

OLD COLORADO CITY HISTORY IS A MUSEUM FOR THE PEOPLE BY THE PEOPLE

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THE GAZETTE

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BY DAVE HUGHES

YOUR HUB CONTRIBUTOR

Thursday, June 21. 2007

Old Colorado City History Center is a museum for the people by the people. The Old Colorado City History Center is a museum and history center suitable for all ages. It is devoted to the original frontier Colorado City (founded 1859 at the base of Pikes Peak and Ute Pass.) The History Center is in Old Colorado City near the commercial and historic district. Hours of operation are 11 am. to 4 pm. Tuesday through Saturday. It is free to the public.

The History Center can be found at' 1 South 24th St., across from Bancroft Park, which has an original 1859 log cabin in the middle of the 1898 Victorian architecture. Old Colorado City buildings date from the 1890s Pikes Peak Gold Rush era. The log cabin depicts a diorama of

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the 1862 Civil War battle of La Glorieta Pass, New Mexico, which involved the first Colorado Volunteer Infantry and Colorado City long before Colorado Springs existed; a blown up display of the one- man sled down the Cog Rail- road from Pikes Peak; displays of the rip roaring 21 Saloons of Colorado City, railroad memorabilia, photo displays of Colorado City from the beginning; many historical books and booklets, maps, photographs of the early Pikes Peak region. Kids love to ring the old church bell in the History Center which was once a church, with steeple.

The Old Colorado City History Center was formed because, in spite of the fact that there has been a city tax supported Pioneer's Museum in downtown Colorado Springs for a long time, it really has been a Museum of, by, and for, upscale Colorado Springs — not about pioneers like those who founded Colorado City a decade before Colorado Springs existed.

So west siders created their own museum and center where research can be done. It also is a place where events and programs are held, and displays about early El Paso County — the civil wars Colorado Springs never went through — fighting hostile Indians and befriending others like the Utes, the great gold mills and Midland Railroad, the rip roaring saloons and gambling days, and the fights with the preachers along church row are displayed.

Earliest Colorado Facts: 1861 Colorado made a territory out of Kansas.

President Abraham Lincoln appoints ex West Point Cadet Gilpin Governor to "Save Colorado for the Union."

Colorado City voted Territorial Capital 1861.

Of 25,000 Gold Rushers already in Colorado 6,000 are Southerners and Secessionists

Secessionists confront loyal Unionists.

Shootouts in Denver City. Spies in Colorado City. Outnumbered rebels go underground as guerillas. Incite Indians to attack settlers.

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Newspaper accounts full of the Civil War news, including capture of 42 Rebels and a six-pound canon near Buelah, west of Pueblo, tell of Company F, 1st Colorado (Mounted), camped in Colorado City 1861 enroute south to escort the prisoners back to Denver City under Marshall Townsend. Private Hollister describes in his journal "Prisoners tried for Treason."

The first Baptist Church of Colorado City was built in 1891 at 1 South 24th Street. It is now the Old Colorado City History Center. Was built in 1891. The tall church steeple was 9' st'mk by ughtmng' FOR

ABOUT THE WRITER: Gunn is a contributor to the Old Colorado Historical Society