

SUPERIOR HISTORIAN

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Lost Superior Book Available

The Superior Historical Commission's book chronicling the architectural history of the town is in print and available for purchase at the Superior Town Hall. The book was compiled thanks to a grant from the Colorado Historical Society and the dedicated work of the Commission members.

Photographs featured in the book, titled Lost Superior: Remembering the Architectural History of a Colorado Mining Town, were contributed to the Commission by Superior residents or people with connections to the town and its past.

Superior resident Doreen Ruffe and preservation specialist Kathryn Barth assembled the photos and wrote the captions. Larry Hickman and Larry Dorsey, two other local citizens, also contributed to the book's successful completion. Hickman created the painting of the Hake house that graces the cover and Dorsey wrote the introduction that outlines the town's history.

The Boulder Book Store hosted a book signing on June 2nd with 40



people attending. The book is available for purchase at the bookstore and at the Town Hall.

A Visit To Grasso Park

Did you know that Superior once had a jail and the iron cell is on display today in Grasso Park in original Superior? The park, southeast of First and William Street, is located near Coal Creek in the shade of old cottonwoods. It is intended to illustrate a small family farm operation typical of the turn of the last century. A number of buildings used by long-time coal miner and farmer Frank Grasso are located on the site, including a small house, barn, root cellar, privy, woodshed and a bungalow. There are also three pieces of machinery all used in farming operations around Superior in the old days. Grasso Park is an inviting environment for all but it is especially attractive as a place for children to explore and for family picnics.

Superior's founding father, William C. Hake, received a homestead grant from the United States government in 1870 and what is now Grasso Park was carved out of the 160 acres granted to Hake. The land may well be where he resided before building a two-story house to the west.

The park is named for Frank Grasso who lived on or near the site for nearly 70 years. Grasso's odyssey is typical of so many immigrants of that time. He was born in Poland in 1878, served (probably

involuntarily) in the Imperial German Army, worked as

a coal miner in his home country, married Victoria (born in Poland, 1869), then set off to America leaving his wife and infant son, John, in the home country while he sought

his fortune in this new land of opportunity.

Frank's pilgrimage took him to Pueblo where he worked in the steel mills of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Corporation. He sent money back to Victoria. Eventually, she and son John made the voyage from Europe and train trip to Colorado to join Frank.

They later headed to the Northern Coal fields and settled near Marshall where Frank worked in the Fox Mine and farmed in the summer. Upon moving to Superior, Grasso adopted the familiar pattern of mining coal in the winter and farming during the warm months. The family lived west of town on Coal Creek, then at 76th and Marshall Road and eventually the house near First and William by the present day Town Hall. He continued to work in the Industrial Mine, raised cattle,



grew alfalfa and wheat (both of which he cut with a hand scythe) and supplied town residents with milk from his cows. He was known to walk all over Superior delivering non-homogenized milk for five cents a quart. He kept two or three cows, milked them directly into buckets, then strained the milk through cheesecloth into quart bottles. The milk, also not pasteurized, was stored in the cellar under the house until delivery. Imagine finding a fresh quart of milk on your front porch topped with a good 5 inches of pure cream.

Frank also kept rabbits and pigs as part of his livestock and was known for curing high-quality hams in his smokehouse also on the Grasso Park site. One story tells us that when town officials confronted Frank about his pigs being in the city limits, he took great pains to prove his pens were 40 feet beyond the town limits, therefore, not in violation.

Eventually, Frank's son John bought the Grasso house at 209 William Street. John's son, Dick Grasso, recalled that he and his four brothers were born in a bedroom in that house. He also told how his mother bought a six-inch pine tree for 25 cents from a peddler and planted it on Arbor Day in 1940 in recognition of the birth of another of the five boys. The tree is still there.

Just before John Grasso's death in 1995, the Grasso family agreed to sell the property to the Town of Superior with the stipulation it would be used as a park, an act of generosity that is greatly appreciated



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It was in a back room in the Town Hall and was used to house those who ran afoul of the law, most probably resulting from time spent in one of Superior's saloons.

Farm Machinery Moved to Grasso Park



Locals were treated to quite a spectacle in June when trucker Glenn Sharp moved two pieces of antique farm equipment from the Biella-Menkic property to Grasso Park. The curiosity was either a seed drill or hay rake dangling from the A-frame mounted on the truck which then crept down McCaslin Boulevard on its way to original Superior. Volunteer laborers Wally Waligorski, Denzil Acklin, Herb Morrison and Bob Morgan assisted Sharp by helping to dig out and dislodge the implements which had been resting on their sites for quite some time.

The pieces are typical of horse-drawn farm implements used until the 1930's. Due to the valiant efforts of many, they now are on display at Grasso Park for all to see. A big thanks to the volunteers for their labor and the Town for financing the relocation.



Former Superior Mayor Ted Asti, Margi Asti's husband, and Denzil Acklin, Genny Acklin Crawford's brother, plant a tree in their memory. Town Trustee Karen Imbierowicz and Commission member Bob Morgan assist.

Superior Centennial A Big Success

100 years of formal incorporation was celebrated by the Town of Superior on June 12th. The area around Grasso Park and the Town Hall was filled with activities, displays, and hundreds of guests enjoyed the day.

Of importance to Superior's heritage was the planting of a tree (as a part of Arbor Day) in honor of Margi Asti and Genny Acklin Crawford, both of whom served on the Superior Historical Commission and passed away within the last year. Genny lived in the Industrial Mine Camp with her family after their migration to Colorado in 1932. With the exception of a few months, Margi lived her entire life in Superior. The spruce tree stands as a symbol of their lives and their contributions to Superior history.

Superior Historical Commission

Wally Waligorski — Chair
Doreen Ruffe — Vice Chair
Karen Waligorski — Secretary
Bob Morgan — Treasurer
Larry Dorsey — Editor Superior Historian

Sources: Cynda Collins Arsenault, Superior a Folk History; interviews with Herb Morrison, Denzil Acklin, and Dick Grasso