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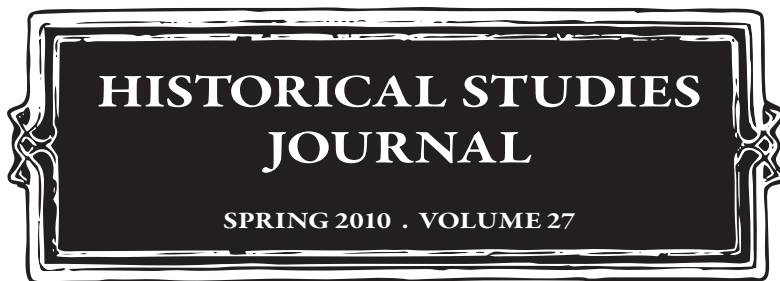
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Pam Holtman, Ernest House Jr., John Monnett & Tom Noel  
for the Center for Colorado & The West at Auraria Library, 2010*

## PREFACE

For twenty-seven years, the *Historical Studies Journal* has showcased the diverse and impressive talent of University of Colorado Denver History Department students. This year's special edition emphasizes the efforts of students from the Center for Colorado & the West at Auraria Library, established in 2009. Under the direction of Dr. Mary M. Somerville, Director and University Librarian and Prof. Thomas J. Noel, students selected as Kenneth King Foundation Fellows and interns at the Center are producing the Colorado Book Review, a list of new Colorado publications and electronic media, resource guides, mini-documentaries and profiles based on oral history interviews.

This journal offers the first profile. It features Robert F. Sweeney, a member of a pioneer northwest Colorado ranching family and is based on oral history interviews by history graduate student Lauramay LaChance. Mr. Sweeney is President/Director of the Kenneth King Foundation which provided the funding for the Center for Colorado & the West. We also introduce the first in a series of resource guides relevant to Colorado. This resource guide features the first peoples to inhabit the area known today as Colorado. This Colorado Native American Resource Guide is a work in progress. We welcome corrections and suggestions at [www.coloradowest.auraria.edu](http://www.coloradowest.auraria.edu), which I hope you will check out.

I would like to extend a deep appreciation for the support and effort of the students and faculty who submitted or recommended papers. These papers will be passed on for consideration in next year's edition. Thank you also to Shannon Fluckey from Clicks! Copy and Printing Services who designed this and previous issues of the *Historical Studies Journal*. Finally, thank you to Jacqui Ainlay-Conley and Kathleen Barlow, both Kenneth King Fellows, and of course, Prof. Thomas Noel, who were integral to the publication of this year's journal.

**PAM MILAVEC**

Editor



**ROBERT FRANK SWEENEY:  
A COLORADO GIVER**

*By Robert Sweeney as told to Lauramay LaChance*

*Editor's Notes:* Colorado history consists of givers and of takers. Much of our history revolves around the takers. Mostly we celebrate those who have extracted riches from the Colorado earth. At the Center for Colorado & the West at Auraria Library (CC&W), our student King Fellows and interns lean towards focusing on the givers, on role models for a cynical age. All too often, these quiet heroes go unsung in our histories. At CC&W, we hope to shed light on some of these people who are worthy of notice by profiling their lives. This exercise in oral history aims to educate students in that technique. We also hope to provide the general public and future generations with otherwise unavailable insights into life in Colorado. The remote, often forgotten extreme northwest corner of rural Colorado provides the little known setting for this story.

This profile spotlights the son of a hardscrabble ranching family of Irish immigrants who settled in northwestern Colorado. This profile of Robert "Bob" Sweeney is based primarily on interviews with him conducted and transcribed by Lauramay LaChance, a graduate student in history at the University of Colorado Denver and a King Intern at the Center for Colorado & the West at Auraria Library. We hope you enjoy it and welcome your comments, corrections, etc. at [www.coloradowest.auraria.edu](http://www.coloradowest.auraria.edu).



*Irish immigrants Patrick and Mary Sweeney and their six sons started one of Moffat County's largest pioneer ranching clans. Mary died in 1936 after a long struggle with stomach cancer. Before finally visiting a doctor she insisted on mopping the floors – everything had to be clean before she left. A year later, at age 99, Patrick ate little of his usual breakfast of bread and milk. "I believe I'll just lie down a while," were his last words. He was laid to rest at Mary's side.*

*Credit: Moffat County Morning News*

## SWEENEY FAMILY ROOTS

My grandfather, Patrick Sweeney, told his stories with a twinkle in his eye, a warning that there might be a wee bit of exaggeration. He'd often start with "I was born in Ireland 105 years ago." He left County Cork, Ireland when he was nineteen. He never returned to his native land. As the second son, he would be landless when the first son inherited the family's 27 acres of peat. Patrick was able to leave that desperately poor country devastated by the potato famine because of some good luck. He won a plowboy contest in Ireland by plowing the straightest furrow. He used the five pound prize to buy passage on the ship, Eastern Star, bound for America.

Reaching New York City in 1865, Patrick saw the harbor draped in black for the death of Abraham Lincoln. Hearing in New York about the western gold rushes, he looked for a railroad job to take him west. He found work with the Union Pacific Railroad that took him as far as Fort Steele, Wyoming. There he landed a job driving a four-horse freight team for the Hugus Stores, a northwest Colorado chain of general stores.

Patrick drove the route between Fort Steele, the railhead, down to Meeker, one of the few Colorado towns never ever to be reached by a railroad. Driving teams of four to six horses, he hauled tons of freight to Meeker and other growing northwest Colorado towns. His teams made 12 to 16 miles a day, stopping to rest overnight at places that have mostly disappeared. That run took 16 days roundtrip.

In Meeker, he met my grandmother, Mary Frawley. She came over from Innis, County Limerick, Ireland, not as an indentured servant but close to it. She found work as a housekeeper and cook for a banker in Meeker. This banker not only owned the Meeker Café but probably owned, at least in part, the Hugus Store where Patrick worked.

Patrick befriended Mary and took to coming to the back door of the Meeker Café and eating meals with her in the kitchen. She fed him and, as they say, the best route to a man's heart is through his stomach. Soon he fell in love and told her, "When I come back next month, let's get married." She agreed and sure enough, he did come back the next month. They were Catholics but got married in a Methodist Church because it was the only church in town.

After their wedding, my grandparents homesteaded in Moffat County in one of the most remote areas in northwest Colorado, about twenty miles north of Meeker. Grandfather claimed he settled in "with 2,500 pounds of barbed wire and grub and didn't have to go out again for two years."

It was dry land. If you did not have water, you could not survive in the livestock business. My grandparents from soggy old Ireland soon realized this and moved to a new place beside the Yampa River. There they raised six boys, George, Henry, Frank, Joseph, Patrick and John. Their last child, the only girl, died two weeks after her birth.



As each son married, my grandparents expanded the ranch to give them a start in life. My father Henry, the second son, ranched the second expansion, four miles away from my grandparent's home. His brothers occupied neighboring spreads. Our family ranches were not very far, maybe fifteen miles northwest, from the famous Meeker Massacre site.<sup>1</sup> My grandmother remembered Utes coming to the ranch and asking for food, which she gave them. However, we grew up hearing stories of how the Utes slaughtered Indian Agent Nathan Meeker, a former agricultural editor of the *New York Tribune* and founder of the *Greeley Tribune*, kidnapped his wife and daughter, and held off the U.S. Army.<sup>2</sup>



*Patrick Sweeney shared lifelong memories of the Ute Indians and the Meeker Massacre. He was living nearby in 1879 when angry natives killed Indian Agent Nathan Meeker, eight other White River Agency employees, and two freighters who were delivering flour to the outpost. The Utes slew Meeker after Major Thomas Thornburgh invaded their reservation with one hundred and eighty U.S. soldiers, whom the Utes ambushed at Milk Creek, killing the Major, ten of his men, and three civilian teamsters. The Utes lost twenty-three men.*

*Credit: Colorado Historical Society*

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1 In 1880, after the U. S. Army removed the Utes to reservations in southwestern Colorado and eastern Utah, the town of Meeker sprang up near the massacre site.

2 For a good overview of the Meeker Massacre and its consequences, see Peter R. Decker, *The Utes Must Go: American Expansion and the Removal of A People*. Golden: Fulcrum Publishing, 2004.

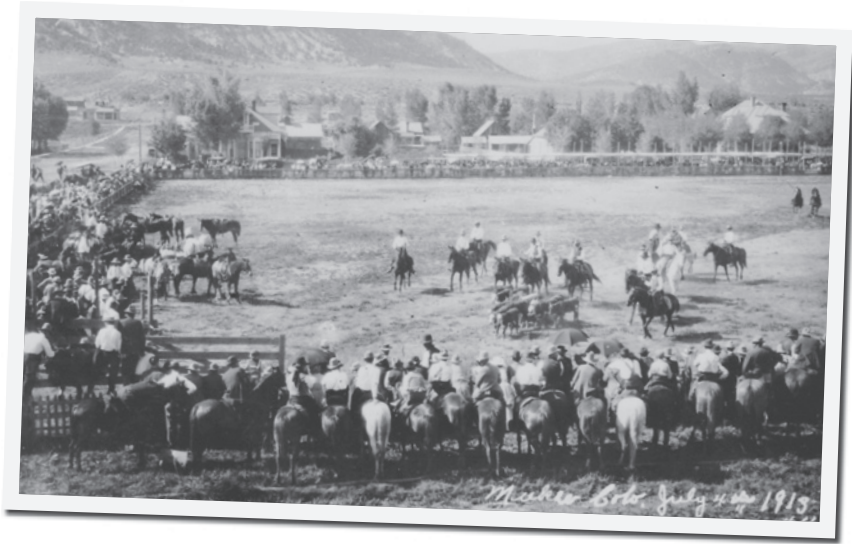


*These 1880's barracks used by soldiers who put down the Ute uprising were converted to the Meeker Public Library, shown here. Today the officers' quarters also house the White River Museum.*

*Credit: Denver Public Library*

Besides the Sweeneys a few other Catholic families lived in the area. As there was not a Catholic church in Craig until 1880, Father Edward J. Downey, a circuit riding pioneer, came to hear confessions and say mass now and then. Whenever he showed up on his mule, my father and my uncles, then boys, would run and hide under their bed. They were scared to death of the priest. I imagine they were scared because he was a stranger there to correct their behavior. Ultimately they would come out of hiding and the priest would spend a few nights at my grandparent's ranch teaching the kids catechism.

However, my dad and his brothers would rather chase wild horses than listen to that priest. They would chase down the wild horses, rope them, and then try to break them. That was one of their favorite sports. Once they tied a sled to a young wild horse, then they all piled on the sled, and let the horse run loose. Horseplay was their main recreation. Those boys tamed enough of those wild beasts to pull the ranch wagon into town. They'd go to Meeker once a month or so for shopping and rodeos. Once a year they'd go all the way to Rifle, the nearest railroad town, to buy supplies that included barrels of flour, dried fruits, dried beans, and provisions to last for months.



*As this view of Meeker's July 4, 1913, festivities suggests, the ranching town had more horses than humans. The Sweeney clan rarely missed July 4th celebrations and the rodeo in Meeker, where they also did their shopping.*

*Credit: Denver Public Library*

## **MOTHER'S SIDE**

My maternal grandmother, Margaret Patterson, was four years old when her family brought her from Scotland to Leadville. She was the oldest of sixteen children. Her father, Gilbert Patterson, was a mine superintendent during Leadville's flush times. The Pattersons lived on the southwest outskirts of Leadville. My family passed down stories of taking food over to Baby Doe Tabor who holed herself up at the Matchless Mine. She would never answer the door, so they would just leave the food on the porch for her.

Margaret Patterson married Robert O'Connell, for whom I was named, and had my mother, June Marian O'Connell. My mom graduated from Leadville High School then went to Colorado State Teachers College, which is now the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley.

After graduating she found a job teaching in the tiny northwest Colorado town of Maybell. My dad, who had just come back from World War I, was working on the family ranch not far south of Maybell. He would ride up there for the Saturday night dances in the schoolhouse. There he met the school marm, asked her for a dance, and fell in love with this beautiful 5' 2" brunette. June Marian O'Connell and Henry Sweeney married in Craig in 1926 and honeymooned in Glenwood Springs.

The newlyweds moved to the family ranch and into a one-story white frame house with a big screened porch on the front. My older brother, Gilbert, was born on the ranch in 1933 after a painful delivery. Five years later, a midwife in Craig, Jenny Starr, delivered me on February 13, 1938.

## **CRAIG YEARS**

I was born and raised on my father's ranch twenty-eight miles west of Craig, Colorado. The nearest post office was the now gone town of Juniper Springs, which had a big hot springs pool, a hot bubbling mud bath and a general store that served as the post office. We lived next to the spreads of my uncles Frank, Patrick, and Joe, who never married and inherited the family home ranch.

Ranch life was rugged. One of my first jobs was to go down to the river and get buckets of water as we did not have running water in the house. We drank water right out of the Yampa River but never got sick. As a lad, one of my other jobs was gathering wood and coal for our big kitchen stove, which was not only for cooking but heated the whole house. We all slept in one room. My dad always got up at 4:30 in the morning to build a fire in the stove. For meals, we had a cellar full of canned goods, barrels of foodstuffs, a great vegetable garden, and we butchered our own meat. We didn't have refrigeration so we'd cut ice from the river in the winter. With a horse, sled, and a big saw, we cut blocks of ice fifteen inches square. We put the ice in our log ice house and covered it with a layer of coal dust and slack that kept the ice from melting. The ice would last all summer. We used the blocks of ice to fill an old fashioned wooden ice box—in which we'd keep our milk, cream, butter, and everything else cold. We had practically everything we needed on our ranch.

When I turned seven, my folks gave me a 22. Every time I would shoot, I would have to run in the house to have my mother cock the 22 because I was not strong enough to do it. So, I learned to hunt with one bullet and got really good at it. One time, the gun slipped and shot a hole through our brand new linoleum floor. Can you imagine giving a 22 to a six, seven, eight year old today?

My parents put me to work in the hay fields, walking the horse that pulled the hay wagon. I started out as a stacker boy, then advanced to hay raker and hay mower. Every summer we irrigated, cut, and put up hay. In the winter, we fed it to our livestock. Livestock had to be cared for seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day, year round, no matter how deep the snow.

Craig shivered in bitterly cold winters. Sometimes we'd even get a freeze in July. In winter it would often be twenty degrees below zero for days on end. Maybell, the nearby town where my mother once taught school, long held the Colorado record for cold—sixty-one degrees below zero. We had to learn to deal with, even to play in, the snow and cold. We started ice skating on the Yampa River. I had a real pair of ice skates. My dad and his siblings used to see how close they could come to the thawed, running water. I never did that, nor did I fall in the river. I respected the river,

especially after seeing a tombstone down there of a kid who drowned while trying to ride his bicycle across the bridge rail. In the spring time the Yampa grew huge and fast, but usually came down by summer when we swam in it.

On the ranch we raised cattle to eat and to sell. This led to some conflicts with neighboring sheep ranches like that of the Kourlises, the famous Greek sheep ranching family. My grandfather and my father's generation would shoot sheep that wandered onto our cattle pastures. We got along better with the Gossard Ranch. On their 30,000 acres spread they raised Morgan Horses, cattle, hay and wheat.

Every fall we took our Herford cattle to Craig, the railhead of the Moffat Road, which later became the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad. My father would ride on the train near the cattle for the two day trip to the Denver stockyards. He wanted to make sure our cattle got water and hay along the way and did not lose a lot of weight. Mother, Gilbert, and I, would ride in a passenger coach. When the white faced Hereford steers went through the Moffat Tunnel they would turn black faced from the train's soot and smoke. At the stockyards, we washed off the soot and smoke and prettied our steers for sale. My dad would join us in the Standish Hotel late at night, after taking care of our livestock.



*The Standish Hotel at 1530 California Street once housed stock show visitors such as the Sweeneys. It was demolished in 2008.*

*Credit: Tom Noel Collection*

While we were in the big city, mother would take my brother and me to the Colorado History Museum, the Museum of Natural History, and up to the top of the Daniels & Fisher Tower—then the tallest building in Denver—to see the town.

We'd always have a fancy dinner at Baur's Restaurant, which I thought was a magical place. I remember looking into their show window and drooling over the roast beef and all those candies and deserts.



*During the family's annual trips to sell cattle at the Denver stockyards, June Marian O'Connell Sweeney took her sons Gilbert and Robert on a tour of the town. Baur's Restaurant, shown here at 1512 Curtis Street, was the place to eat for the Sweeney family and many out-of-town visitors. Now on the National Register of Historic Places and a designated Denver Landmark, Denver's oldest restaurant has been restored by owner/operator Jimmy Lambatos.*

*Credit: Denver Public Library*

## GRADE SCHOOL

After my mother got a job teaching third grade at Craig Elementary School, we moved into Craig and bought a home. My mother took my brother and me around to every church in Craig and asked us which one we wanted to go to. We looked at the First Christian Church of Craig. They had a handsome sawn log building covered with lap siding and painted white with a big corner bell tower. But my mother picked the Congregational Church. While I enjoyed going to that church a lot, I probably should have been going to a Catholic Church. I still feel like I ought to be a Catholic but I'm not. Back then, I didn't like the fact they had to eat fish on Friday. I wanted beef all the time.

At age four, I started going to school with my brother and my cousin, John. They were in the fifth and sixth grade when I started out in kindergarten. When I got to the first grade, I was already writing long hand and counting, so they moved me up to the third grade—my mother's class. I was always the youngest kid in my class. When I played sports, I always wished I was a little bit bigger to keep up with the older kids. Maybe that's the reason I've always been so interested in helping out underdogs.

I played basketball, football, and ran track. I also joined the band. I picked the clarinet, because I really liked a girl who played the clarinet and I wanted to sit by her. My only interest was her, not the instrument.

My brother played football and was a real intellect. He won a Boettcher Foundation Scholarship which only funded attendance at a Colorado college or university, but he turned it down to go to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. As a boy he had hay fever and it turned into asthma. Whether you were sick or not, in those days you went to the hay fields everyday. He would lay in bed at night and just wheeze. The hay fever really wrecked his heart. Of course no one knew at the time just how bad it was. He died in his 50s of congestive heart failure.

I had a pretty normal high school experience. I worked on the year book committee and reported stories for *Bull Pup Tails*, our junior high school newspaper. Then I worked on the *Craig Bulldog*, the high school paper. When national touring concerts came through northwest Colorado I got to interview them. I trotted up on the stage and talked to the singers and interviewed them and then wrote them up for our little school paper.

When I graduated I didn't know what I wanted to do. I knew if I went back out to the ranch it would be a lonely existence. I would have my 22 rifle, my dog, and a horse, but my folks didn't even have a television. So I applied to Colorado State University (CSU) and was admitted. Ever since I was just a little kid I tried to help injured animals: horses, cows, calves, lambs, puppies, and kittens. On the ranch, animals were always getting caught in the barbed wire fence and cut up. I took great pride in trying to save the animals. My dad liked the idea of my becoming a veterinarian so that's what I said I wanted to be.

## COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

My first year at CSU I did all the vet stuff. I did human anatomy, kinesiology, and dissected a greyhound dog. We checked out horses, fish, and all these dead animals, even a human body. Once, I threw a fish back into a tank of formaldehyde and it splashed the liquid in my face. I thought; “Yuck, why am I doing this”? This was my wakeup call. I did not want to be a vet.

Back in Craig, my mother ran for Moffat County Superintendent of Schools. Although my dad was an Irish Catholic Democrat, he did vote for my mother, a Protestant Republican. During her campaign I walked door to door with her all over Craig. We gave everyone our campaign stuff, courted their votes, and won by a landslide. That kind of tickled me and I thought it was fun. So I jumped at the chance to apply for a Ford Foundation Scholarship for political science, even though I didn't know if I was a Republican or Democrat. That Ford Foundation Scholarship paid you to work with the political party of your choice. I applied along with Don Stimmel, my good friend, who was absolutely brilliant but kind of a nerd. I asked him which one he wanted to apply for and without hesitation he said Democrat. Then I said, “Well then, I will apply as a Republican.” We both applied and both won. My job for the next year consisted of working with the Larimer County Republican party as an intern. It paid well, about one thousand dollars.

The next fall I changed my major and went into political science, history, journalism, and became an interdepartmental major. Basically I took what I wanted. I took sixty-five hours of history, geology, creative writing, and Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC). I also got involved with the student publications. I edited a humor magazine, *The Ram's Horn*, and a literary magazine, *The Prism*. I also wrote for the school paper.



*Gerri Keeling met fellow student  
Bob Sweeney in the library at  
Colorado State University.*

*Credit: Courtesy of Patrick Sweeney*



While at CSU I didn't spend all my time in class or working on publications. I spotted the woman I was going to marry in a library and asked her out. Geraldine "Gerri" Keeling was from Fowler down in the Arkansas River Valley. I impressed her by taking her to plays. She thought this cowboy from Craig was cultured. I gave her my Sigma Chi fraternity pin and she became the sweetheart of this Sigma Chi.



*Robert & Gerri Sweeney cut their wedding cake in 1958 in Fowler, her hometown.*

*Credit Courtesy of Patrick Sweeney*

## **MILITARY**

I had to take ROTC for two years. I then applied to the advanced ROTC course and got accepted. I spent two years marching around, which earned me a military commission as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army when I graduated. When it came time to pick a military branch and spend six months there, I chose army.

Gerri went with me down to Fort Knox, Kentucky, where the U.S. Army has its main armory school. I learned how to operate tanks, how to use their weapons, how to train with tanks, and to live with tanks. It was a basic training program on how to be a platoon leader. As a gunnery officer and instructor, I ran firing ranges for tanks. Ever since I was seven, I liked and was good at shooting. When I got out, I was Tank Reconnaissance Patrol Leader. My job was to be out front with my tanks and infantry platoon probing to see where the enemy was. The life of a recon platoon's lieutenant was dangerous, but fortunately there were no wars in 1960.

Because I was in a combat branch I had to serve eight years in the reserves and six months active duty. I chose that versus two years in the reserves and two years active duty. After armory school, I went back to the ranch to help my dad.

## JUMPING INTO JOURNALISM

As a senior at CSU, I applied to law school at the University of Colorado and was accepted for the fall of 1961. Meanwhile, I became intrigued with a newspaper opportunity in Craig, Colorado. *The Craig Empire Courier* had been around for years, run by Ted McCandless and Chuck Stoddard. McCandless and Stoddard started putting out a paper in Hayden on Friday called the *Yampa Valley Flash*. This made the competing Hayden newspaper owner, Al Schafer, so mad that he decided to retaliate. So he moved his Hayden paper, the *Northwest Colorado Press*, into Craig.

I thought this small town newspaper war was just a hoot. So I went in and asked Schafer if I could help him with his paper. He asked if I would sell advertising. In college I sold advertising for both the campus newspaper and the humor magazine. So I started working for him and brought in a great big pile of ads because I knew everybody in town. He was impressed and paid me pretty good money.

When the time came for me to leave for law school, Al called me into his office. He said that if I would stick with the newspaper, he would give me half of the *Northwest Colorado Press*. I told him he had a deal. So he gave me half of the paper and I didn't go to law school. I continued to sell advertising for him and to help my dad a few days a week.

The next year, 1962, Schaefer told me he and his wife were ready to move on and wanted to know if I would buy out his half of the paper. I used some of our cattle as collateral at the bank and took out a loan for ten thousand bucks. Suddenly, I owned a newspaper in Craig, Colorado.

## OWNING MY FIRST NEWSPAPER

My first newspaper, the *Northwest Colorado Press*, was old fashioned. On our old lead linotype press, we laid out hand fed type line by line and page by page. You'd hand feed the chases of type into a press and print one page of paper at a time. Then you'd let that side dry and print the other side. I became the printer, the writer, and the ad salesman. So this hot-shot college kid and army officer suddenly had to put on a printer's apron and learn how to hand set type and put it on paper. I worked ungodly hours, maybe 110 hours a week trying to learn how to be a printer with old and beastly equipment. Then one day a guy from Pennsylvania walked in the door and told me about a new process of printing called offset lithography. He claimed it was a much better way to put out a paper than the way I was doing it. I hired him on the spot as my press man. For twenty years I ran that newspaper.

I expanded my business by buying more newspapers in Berthoud, Breckenridge, Carbondale, Craig, Fort Collins, Glenwood Springs, Hayden, Kremmling, Meeker, Nucla, and Walden, Colorado. I also ran newspapers in Roosevelt, Utah and in Hanna and Baggs, Wyoming. At one point I had eighty employees. I also became city councilman, and mayor of Craig from 1972 to 1974. Meanwhile, my wife Gerri and I were raising four kids. Of course, they all had paper routes to deliver after school every day.



*Bob and Gerri Sweeney put all four children, Saundra, Sharon, Susan, and Patrick, to work delivering the family newspapers. The family is shown here in the mid 1970s in their Craig home.*

*Credit: Courtesy of Patrick Sweeney*

We kept those newspapers in business the old fashioned way: we combined newspapering with a printing business. In the small towns we did nearly all the printing – high school papers and programs, business, cards, menus, business forms, anything anybody wanted. The printing supported the newspapers – just like it did in the old days. We still own a printing company -- Baker Engraving – and do printing to this day. Our customers include the Broadmoor Hotel and Newmont Mining. They say journalists have ink in their blood and that printers have in on their fingers. I like ink in both places.

We had a busy life that got even more so after Gerri was diagnosed with cancer. I drove her from Craig to St. Joseph Hospital in Denver for treatment every Monday, and then picked her up on Friday to bring her home. Fortunately, at that point the Howard Newspaper chain out of San Clemente, California, approached me.

They owned eighteen newspapers, including the *Casper Star Tribune* and wanted to buy me out. I struggled with the decision but did sell when they made me an offer I could not refuse — \$4.5 million.

So I retired at age 42 and had time to look back. I miss those days. The newspaper business was fascinating. One day, for example, I got a wire from the Associated Press that Bobby Kennedy and his family were coming to Craig to float down the river at Lily Park. So I gathered my wife and kids and we searched the river for the Kennedys. On the way, we came across a wrecked car. The Associated Press reporter had driven off the road into a gulch. So I pulled him out of the gulch and we proceeded down to the Yampa River. We hadn't been there for thirty minutes when this caravan of cars showed up with Bob, his wife Ethel and a whole lot of kids. The Kennedy kids went crazy climbing over the brush and the rocks. We had to warn them to look out for rattlesnakes. Robert Kennedy and his wife could not have been friendlier. They posed with us for pictures. Our kids and the Kennedy kids, who were about the same age, played together for an hour or so while they were getting the boats ready. Then we said goodbye and waved them off as they headed down the river. Shortly after that Bobby Kennedy was assassinated during his run for the Democratic nomination for president.

Another memorable day as a journalist came when I wanted to interview the notorious Donald Dean Spooner, who had murdered four people. The police finally caught him and threw him in the Craig jail. I went down and asked the sheriff if I could interview Spooner. He let me into the cell with him and I spent several hours interviewing him. I filed the story with the *Associated Press* and it went all over America.

Newspapering brought good times and travel. I went to the Soviet Union as an exchange journalist in 1975 with thirteen big shots from New York, Chicago, and other big newspapers. I was the little guy from a tiny town no one had ever heard of. Yet, I felt at home in Russia because it was cold like Craig. While the other editors were freezing to death, I felt like I was home.

## ON TO DENVER

We moved to Denver in 1980 where St. Joseph Hospital cured my wife's cancer. We both had worked like dogs for twenty years on those little northwestern Colorado newspapers. We were finally free to relocate. Moving to Denver also brought us closer to our kids, who were starting college.

The move to Denver was a major transition. In Craig I had been a big fish in a little pond. In Denver, I was a very little fish in a great big pond. Back in Craig I had been active in the Lions, the Jaycee's, and about everything else. In Denver I didn't know anyone or belong to anything. Since I sold my newspapers, we had some money. My wife and I bought a nice home on Blackmer Drive in Cherry Hills Village. As for my children, Sandra attended the University of Colorado, Sharon went to University

of Northern Colorado, Susan was a sophomore at Cherry Creek High School, and Patrick went to Cherry Hills Village Elementary School.

Before I left Craig I bought a paper in Denver, the *Colorado Statesmen*—a political newspaper. Jody Strogoff, who had worked for me on the *Hayden Valley Press*, managed the paper. She told me about the owner who wanted to sell it. I came down and bought it from him in 1980 and Jody ran it. So, I never really got out of the newspaper business. I was always interested in politics so that political paper seemed like just the ticket. I covered national political conventions, wrote a column, and became involved in both Democratic and Republican party politics. I ran the *Colorado Statesman* for four years with Jody Strogoff who has it now.

It was impossible to make the *Colorado Statesman* pay. During the political campaigns things were better but we only had those every other November. The *Statesman* did give me a wonderful transition to the big city and an introduction to its leadership. I kept it a bipartisan political paper which seemed like a clever concept, giving us access to all parties and points of view.

When I first came to Denver I ran for Republican National Committee man. At this one and only venture into national politics, I lost. However, The *Statesmen* put me in a bipartisan mode. I tried not to look through Democratic or Republican eyes but to try to be fair and balanced, to look at all sides of the political spectrum. It's rare that I ever talk politics in the non-profit world. I don't ask people if they are Republicans or Democrats or Communists.

The *Colorado Statesman* wasn't my only lousy financial investment. While I owned the *Statesman*, I also bought Ramada Inns in Greeley and Fort Morgan. Then interest rates soared first from eight to twenty-four percent. In 1984 I owed a lot of money on everything. I sold the hotels and the newspaper. I sold off just about everything, even my house. The only thing I kept was *The Villager*, a newspaper I started for the Cherry Hills Village area in 1982. I kept it even though my whole world was turning upside down and everything was going wrong. *The Villager* remains a successful paper and I still enjoy doing a weekly column for it. We started out with six *Villager* newspapers, but have consolidated them into one which serves primarily the south metro area.

During the 1980s, I was president of the Colorado Press Association. Later, I got involved in the National Newspaper Association (NNA) and became intrigued with the national issues of the newspaper industry. I served as the Association's director of Region Ten, which includes the states of Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico and Utah. For about eight years I worked with all the member newspapers in those four states. Then, I became chairman of the National Newspaper Association. This small time journalist from little Craig, Colorado, was at one time the president of the world's largest newspaper association. After I finished that I became president of the NNA Foundation for a couple of years. I did everything you could do on a national level. Internationally, I traveled under the banner of newspaper groups to South America, the Middle East, China, and so on. That was a real highlight of my newspaper career.

## THE KENNETH KING FOUNDATION

In 1983, I met Mr. Kenneth Kendal King through the Lions Club. I had transferred my Craig Lions Club membership to the Denver Den, where about 200 members met every Wednesday at the Denver Athletic Club for lunch and a speaker. When they introduced me, Mr. King came rushing over because I happened to be a Sigma Chi fraternity member at CSU in Fort Collins. He was a Sigma Chi at Northwestern University in Chicago. He gave me ‘the grip and hug’ and the warmest welcome. From that day on he took me under his wing.

Kenneth King had made a fortune with his Columbia Savings Bank. In 1990 he was setting up the Kenneth King Foundation and asked me to be on his board. I accepted and came to the first meeting with four or five other people. They elected me Vice President only because I was the youngest guy there. I suggested the creation of an Encouragement Fund. This fund enabled the directors to bestow \$500 to \$1,000 grants on notable non-profits that had not requested a grant but were doing a great job of helping the less fortunate.

Upon King’s death in 1992, Stevens “Steve” Parks Kinney II took over as president of the Kenneth King Foundation. When Kinney died suddenly of liver cancer in 1993, I became president of the King Foundation. That became a full time job so I turned *The Villager* over to Gerri and the kids.



*Even in a day of shrinking and dying newspapers, the Sweeney family operates the Denver Herald Dispatch, the Colorado Gambler, the Fruita Times and the Palisade Tribune. All four children are actively involved in the family business.*

*Credit: Courtesy of Patrick Sweeney*

Gerri, my oldest daughter Sandra, and my youngest daughter, Susan, have run the *Villager* ever since we started it in 1982. My middle daughter, Susan, took on the *Colorado Gambler*, where we specialize in historical articles as well as gaming news. We launched the *Gambler* in 1991 when gaming was legalized in Black Hawk, Central City and Cripple Creek. Patrick, our youngest, is the information technology person for all of our family enterprises.

Fortunately for me, two of King's employees stayed with the foundation, Bernice Bettis and Minnie Lundberg. Bernice had worked for Mr. King for forty-seven years. She continued to work at the foundation until she was 90. She lived to be 94 before her death in 2008. Bernice wrote the book on the King Foundation, *That Man is Special: A Biography of Kenneth King*. Mr. King's bookkeeper, Minnie Lundberg, retired in April, 2008 at age eighty-three. But, we've brought her back to work two days a week doing the books. I needed all the help I could get to run the foundation.

## THE FOUNDATION'S WORK

Our mission at the King Foundation has always been to try and help the disadvantaged folks who really need help. Everyone wants money but who do you give it to? Do you give it to scholarships? Do you give it to people who are ill? Do you give it to entertainment? Entertainment is wonderful but saving someone's life is better. So we focus on trying to keep people alive by giving them food, shelter, and medical attention. We also believe in educating individuals so they can find a job to support themselves. At the King Foundation, we focus more on human services than on art and entertainment. For example, our biggest commitment ever was to help those who are blind or have vision problems through the Rocky Mountain Lions Eye Institute.

At the time I took over the Kenneth King Foundation, King had made building the Rocky Mountain Lions Eye Institute a major cause. The Lions had always been interested in eyesight because of our close relationship with Helen Keller. Lions' Clubs supported her work and in 1925, while speaking at our international convention, she challenged us to be, in her words, the "knights of the blind in the crusade against darkness." She called upon the Lions, the world's largest service organization; to make blindness and the visually impaired their special cause and we did and still do.

Pursuing King's wishes, we gave the Rocky Mountain Lions Eye Institute money to build a new building on the University of Colorado's Health Sciences Center Campus at East 9th Avenue and Colorado Boulevard. The City of Denver rejected that plan because the surrounding Congress Park, Hilltop, and Hale neighborhoods protested that it would be a big office building.

After that, we early on joined the cause of moving to a much larger, less constrained campus for the Health Sciences Center on the old Fitzsimons Army Hospital site. After the army closed its medical center there in 1995, the university and our Lions Club jumped at the opportunity to move to that square mile site with all kinds of room to grow.

We found a great leader when Dr. Brownyn Bateman, Vice President of the Jewels Stein Eye Institute at UCLA, came to Denver to spearhead the drive to build the new eye center. Before her arrival the project had almost died for lack of funding and interest. As a professor and prime mover, she worked with numerous Lions Dens and the King Foundation to raise \$5.5 million. The university matched that with \$6 million.

The Lions Eye Institute was the first new building constructed on the Fitzsimons campus. The university used us as a poster child to bring more buildings out there despite opposition from doctors and bureaucrats clinging to the crowded, landlocked but familiar old campus. So our eye institute helped lead the way to constructing what is now America's premier modern academic medical center campus. The Rocky Mountain Lions Eye Institute on the University of Colorado Denver Anschutz Medical Center is a great tribute to the Lions of Colorado and Wyoming, and to the vision of the university. The Lions partnership with the King Foundation is one of our greatest foundation successes to date.



*The Rocky Mountain Lions Eye Institute opened in 2001 on the University of Colorado's Anschutz Medical Campus. Designed by the premier Denver hospital design firm of Davis Partnership, it was built by Haselden Construction of Aurora. The elegant red brick, glass and creamy metal structure has become a beacon for those throughout the Rocky Mountain region with vision problems. These patients are not only treated here but often benefit from its state-of-the-art research.*

*Credit: University of Colorado Hospital*



When you visit our Rocky Mountain Lions Eye Institute, 1675 N. Aurora Court, on the Anschutz Medical Campus be sure to look at the painting by Colorado artist Larry Fanning. It shows a pride of lions and is prominently displayed over the information desk that welcomes folks to the three-story atrium lobby. The top floor of the Institute houses the Rocky Mountain Regional Office of the Lions Clubs of Colorado and Wyoming. This \$11.5 million, three-story structure houses research, offices, and education space as well as the Rocky Mountain Lions Eye Bank, which focuses on transplantation and research to help fight blindness.

## THE UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER CONNECTION

Our foundation has probably given more money to CU-Denver downtown than anyone else and will continue to do so. In 2009 we funded the creation of the Center for Colorado & the West at the Auraria Library (CC&W). The center's programs enrich students' learning experiences by providing opportunities to work collaboratively in producing resource guides, book reviews, biographical profiles, histories, documentaries, and other presentations in order to interpret, present, and preserve local, state, and regional history.

We work well with University of Colorado Denver and they seem to be aggressive, eager and out there. Our King Foundation's interest in public education led it to fund the King Building, formally known as the Kenneth King Academic and Performing Arts Center. The King Center was primarily funded by the state of Colorado but the legislature asked that the university get some private grant money. So we donated a million dollars to make it happen and they put our name on this \$45 million building. I am proud of the King Center and our downtown campus. To this day, a whole lot of people don't know what a great university CU-Denver is. It's the best kept secret of Colorado.



*The Kenneth King Academic and Performing Arts Center opened at 855 Lawrence Way on the Auraria Higher Education Center Campus in 2000. Besides offices and classrooms, the King Center contains a 520-seat concert hall, a 300-seat courtyard theatre, a 200-seat recital hall and production studios. Designed by the Denver firm of Hoover Berg Desmond, the 180,000 square foot, five story building matches the red brick, raw concrete and glass style of other campus buildings.*

*Credit: University of Colorado*



*The Auraria Higher Education Center Campus which houses UCD, Metropolitan State College of Denver and the Community College of Denver is by far the largest campus in Colorado with a combined enrollment of 50,000 students in 2010. “We are very proud of the Auraria Campus and our work there,” says philanthropist Bob Sweeney. “This is a place where economically challenged, minority, and older, working and married students get a chance at education to a higher degree.”*

*Credit: Photo by Farhad Vakilitabar*

## **BOB SWEENEY REFLECTIONS**

I was named Colorado’s outstanding non-profit executive in 2006, but I see myself as a businessman not a non-profit person. Many times non-profit people look at helping people but they don’t look at who is going to pay the bill and help people become self-supporting.

In 2009, I won the AMOS Award, the highest award given by the National Newspaper Association for community service. My community service also includes a stint as President of the Denver Lions Club. I started as a regular member and I worked my way through the various chairs and offices to finally become president in 2001-02. I find a lot of friends, advisors and good ideas through club life.

I try to see things as a problem solver. How do we solve the problem, how can we be successful, how can we fund solutions? The King Foundation dispenses close to \$2 million in grants every year. We limit our work to the state of Colorado. Approximately a third of our grants go to health care with another third going to education.

In 2008 the largest grant went to the Center for Drug and Alcohol Addiction Rehabilitation on the Anschutz Medical Campus. The second largest single grant went to help blind children. Another major focus for our King Foundation is funding some thirty-five organizations that assist with basic needs like food, shelter, and clothing.

I'm proudest of the Lions Eye Care Institute at the University of Colorado Denver's Anschutz Medical Campus. We have also established the half million dollar King Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Day Care Center. If you have MS you can go there and they will take care of you all day long. About sixty people go there everyday, many in wheel chairs. The King MS Center is on the old Marycrest Campus site in the northwest corner of Denver at West 52nd Avenue and Federal Boulevard next to Regis University. We spent a half million dollars to make it happen.

Our foundation tries to help people help themselves. What better and happier life could there be than helping people?

## **THE KENNETH KING STORY**

*Editors note:* To provide more insight into the good work of the Kenneth King Foundation, that organization has provided us information to help explain King's life, his good fortune, and how he channeled his wealth into the foundation.

Born in Nederland, Texas in 1901, Kenneth Kendal King moved with his family to Denver in 1916. There he and his two brothers graduated from East High School. During summers, young Ken worked aboard the Denver & Rio Grande's famous tourist train to Glenwood Springs, selling peanuts, popcorn, candy, newspapers, and souvenirs. Next he went to Northwestern University where he worked his way through driving a Yellow Cab around Chicago. He also worked serving meals at the Sigma Chi Fraternity House,

Upon graduating, King jumped into the business world. He invested successfully in a residential subdivision in Orlando, Florida, then went on to Salt Lake City to work at a savings and loan company. There his job was to collect delinquent loan payments. After learning that business from the bottom up, King returned to Denver in 1929 to open his own firm, Columbia Savings Building, and Loan Association. Although founded on the cusp of America's worst depression, King's bank somehow survived and even thrived. Business picked up after Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal initiated the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) to help families become homeowners. King and Columbia pioneered the FHA plan throughout the state of Colorado where King became known as "Mr. FHA." While many of his fellow businessmen fought the New Deal as 'socialism' and government interference in the private sector, King worked with the federal government. King prospered and briefly married. This short marriage produced a son, Alan Shell King, who was born in 1940. Alan had a distinguished, if short, career in computer science and the healthcare field before his death in 2004.

As Columbia Savings prospered, King recruited his brother, Harold Taft King, who had a B. A. and a law degree from the University of Colorado. Harold joined Columbia Savings as its Vice President and Legal Counsel. Columbia started out in one room of the Steele Building at 16th and California streets [The Steel Building was handsomely restored by Evan Makovsky in 2009 and renamed the Sage Building]. As business grew, Columbia moved to the Majestic Building at 16th and Broadway.



*The Majestic Building, a 1894 gem designed by Frank Edbrooke, housed Columbia Savings during the 1950s. Built in 1894, this Romanesque revival gem distinguished the northwest corner of 16th Street and Broadway until its 1977 demolition.*

*Credit: Denver Public Library*

By the 1950s post-World War II boom, Columbia was outgrowing its fourth floor quarters in the Majestic Building. From his Majestic office, Kenneth King overlooked some small one-story shops just across 16th Street. There he and his brother Harold decided they would construct their own building. They partnered with the Denver Petroleum Club, which was looking to build a fancy new clubhouse. Flush with the soaring oil business, that club asked the Kings to expand their planned four or five story building to a fourteen-story office tower. The Petroleum Club promised to build a deluxe dining facility and to encourage the members to rent office space in the new structure provided it would be named the Petroleum Club Building. The building opened in 1957 with a bar and restaurant for club members on the 12th and 13th floors.



*Ken and Harold King had prominent Denver architect Charles D. Strong design the Denver Petroleum Club as a mid-century modern structure in a polygonal shape to suit its site at the southwest corner of 16th Street and Broadway. The verticality of one of Denver's first modern high rises is masked by horizontal bands of blue glass spandrels and windows. At the ground level cantilevered hoods shelter its black granite veneer. White columns rise to a cantilevered parapet beneath the 14th story penthouse which contained only the private residence and offices of Kenneth King.*

*Credit: Denver Public Library*

While the Petroleum Club Building housed the headquarters and main bank of Columbia Savings and Loan, the company began opening branches across the state including Colorado Springs, Fort Collins, Greeley, Lakewood, Littleton and Pueblo. King's Cherry Creek and Greeley Bank exemplified the circular neoclassical style he favored for Columbia. By 1961, Columbia Savings assets had topped \$63 million and paid out \$2 million in dividends. As Columbia became the industry leader in Colorado and a national model, it attracted suitors. The Music Company of America (MCA) bought out Columbia in 1962. In the newly expanded MCA, Kenneth King was the largest private shareholder, comedian Jack Benny was second and Harold King was third.

Columbia Savings began featuring the nationally known and loved Jack Benny, whose television show topped the national ratings, at the openings of its new branch banks. In 1980, Columbia opened its grandest structure ever—the shimmering glass and aluminum Columbia Plaza at 17th and Broadway.



*Columbia Savings constructed its new 1980 Columbia Plaza home at a most prominent downtown location where 17th Street, the Wall Street of the Rockies, ends at Broadway. Kohn Pedersen Fox, a prominent New York firm, designed the pentagonal forty-one-story tower Kohn Pedersen Fox put an up-and-coming young architect, Curtis W. Fentress, in charge of the Columbia Plaza project. After Columbia Plaza opened to rave reviews, Fentress stayed in Denver to become the city's best know architect with the town's largest single architectural firm. Fentress Architects subsequently designed the terminal at Denver International Airport, the Colorado Convention Center, and many other notable public and private buildings. This glistening aluminum tower was sold by the Kings along with Columbia Savings in the early 1980s and renamed Amoco Plaza.*

*Credit: Photo by Roger Whitacre*

Columbia Savings adorned its prominent street level glass gallery with a \$2 million August Rodin's sculpture, *The Thinker*. That giant nude male, consumed in thought, became a famous sight, spotlighted at night, overlooked downtown's most prominent intersection. Some joked that the figure was Ken King contemplating the interest on his bank savings.

Meanwhile, Kenneth King was thinking about retirement. He began spending more time at his Estes Park summer home. After King sold Columbia Savings, he moved out of the Denver Petroleum Club and to the top two floors of a new, seven-story apartment house, Kingstone Manor. King built this red brick building with 3200 square feet per floor in 1982 at 900 Pennsylvania Street in Denver's Capitol Hill neighborhood.

Then Kenneth King turned to philanthropy. He established the Kenneth King Foundation in 1990 with himself as President/Treasurer/Director, his attorney Stevens Park Kinney II as Vice President and Assistant Treasurer/Director, and his longtime secretary Bernice A. Bettis as Secretary/Director. He set up the foundation offices in Kingstone Manor, where it remains today.

King's philanthropy stemmed from his religion. A staunch member of the First Baptist Church of Denver, he supported the inner city church and funded landscaping for its site at the southwest corner of Grant Street and East 14th Avenue (across the avenue from the Colorado State Capitol).



*In 1968, The First Baptist Church of Denver, located at 430 E. 14th Avenue just south of the Colorado State Capitol, was designated as Historic Denver Landmark # 8 for its architectural, charitable, and historical merits as a cornerstone of the Capitol Hill neighborhood. Here Alan Fisher, right, of the Denver Landmark Preservation Commission awards the prestigious bronze plaque to the church's minister, Rev. Harold A. Malborg.*

*Credit: Photo by Genn Cuerden*

King's favorite philanthropy, Goodwill Industries, was founded in Boston around 1900 to help destitute people, Goodwill grew into a national organization with a strong Colorado connection. Goodwill asks folks to donate second hand clothing, shoes, furniture, books, utensils, toys—anything that might be repaired, cleaned and sold in their second hand stores. They hire the unemployed, especially the disabled, to do the restoration and sales in Goodwill's network of thrift stores. Their slogan is 'Not Charity, but a Chance.'

King liked the philosophy of Goodwill Industries of America and he contributed his time and money generously throughout his lifetime. He served on the National and the Denver Board of Goodwill Industries of America. He set up a \$500,000 endowment to fund an annual award, the Kenneth King Outstanding Management Award, to recognize the top Goodwill administrators.



*Melissa Briggs helped found Goodwill's Denver mission in 1917 in the basement of the Epworth Methodist Mission at 31st and Lawrence Street.*

*Credit: Goodwill Industries Denver*

*Melissa Briggs bicycled around Denver collecting broken dolls for the "Doll Factory" at Goodwill's headquarters, which is now a huge repair shop and warehouse at 6850 N. Federal Boulevard.*

*Credit: Goodwill Industries Denver*







*Goodwill Industries sends out trucks, as shown here in 1931, to collect donated items that are repaired and cleaned for sale. With support from the Kenneth King Foundation, Goodwill hires several hundred unemployed and disabled people to recycle goods; mentors and trains more than 23,000 at risk youth each year; and operates eighteen metro area retail thrift stores.*

*Credit: Goodwill Industries Denver*

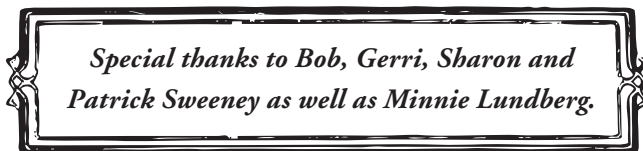
Inspired by Goodwill's commitment to hiring handicapped workers, King did the same with his bank where he hired polio victims. Recognizing King's leadership in hiring the handicapped, Governor John Love designated him as "Colorado Employer of the Year 1963."

After making philanthropy his major concern, King decided to step down from the Presidency of Columbia Savings and found an able successor in Daniel Ritchie. Richie guided Columbia until 1988, when MCA sold its assets, including Columbia Savings, to Matsushita, a Japanese company. Dan Ritchie subsequently became the Chancellor of the University of Denver. He transformed that financially troubled school into a thriving and much more prestigious campus to which he added many splendid new buildings designed in traditional style with fine stone, copper, and other high quality materials. After retiring from DU in 2006, Ritchie succeeded Don Seawell, founder of the Denver Center for the Performing Arts, as the DCPA chairman.

Kenneth King died peacefully in 1992. His memorial services were held in the First Baptist Church of Denver. Hundreds attended the commemorative service and heard final, poetic tributes from his longtime secretary, Bernice A. Bettis, and his longtime accountant, Minnie Lundberg.

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## COLORADO NATIVE AMERICAN STUDIES RESOURCE GUIDE

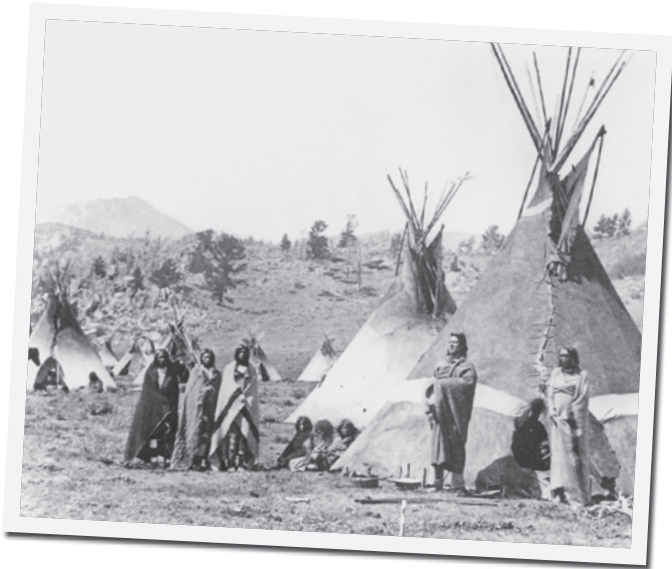
*By Pam Milavec with Angela DiPaolo, Dana EchoHawk,  
Pam Holtman, Ernest House Jr., John Monnett & Tom Noel  
for the Center for Colorado & The West at Auraria Library, 2010*

This resource guide is far from comprehensive and is intended only as an opening for the exploration of Native Americans in Colorado and their points of contact with Europeans whose presence altered indigenous lifestyles. The use of the term “Colorado” is a recent occurrence when compared with Native American habitation. Since “Colorado” did not exist at the time, neither did the rectangular-shaped state boundary so familiar to those alive today. These sources should be examined with a critical mind and an understanding of the origin of each particular source. Though many peoples lived and traveled in what is now Colorado, only the Arapaho, Cheyenne and Ute peoples have been featured in this resource guide for purposes of brevity.

We welcome corrections and suggestions. Revisions will be incorporated into our online interactive version at [coloradowest.auraria.edu](http://coloradowest.auraria.edu).

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*Pam Milavec received her undergraduate degree from Metropolitan State College of Denver in both History and English/Writing. She is currently pursuing her MA in History at the University of Colorado at Denver. A lifelong advocate of education, she is employed by Denver Public Schools' Polaris Program at Ebert Elementary. She compiled the Colorado Native American Resource Guide as part of her duties as a King intern with the Center for Colorado and the West.*



*Arapaho Camp c. 1800s.*

*Credit: Colorado College Library*



*Camp at Sand Creek Massacre  
Historic Site, 2007.*

*Credit: Richard R. Nilles*

## COLORADO NATIVE AMERICAN TIMELINE

- 12,000 – 9,000 BC Clovis Culture
- 9,000 – 8,000 BC Folsom Culture
- AD 1 – 1300 Ancestral Puebloans
- AD 1 – 450 Modified Basketmaker Period
  - AD 50 – 1100 Developmental Pueblo People
  - AD 100 – 1300 Classic Pueblo Period
  - AD 1175 Mesa Verde Cliff Palace
- AD 650 – 1200 Fremont People
- c. 1000 Utes arrive
  - c. 1800 Arapahos and Cheyennes arrive
  - 1830 William Bent & Ceran St. Vrain open Bent's Fort trading post
  - 1849 Cholera outbreak
  - 1851 Fort Laramie Treaty
  - 1858 Gold discovered at confluence of South Platte and Cherry Creek on Cheyenne and Arapaho land
  - 1861 Treaty of Fort Wise
  - 1863 Conejos Treaty
  - 1864 Sand Creek Massacre
  - 1869 Medicine Lodge Treaty removes Arapahoe and Cheyenne
  - 1869 Summit Springs
  - 1876 Colorado becomes a state
  - 1879 Battle of Milk Creek/Meeker Massacre
  - 1881 Ute tribes removed to Colorado and Utah reservations
  - 1881 Helen Hunt Jackson publishes *A Century of Dishonor* exposing mistreatment of Native Americans
  - 1887 Dawes Severalty Act effectively facilitated the dispossession of Native American lands.
  - 1888 Band of Utes under Colorow make last raid into Colorado
  - 1906 Mesa Verde National Park created
  - 1918 Consolidated Ute Indian Reservation established
  - 1924 Indian Citizenship Act
  - 1934 Indian Reorganization Act
  - 1971 Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Park opened
  - 1978 Indian Child Welfare Act
  - 1979 American Indian Freedom of Religion Act
  - 1990 Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act
  - 2001 Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site created



*Ute woman and child.*

*Credit: Colorado Historical Society*

## **COLORADO NATIVE AMERICANS: OVERVIEW**

For at least the last 14,000 years, people have made the Colorado plains and mountains their home. The first peoples, Paleoindians, followed their food supply across the prairie, hunting mammoth, mastodons and giant bison. Their skilled hunting of large game required them to live and work together in close cooperative groups. As the giant mammals died off, the indigenous peoples developed technology to hunt smaller game. Some began to plant crops, requiring them to become semi-nomadic, while others continued their nomadic hunter-gatherer lifestyle.

Among those who took to farming were the Ancestral Puebloans, once referred to as Anasazi. They settled in southwestern Colorado and the surrounding Four Corners area. Known as Basketmakers for perfecting that art, they lived in circular pithouses and grew corn, beans and squash, as well as domesticating turkeys. Between 750 – 1100 AD, the Ancestral Puebloans moved to above-ground apartment-style houses. In addition to the multi-family dwellings, they retained the use of the circular pithouse design. These ceremonial structures, called kivas, served as centers for Ancestral

Puebloan communities. Around 1100 A.D. the Ancestral Puebloans again changed their architecture and moved into the multi-storied cliff dwellings for which they are best known. After living in these precariously placed structures for only a two hundred year period, the Ancestral Puebloans moved yet again. The great drought of 1275-1300 factored into their move into the Rio Grande Valley and other areas where they built pueblos. The blood of these cliff dwellers still pulses through the veins of modern Pueblo peoples.

Other peoples who had made the Four Corners region their home may also have influenced the Ancestral Puebloans to relocate. Ancestors of the Utes, the oldest continuous group of people to occupy Colorado, found their way into Ancestral Puebloan territory. Later, the Spanish arrived on the Native American continent and introduced horses. By the late 1600s, the Utes began to use horses to hunt buffalo. Other groups who once made southern Colorado their home, include the Apache, Navajo, Comanche, Kiowas and Shoshone.

In the late 1700s, the Arapaho moved onto the Colorado plains, followed shortly thereafter by the Cheyenne. Though they obtained the horse at least thirty years after the Utes, the Cheyenne and Arapaho also became formidable horsemen. Both of these tribes belonged to the Algonquin language group and had migrated from the Great Lakes region. They became allies against the Utes, Shoshones, Kiowas and Comanches.

The discovery of gold in 1858 and the subsequent conflicts with white settlers brought the nomadic lifestyle to an end. The Sand Creek Massacre led by Colonel John M. Chivington against peaceful Cheyenne and Arapaho marked the end of those tribes as a major presence in Colorado. Despite the drastic depletion of ancestral homelands through a series of treaties, the Utes maintained their presence in the Four Corners area where the Southern Ute and Ute Mountain Ute reservations remain to this day. Colorado has become a major center for many tribal related organizations, representing a large number of tribes.

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*Petroglyphs "Picture Rock"  
Yellow Jacket Canon,  
Canon of the Ancients.*

*Credit: Denver Public Library*

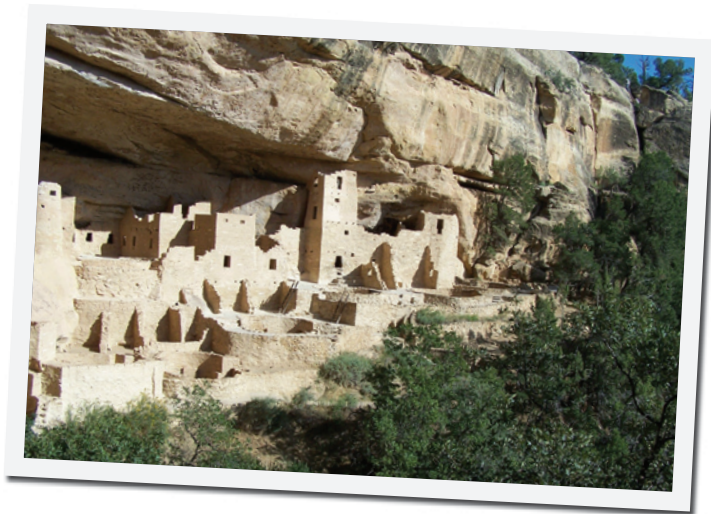
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*Cliff Palace at Mesa Verde.*

*Credit: Richard R. Nilles*

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*Sand Creek Massacre  
Historic Site Dedication,  
27 April 2007.*

*Credit: Richard R. Nilles*

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*Ute Warriors.*

*Credit: Colorado Historical Society*

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#### 4. MOVIES

*Hollywood has done much to promote Native American stereotypes, particularly, but not limited to movies with older release dates. Several of the movies listed below exemplify such biases.*

- Centennial*. FVF. Directed by Harry Falk, Paul Krasny, Bernard McEveety, Virgil W. Vogel; 1978, Universal TV. 2008. 1248 min.
- Cheyenne Dog Soldiers' Story*. Directed by Ava Hamilton. 1993, Tribeca Film
- Cheyenne Warrior*. DVD. Directed by Mark Griffiths. 1994; Libra Pictures. 90 min.

- Chief's Prophecy: Survival of the Northern Cheyenne Nation (The)*. Directed by Leo KILLSBACK. FVF. 2009; Arizona Public Media. 60 min.
- Destiny at Dawn: Loss & Victory on the Washita*. FVF. Centennial, CO: Great Divide Pictures, 2004. 25 min.
- Grayeagle*. Directed by Charles B. Pierce. VHS. 1977; Charles P. Pierce Production Inc., 2001. 104 min.
- How the West Was Lost*. Directed by Ric Burns. FVF. "The Only Good Indian is a Dead Indian." "Kill the Indian, Save the Man." The Utes Must Go." 1995; PBS Paramount, 2006.
- In the White Man's Image*. "The American Experience." Directed by Christine Lesiak. FVF. 1991; American Experience, 58 min.
- Last of the Dog Men*. Directed by Tab Murphy. VHS. 1995; Carolco Pictures, 1996. 118min.
- Little Big Man*. Directed by Arthur Penn. FVF. 1970; Cinema Center Films; 2003. 139 min.
- Native Americans*. "The Plains Part 1: All Our Relations." "The Plains Part II: Fields of Grass, Seas of Blood." Directed by John Borden, George Burdeau, and Phil Lucas. FVF. 1994; Turner Home Entertainment, 1998. 110 min.
- Pow Wow Highway*. Directed by Jonathan Wacks. FVF. 1989; Handmade Films, 2004. 87 min.
- 500 Nations*. "Roads Across the Plains: Struggle for the West." FVF. 1995; Santa Barbara Studios, 2004. 53 min.
- She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*. Directed by John Ford. FVF. 1949; Argosy Pictures, 2007. 103 min.
- Silent Thunder*. Directed by Angelique Midthunder. FVF. 2006; Midthunder Productions. 27 min.
- Soldier Blue*. Directed by Ralph Nelson. FVF. 1970; AVCO Embassy Pictures, 2006. 112 min.
- Stagecoach*. Directed by John Ford. 1939; Walter Wanger Productions, 2007. 96 min.
- "Tears in the Sand" *Rocky Mountain Legacy*. VHS. 1999; KRMA-TV 60 min.
- Way West (The)*. FVF. "The War for the Black Hills." Directed by Ric Burns. 1995; PBS Paramount, 2006. 90 min.
- Windwalker* Directed by Keith Merrill. VHS. 1981; Santa Fe International. 108 min.



*Denver March Powwow,  
Female Dancers.*

*Credit: VISIT DENVER*

## 5. RESOURCES/WEBSITES

American Indian College Fund – Denver

<http://www.collegefund.org/>

Indian Voices on KGNU Boulder Denver 88.5 FM, 1390 AM and online at  
[www.kgnu.org](http://www.kgnu.org) Sundays, 3:00-4:00 p.m.

Arapaho Project

<http://www.colorado.edu/csilw/newaraproj2>.

Cheyenne and Arapahoe Tribes of Oklahoma

<http://www.cheyenne-arapaho.org/>

Colorado Directory of American Indian Resources

[www.colorado.gov/ltgovernor/initiatives/indianaffairs.html](http://www.colorado.gov/ltgovernor/initiatives/indianaffairs.html)

Colorado Springs Indian Center

<http://www.coloradospringsindiancenter.org/>

Denver Indian Center

<http://www.denverindiancenter.org/>

Denver March Powwow

<http://www.denvermarchpowwow.org/>

Native American Bank – Denver

International Institute for Indigenous Resource Management

444 South Emerson Street

<http://www.nabna.com/>



News from Indian Country  
<http://www.indiancountrynews.com/>

Northern Cheyenne Tribe: Official Site of the Tsitsistas and So'taeo' o People.  
<http://www.cheyennenation.com/>

Rocky Mountain Indian Chamber  
<http://www.rmicc.org/>

Southern Ute Indian Tribe  
Available: <http://www.southern-ute.nsn.us>.

University of Colorado at Boulder Library.  
"Native American Treaties and Information."  
<http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/govpubs/us/native.htm>

Upcoming Native American Events in Colorado and surrounding states  
<http://www.fortnet.org/PowWow/events.html>

Ute Mountain Ute Tribe  
Available: <http://www.utemountainute.com>

## 6. MUSEUMS AND HISTORIC SITES

Anasazi Cultural Center/Canyons of the Ancients National Monument  
27501 Highway 184  
Dolores, CO 81323  
(970)882-5600  
<http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/ahc.html>

Battle of Milk Creek Monument (marker)  
Northeast of Meeker, off Colorado 13 on dirt road

Beecher Island Battlefield/Simmons State Wildlife Area  
From US 36 a few miles west of the Kansas line, drive north on CRLI  
about 10 miles (CRLI turns into CRKK just before Beecher Island) to  
Beecher Island Battleground, on the west side of the road and the north  
side of the Arikaree River.

Bent's Old Fort  
35120 Highway 194  
La Junta, CO 35120  
(719)384-2596  
<http://www.nps.gov/beol/index.htm>

Black Kettle Museum  
LL Males & Broadway,  
Corner of 283 and State Hwy. 47  
Cheyenne, OK  
(580)497-3929, call ahead.

- Canyon Pintado Historic District (marker)  
Along Colorado 139 between Douglas Pass and Rangley  
Colorado
- Chaco Canyon  
PO Box 220  
Nageezi, NM 87037  
(505)786-7014 x 221  
<http://www.nps.gov/chcu/index.htm>
- Colorado History Museum  
(expectant opening, 2011)  
12th Ave. & Broadway  
Denver, CO 80203  
(303)866-4686  
<http://www.coloradohistory.org/>
- Comanche National Grasslands  
27162 Highway 287  
PO Box 127  
Springfield, CO 81073  
(719)523-6591  
<http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/psicc/coma/>
- Denver Art Museum  
100 W. 14th Avenue Parkway  
Denver, CO 80203  
(303)575-2793  
<http://www.denverartmuseum.org/home>
- Denver March Powwow, Inc.  
PO Box 19178  
Denver, CO 80219  
(303)934-8045  
Email: [denvermarchpowwow@comcast.net](mailto:denvermarchpowwow@comcast.net)
- Denver Museum of Nature and Science  
2001 Colorado Boulevard  
Denver, CO 80205  
(303)322-7009  
<http://www.dmns.org/main/en/>
- Dinosaur National Monument  
4545 Highway 40  
Dinosaur, CO 81610  
(970)374-3000  
<http://www.nps.gov/dino/index.htm>
- Fort Garland Museum  
Colorado Historical Society  
Fort Garland, CO 81133  
(719)379-3512  
[http://www.coloradohistory.org/hist\\_sites/ft\\_garland/ft\\_garland.htm](http://www.coloradohistory.org/hist_sites/ft_garland/ft_garland.htm)

- Fort Uncompahgre Living History Museum  
360 Main Street  
Delta, CO  
(970)874-8349  
(970)874-1718  
<http://www.silverstage.net/FortUncompahgre.htm>
- Fort Vasquez State Museum  
Colorado Historical Society  
13412 Highway 85  
Platteville, CO 80651  
(303)785-2832  
[http://www.coloradohistory.org/hist\\_sites/ft\\_vasquez/ft\\_vasquez.htm](http://www.coloradohistory.org/hist_sites/ft_vasquez/ft_vasquez.htm)
- Fremont Indian State Park  
11000 Clear Creek Canyon Road  
Sevier, UT 84766  
(801)527-4631  
<http://stateparks.utah.gov/parks/fremont>
- Koshare Indian Museum  
115 W. 18th  
La Junta, CO 35120  
(719)384-4411  
<http://www.kosharehistory.org/>
- Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument  
P. O. Box 39  
Crow Agency, MT 59022  
(406)638-2621  
<http://www.nps.gov/libi/index.htm>
- Mesa Verde National Park  
PO Box 8  
Mesa Verde, CO 81330-0008  
(970)529-4465  
<http://www.nps.gov/meve/index.htm>
- Museum of Western Colorado  
4th and Ute  
Grand Junction, CO 81501  
(303)242-0971  
<http://www.museumofwesternco.com/>
- Rangely Museum  
434 W. Main Street  
Rangely, CO 81648  
(303)675-2612  
<http://www.rangely.com/Museum.htm>

Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site

P. O. Box 249  
Eads, CO 81036  
(719)729-3003  
<http://www.nps.gov/sand/index.htm>

St. Stephens Indian Mission

PO Box 250  
St. Stephens, WY 82524  
(307)856-7806

Summit Springs

From 1-76, Exit 115 at Atwood. The site is southeast on Colorado 63 about 5 miles. Turn left on Washington County Road 60 and go 4 miles east to a dead end, and then turn right and go a mile south on a gravel road to a windmill and a turnaround.

Ute Indian Museum

Colorado Historical Society  
17253 Chipeta Road  
Montrose, CO  
(970) 249-3098  
(970)252-8741  
[http://www.coloradohistory.org/hist\\_sites/uteindian/ute\\_Indian.htm](http://www.coloradohistory.org/hist_sites/uteindian/ute_Indian.htm)

Ute Mountain Tribal Park

P. O. Box 109  
Towaoc, Colorado 81334  
(970)565-3751 x 330  
1-800-847-5485  
Visitors Center and Museum  
(970)749-1452  
<http://www.utemountainute.com/tribalpark.htm>

Washita Battlefield National Historic Site

Rt. 1, Box 55a  
Cheyenne, OK 73628  
(580)497-2742  
<http://www.nps.gov/waba/index.htm>

Yucca House National Monument

Call Mesa Verde National Park (970)529-4465

