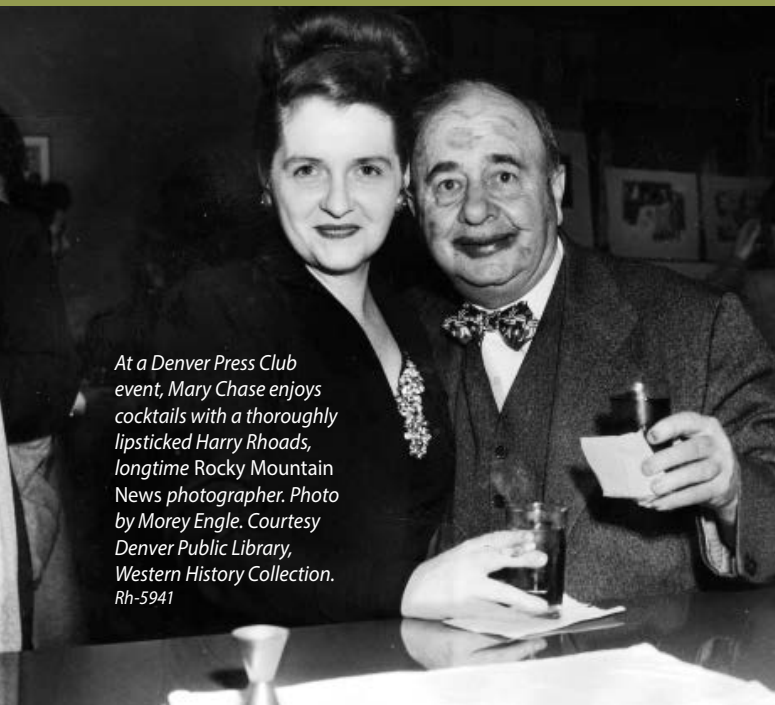


Mary Coyle Chase poses with Joe at her home in Denver. Courtesy Denver Public Library, Western History Collection.

The legacies of Mary Chase and Antoinette Perry differ dramatically, but both were exemplary achievers who paved the way for women in their respective professions.

The fact that the Tony Award is offered every year is a constant reminder of Antoinette Perry's fame. More important, though, was her personality: warm, loving, and passionate about the theater. It was her life. Said *New York Times* drama critic Brooks Atkinson, "Antoinette Perry was an imaginative, able and selfless person. There was nothing she would not or could not do. But fame was not what she was after. She just loved the theater."

Perry seemed always to rise above the barriers that threatened to keep her from doing what she wanted in the theater. She defied her parents, who disapproved of her becoming an actress; she brazenly entered the Broadway



*At a Denver Press Club event, Mary Chase enjoys cocktails with a thoroughly lipsticked Harry Rhoads, longtime Rocky Mountain News photographer. Photo by Morey Engle. Courtesy Denver Public Library, Western History Collection. Rh-5941*



*Jimmy Stewart makes a surprise visit to honor Mary Chase at the Bonfils Theatre in Denver on the occasion of the 35th anniversary of Harvey in 1978. Courtesy Denver Public Library, Western History Collection.*

scene as an actress at a young age; she accepted her role as wife and mother when she married Frueaff; and she had no difficulty finding her way back to Broadway—first as an actress, then as a producer and director. She was one of the first female directors on Broadway and devoted her life to encouraging other women to take on the role as well. Aside from her many talents, Perry was a role model for women. Said Ellis Nassour, “In the male-dominated theatre of her time, when women were relegated to acting, costume design or choreography, she became the first successful independent woman producer/director. Well into the 1970’s, Antoinette Perry was the only woman director with a track record of hits,” having overseen 500 or more theatrical productions.

For Mary Chase, the role of female playwright and author always remained within the traditional parameters of her time. At least one reporter considered her “a housewife who wrote plays in her spare time,” and nothing more. As the wife of a man who rose to the title of associate editor at the *Rocky Mountain News*, she accompanied her husband on his business trips and was always known as “Mrs. Robert Chase.”

Unlike Perry, who made her contributions to the theater primarily on Broadway, Chase’s contributions were both local and national. Locally, Chase worked more on the sidelines than Helen Bonfils, who founded the Bonfils Theatre in 1952 and is still credited with bringing Denver’s theater scene into modern times. Chase became a national figure in promoting children’s theater and also worked with the Denver experimental theater The Changing Scene. At one point, to pay the Denver community back, she taught a playwriting class at the University of Denver.

Both Perry and Chase have been inducted into the Colorado Women’s Hall of Fame. Mary Chase garnered many awards in Denver. The University of Denver gave her an honorary degree in 1947; the Colorado Authors’ League awarded her the William McCleod Reine Award; she was an honorary member of the Denver Woman’s Press Club; and she was inducted into the Denver Center for the Performing Arts Hall of Fame in 1999. The national Children’s Theatre Conference of the American Educational Theatre Association honored her in 1960.

Those interested in seeing remnants of the sites where Perry spent her childhood and where Chase lived her entire life will find only a few. Perry grew up in South Park, Colorado, where her family’s Salt Works Ranch is now a Centennial Farm (having been in the same family for over a hundred years) and is a designated national historic site. One of the

ranch's salt kettles is in the collection of History Colorado.

Chase's Baker Neighborhood home is today a designated Denver landmark. At Staunton Park near the town of Conifer, a sign indicates the location of the Elk Falls cabin where Robert and Mary Chase escaped the continuous uproar over Chase's celebrity. The building that housed the Bonfils Theatre where some of Chase's plays were performed is now occupied by the Tattered Cover Book Store on Colfax Avenue and Elizabeth Street in Denver. In the center of the Tattered Cover are some of the original seats from the theater.

The Denver Center for the Performing Arts complex was dedicated in 1986 and includes the Auditorium Theater at Thirteenth and Champa, originally built in 1908 for the Democratic National Convention and where theatrical touring companies—among them the *Harvey* touring company—often stopped over with new plays. After a substantial renovation that was completed in 2005, the Auditorium was renamed the Ellie Caulkins Opera House. The complex also houses a modern version of the Bonfils Theatre. A plaque on its walls is dedicated to Mary Chase.

The Central City Opera House served as a summer venue for the most popular plays of the day at the time that *Harvey* had its Colorado debut in 1947. It is now solely an opera house. Elitch's Summer Theatre, where *Harvey* was presented twice, closed in 1990, but the old building remains standing at Thirty-Seventh Place and Utica Street in the Highlands section of Denver.

Chase donated the original *White Rabbit* manuscript to the University of Denver's Penrose Library near the original location of the University Civic Theatre, where several of Chase's early plays were produced.

The theatrical scene in Colorado has much to thank for two amazing women who contributed so much to advance the arts.

### For Further Reading

For more about Mary Chase and *Harvey*, see Carolyn Casey Craig, *Women Pulitzer Playwrights: Biographical Profiles and Analyses of the Plays* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Company, Inc. 2004); Marilyn Griggs Riley, *High Altitude Attitudes: Six Savvy Colorado Women* (Boulder: Big Earth Publishing, Johnson Books, 2006); Thomas J. Noel and Amy B. Zimmer, *Showtime: Denver's Performing Arts, Convention Centers and Theatre District* (Denver: Denver's Division of Theatres and Arenas, 2008); and, of course, Mary Chase, *Harvey: A Comedy in Three Acts* (New York: Dramatists Play Service, 1950).



Mary Chase's childhood home still stands, a Denver landmark in the Baker Neighborhood. Courtesy Denver Public Library, Western History Collection.

MIMI POCKROSS is an award-winning freelance writer who specializes in writing about the arts, education, and family. She is a former director of the Colorado History Museum. Like Mary Chase and Antoinette Perry, she is a wife, mother, and grandmother and a longtime resident of Colorado. Her third book, *Pulling Harvey Out of Her Hat: The Amazing Story of Mary Coyle Chase*, is scheduled to be published in the fall of 2020.



# Two Trains in the Springs: Women’s Suffrage and the 1959 Girl Scout Roundup

BY BRIAN COOKE

Sixty-one years ago, a 16-year-old girl boarded a train near Philadelphia and headed for the West. Some fifty hours later, she arrived at the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe passenger depot in Colorado Springs. She and 10,000 other Girl Scouts from twenty-eight countries had gathered to camp and learn about friendship and teamwork.

Nine years later, back in Pennsylvania, that girl became my mother. Now a grandmother, she has fond memories of that visit but has yet to return to Colorado Springs.

While on vacation last year in the Springs with my own little Girl Scout, I decided to invite my parents to Colorado. I enticed them with an offer of sightseeing, including the train station where my mother had disembarked and the field where she’d camped.

Ahead of their visit, I looked for information about the depot. I discovered that there are *two*, both of them now decommissioned and repurposed.

In 1916, a year before the newer depot was built, another group of women came to Colorado Springs by train, arriving at the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad depot on South Sierra Madre Street. The twenty-three activists on board had toured the western states to generate support for women’s voting rights. In Colorado Springs, they stopped long enough for some speeches and a photo opportunity in front of the depot.

When they returned to Washington, D.C., the activists presented Congress with petitions they’d collected on their journey. Four years later—one hundred years ago this August—the 19th Amendment was signed into law, prohibiting states and the federal government from denying citizens the right to vote, regardless of gender.

But what happened to these two depots?

Built in 1917, the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe depot supported passenger railroad service until 1971. It was later listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

In recent years, State Historical Fund grants have been used to repair and clean this depot where my mother arrived; it’s now a place for innovation and business growth.

Down the road, the old Denver & Rio Grande depot dates back to the late 1800s and is now the heart of Old Depot Square, home to restaurants and other businesses.

Today, these depots host people looking to the future, gathering with friends. But their historical meaning persists; they remind us of both our right to vote and the strong women who’ve left their mark on our families and our country.

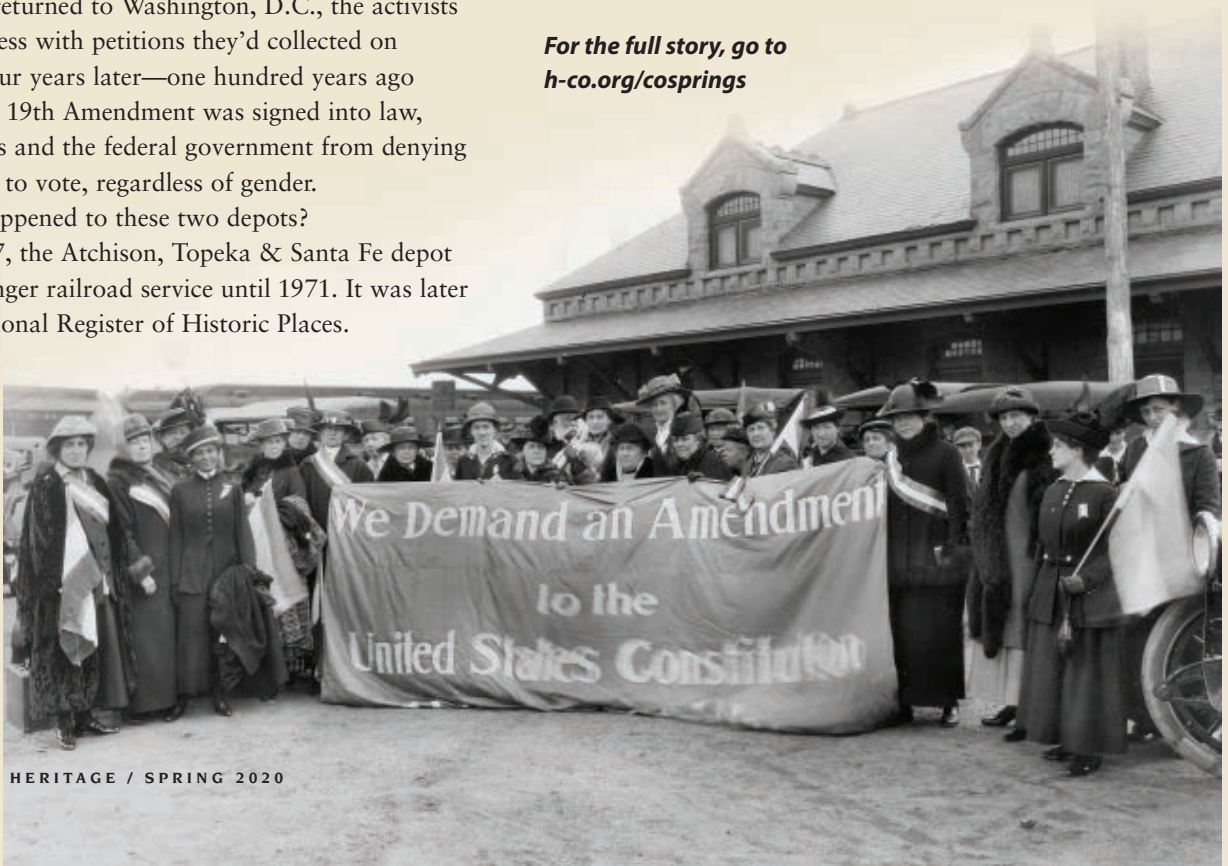
*History Colorado, the Colorado Women’s Vote Centennial Commission and partners around the state are observing the 19th Amendment centennial with a variety of events. The events will give multi-generational audiences the opportunity to learn about the journey and struggle to achieve voting rights, understand the contributions of women in Colorado history, and underscore the value of the right to vote. COWOMENSCENTENNIAL.ORG*



**Women’s Vote Centennial**  
COLORADO // 2020

**For the full story, go to [h-co.org/cosprings](http://h-co.org/cosprings)**

*On a western tour to support women’s right to vote in the United States, riders on the “Suffrage Special” train arrived in Colorado Springs in 1916. Courtesy Library of Congress.*



## New Listings

*In the National Register of Historic Places and Colorado State Register of Historic Properties*

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the nation’s historic places worthy of preservation.



in the tradition of the grand Georgian and Federal-style houses built during the 1700s in his native New England.

The plans were developed by Stanley, likely in association with the Denver architectural firm of Kidder and Wieger, and served as the architectural prototype for the National Register-listed Stanley Hotel and Manor House built near Estes Park by Stanley between 1907 and 1912.

### About the Colorado State Register

The Colorado State Register of Historic Properties is a listing of the state’s significant cultural resources worthy of preservation

for the education and enjoyment of Colorado’s residents and visitors. Listed properties include individual buildings, structures, and objects as well as districts and historic and archaeological sites.

History Colorado’s Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation administers the Colorado State Register program. Properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places are automatically placed in the Colorado State Register. Properties may also be nominated separately to the Colorado State Register without inclusion in the National Register.

## State Register of Historic Properties

### Stanley House

Estes Park vicinity

Built as a summer residence for F. O. and Flora Stanley, the 1904 Stanley House is a rare example of high-style Colonial Revival style architecture in the Estes Park area.

A wealthy East Coast industrialist, Freelan Oscar Stanley and his twin brother, Francis Edgar Stanley, amassed sizable fortunes primarily by developing a dry-plate photographic process that they sold to George Eastman, and by inventing the Stanley Steamer automobile. After F. O. Stanley was diagnosed with tuberculosis, he and Flora spent the summer of 1903 in Estes Park with hopes that the mountain air would prove therapeutic.

Finding his health considerably improved, Stanley chose to construct a stately summer residence designed

***For details about the benefits of listing as well as nomination criteria and the nomination process, go to [HistoryColorado.org/preserve](http://HistoryColorado.org/preserve).***

## Do you know this building?

- |                     |                           |                       |
|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Where is it?     | 2. Who built it?          | 3. When was it built? |
| a) Colorado Springs | a) Lord Dunraven          | a) About 1876         |
| b) Estes Park       | b) Howard F. Smith        | b) About 1890         |
| c) Aspen            | c) William Jackson Palmer | c) About 1919         |
| d) Crested Butte    | d) Jerome B. Wheeler      | d) About 1927         |



Answers on page 32

## Do you know this building?

Continued from page 31

BY AMY UNGER,  
NATIONAL AND STATE REGISTER HISTORIAN

**Answers:** b) Estes Park, a) Lord Dunraven, a) 1876



British aristocrat Windham Thomas Wyndham-Quin, Fourth Earl of Dunraven and Mount-Earl, became enamored with Estes Park in 1872 during a lengthy hunting trip through the American West. Stunned by its natural beauty and desirous of its excellent hunting grounds, Dunraven began formulating a plan to acquire the park in its entirety—embarking on what many saw as an illegal, or at best unethical, land acquisition that eventually brought more than 15,000 acres in Estes Park under his control.

The Dunraven Cottage was built around 1876 for Dunraven’s private use during his visits to Estes Park. In comparison with the rustic log cabins typically built in the area in the 1870s, the cottage was luxurious, with running water piped in from nearby natural springs, as well as an indoor privy and bath.

Dunraven used the cottage sporadically, hosting well-heeled friends and fellow aristocrats who wished to experience the wild Colorado landscape firsthand. Renowned artist Albert Bierstadt, who accompanied Dunraven to Estes Park in January 1877, likely stayed at the cottage and captured the stunning view in his famous painting *Estes Park, Long’s Peak*.

Dunraven divested himself of his Estes Park holdings in 1908, and ownership of the cottage transferred to the Estes Park Development Company, a firm controlled by entrepreneurs Burton D. Sanborn and Freelan O. Stanley. In 1923, the North Central Colorado Council of Camp Fire Girls acquired the cottage and opened Camp Dunraven, a summer camp for girls.

Founded by Dr. Luther Halsey Gulick, a physical education specialist, and his wife, author Charlotte Vetter Gulick, the Camp Fire Girls of America were formally organized in 1912 as a national counterpart to the Boy Scouts of America. Wilderness experiences were an essential part of the Camp Fire Girls program and many girls attended summer camps affiliated with the organization.

Ellen Gertrude Lee, founder of the Greeley Camp Fire Girls, is credited with encouraging acquisition of the storied Dunraven Cottage and served as the camp’s director. Daytime hours were devoted to craft activities, hiking, swimming, rowing,

horseback riding, and lessons, such as how to build a campfire and identify wildflowers. In the evenings, the girls entertained each other with talent shows and the like. The weeklong camping experience included a formal awards ceremony, choreographed by Lee and the campers, which took place outdoors at the base of a striking natural rock formation northwest of the cottage.

The camp drew girls primarily from the northeastern Colorado region, and any “girl of reputable character and good health” could attend. In 1935, Camp Dunraven could accommodate fifty-three campers and offered five weeklong sessions at a cost of \$6.50 per session. After a visit to the camp in 1952, a member of the Camp Fire Girls national leadership found that “Camp Dunraven is the most beautiful camp of any within our seventh regional jurisdiction.” The camp continued to host Camp Fire Girls and other groups until 1965 and is now in private hands.

*Dunraven Cottage, Estes Park. Courtesy Denver Public Library, Western History Collection. AUR-3396*



### Good to Know

National or State Register listed properties may be eligible for investment tax credits for approved rehabilitation projects. Listed properties may also be eligible to compete for History Colorado State Historical Fund grants. These grants may be used for acquisition and development, education, and survey and planning projects. The next nomination submission deadline is October 2, 2020. For information, call 303/866-3392.

For more about these and all National and State Register properties in Colorado, visit [HistoryColorado.org/national-state-registers](http://HistoryColorado.org/national-state-registers).



# We Are Making History

It's hard to imagine where History Colorado would be today without the support of our members and donors. What began as a state historical society in 1879 with a collection housed in a borrowed hotel room, History Colorado has blossomed into a vital organization that's the guardian of nearly 15 million artifacts and engages people in every corner of the state with a range of programs and services.

Currently, we have more than 6,000 members. What motivates them to be members of History Colorado is as varied as the membership benefits we offer—which may explain why we have members who live as far away as Maine and even the United Kingdom.

Donors, too, like our Society 1879 legacy donors who've included History Colorado in their estate plans, are particularly impactful. Their importance lies in their commitment to give, ensuring their legacy lives on through our work.

Now more than ever, our donors and members make what we do possible. While our doors have been closed and our in-person programming cancelled, the History Colorado staff remain accessible, albeit behind the scenes and digitally. Our educators are continuing to inspire young and old with newly created online learning programs and a weekly digest of history news and ideas. Our curators are carrying on with their painstaking care of our artifacts, while the Stephen H. Hart Research Center faithfully answers research requests. Other teams are maintaining their essential functions—including our membership team, who are always available to help you.

Just like we did in 1879, we're making history. Now more than ever, membership and donation dollars are vital to keeping



the museums operating and our programs thriving. As one of our longtime members, Ronald Simon, said, "Every year, my wife and I renew our membership. We don't get to the museum like we once did, but we never forget how important it is to keep it open for the future to preserve the past."



**For more than 140 years, our supporters have made our work possible. Make a special donation today at [h-co.org/donate](http://h-co.org/donate).**

## Saluting Our Volunteers!

**We can't thank our volunteers enough for the thousands of hours they give each year. Here is our TOP 40 ranking of the volunteers who donated the most hours last year, led by Amerson Woodie, with a whopping 956 volunteer hours!**

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Matthew Dailey  
Jeremiah Moore  
Judy Durzo  
Emilio Ortega  
Jeanice Bush  
Margaret Conable\*  
Stephanie Longsdorf\*

Charles Pitts  
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Lorraine Polchak

\*Volunteers with more than 10 years of service



*In every issue of Colorado Heritage, we'll field your questions about our collections, your own collections, Colorado history, archaeology, or historic preservation.*

**Q:** *In this time of moving so much of our programming into a virtual realm, we've seen a number of our programs reach all-new audiences due to the increased ease of access. One of those success stories is our historic preservation webinars, so we asked Chris Bowles, our Heritage Outreach and Preservation Planning Manager, to fill us in.*

**A:** Historic Preservation staff have continued to meet the challenges posed by COVID-19 by adapting to a suddenly digital world and developing meaningful programs for the people of Colorado. Erica Duvic, our Certified Local Government (CLG) coordinator, has been particularly agile in moving our office to the new normal.

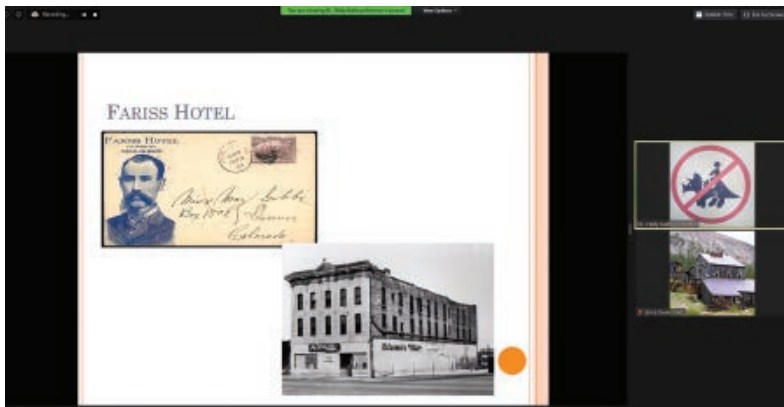
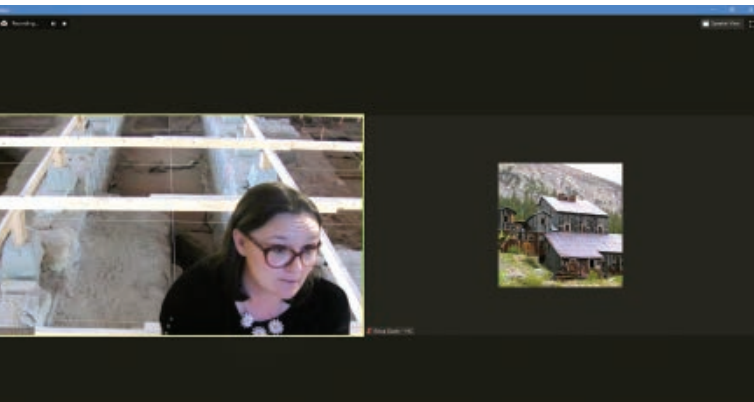


Originally from Georgia, Erica has been in historic preservation for fifteen years. She worked in Park County helping to preserve the incredible heritage of the area. She also worked for Wyoming's State Historic Preservation Office before finally making the move to History Colorado. She's coordinated our CLG program for the past two years and has become a familiar face across Colorado's sixty-four CLGs and many of the 125 governments with historic preservation ordinances. In addition she's the coordinator of the Centennial Farms program, which highlights the families who've farmed and ranched in Colorado for at least 100 years.

Both programs require Erica to be freely available and personally reach out to participants. One of her most successful outreach activities has been the organization of monthly training webinars for CLGs. These were already scheduled through the summer, but with the interruptions of the pandemic Erica felt that the webinars could be expanded to help anyone with an interest in preservation. So starting in mid-April she organized weekly webinars drawing in members of the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation staff to present a wide variety of topics. These included a Preservation 101 class, an introduction to the National and State Registers of Historic Places, a class on artifact curation and the role of museums as State Repositories, and an overview of archaeological practice in Colorado.

The webinars have been an unexpected success, with upwards of 300 participants from all walks of life taking part so far. Anyone with access to Zoom can view the past and future webinars at [HistoryColorado.org/archaeology-preservation-webinar-series](https://www.historycolorado.org/archaeology-preservation-webinar-series). We hope to have these available through other media in the near future and details will be posted on our website. Erica and the rest of the Archaeology and Historic Preservation staff continue to work hard to help Coloradans preserve their historic places despite the difficulties of the current situation.

*On May 13, State Archaeologist Dr. Holly Norton presented a webinar on the archaeology of the site of the Fariss Hotel and the El Pueblo trading post in Pueblo. Artifacts from the 1880s hotel, which once stood atop the site of the old adobe trading post, have been the subject of a three-year study in the Emery Archaeology Laboratory at the History Colorado Center.*



**Do you have a question for History Colorado?**

**Send it to [publications@state.co.us](mailto:publications@state.co.us), and please put "Ask History Colorado" in the subject line.**

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We're a certified "Service Enterprise," meeting our mission through the power of volunteers. By giving your time, you can help us continue to engage people in our past in order to create a better Colorado. Share your passion by finding the volunteer or internship opportunity that's just right for you. Visit [HistoryColorado.org/volunteers](http://HistoryColorado.org/volunteers) or call 303/866-3961.



### JOIN US

Love History Colorado? Join us! You'll get free admission to our museums, a number of Georgetown Loop Railroad® passes based on your membership level, our publications, and much more. Already a member? Members at higher levels get reciprocal Smithsonian benefits. Consider upgrading to get the VIP treatment. Join us or give the gift of membership by going to [HistoryColorado.org/membership](http://HistoryColorado.org/membership).



### LEAVE A LEGACY

In 1879, just three years after Colorado achieved statehood, Governor Pitkin established the State Historical Society (today's History Colorado) to collect and preserve items related to the state's identity. Today, History Colorado's Society 1879 honors those whose estate gifts will help preserve Colorado's past for generations to come. Estate gifts come in all shapes and sizes. Options exist. Contact Cheyenne Johnson at 303/866-4845 or [Cheyenne.Johnson@state.co.us](mailto:Cheyenne.Johnson@state.co.us).



### MAKE HISTORY WITH YOUR NEXT EVENT

Create an unforgettable event with an authentic Colorado experience. The History Colorado Center offers a convenient downtown location with full event-planning services and a team of culinary experts. Treat your guests to a taste of history with our interactive exhibits set in a clean, modern museum setting. Whether it's a dream wedding, 1,500-person cocktail reception, or a meeting for ten, we look forward to creating a custom event in our beautiful museum. Find us—and all our other sites—at [HistoryColorado.org](http://HistoryColorado.org).



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HISTORY *Colorado*

# Coloradans Respond to COVID-19



How has the pandemic changed your life?

*Share your experience with us.*

[HistoryColorado.org/covid-19](https://HistoryColorado.org/covid-19)

We want to hear about how the outbreak has been changing your daily life. How are you navigating work and family needs? Did your place of work have to reduce hours or close? What steps has your family been taking to prevent the virus's spread? What will you remember about this moment?

**You can share your story by:**

- Completing a survey, in English or Spanish
- Creating and sharing a journal, using our template or your own
- Leaving us a voicemail at 720/466-8215, or emailing [HC\\_Covid19@state.co.us](mailto:HC_Covid19@state.co.us) to submit your form, journal, photos, or video
- Making it a community project! We have step-by-step instructions in English and Spanish

Help History Colorado document this moment in time. History is in the making and we want to record your story.

*Want to go paperless? Go to [h-co.org/puboptions](https://h-co.org/puboptions) to let us know if you'd rather get Colorado Heritage via email.*