

SUPERIOR HISTORIAN

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COMMISSION ACTIVITY UPDATE

The Superior Historical Commission has been busy in recent months. In addition to the regular monthly meetings, which are open to all who would like to participate, some specific areas are worthy of noting.

Terrific progress is being made in the writing of the book Lost Superior which is dedicated to acknowledging Superior's architectural past, focusing on buildings that are lost or altered over the years. Doreen Ruffe of the Historical Commission and Jennifer Dunn from the Town staff are heading this project which is moving along nicely. Photographs have been assembled and text is being composed all leading to a goal of completion in time for the Town's centennial celebration June 5, 2004.

We are happy to report that the grant application made by the Town of Superior for restoration of the cemetery was approved. The funds from the Colorado Historical Society along with a similar amount from the Town of Superior will be used to employ a professional to repair and reset headstones in the cemetery. Anyone who does not want the grave stone of a family member worked on should contact Jennifer Dunn at the Town at 303-499-3675.

YOU CAN HELP

All are invited to help out on Commission projects. We are always looking for old photographs and other memorabilia to add to our small collection. Photos of old Superior are especially welcome in light of the Lost Superior book. Any donated pictures can be scanned and immediately returned to their owners. **You are welcome to attend the next meeting of the Superior Historical Commission on February 20th at 10:00 a.m. at the Town Hall**

Margie Asti, 1932-2003

It is with great sadness that we report the death of long time Superior stalwart Margaret "Margie" Asti who passed away December 28, 2003. Margie was born, raised, and lived essentially all her seventy-one years in Superior. She loved her home town and was very active building an appreciation for its history. She was an invaluable member of the Historical Commission

and was contributing to the Lost Superior book compilation at the time of her unexpected death. The members of the Commission, citizens of Superior, and Margie's family and friends have lost an irreplaceable link with the past as well as a wonderful person and ally.

SUPERIOR'S PIONEER CEMETERY, Part 2

The Superior Cemetery encompasses one and a half acres and is located on a hillside near the site of the old Enterprise Mine which was active in the



1890's. The coal mine took its name from the Enterprise Farm on which the Cemetery and the mine were founded. The first burial in Superior's Cemetery was in 1873 and it was officially deeded in 1876. Although around ninety possible graves have been detected through ground penetrating radar, there are fifty-five known graves and thirty two remaining stones in the cemetery, at least twenty six needing repair. It is hoped that one project on tap for the future is to confirm just how many graves actually exist in what was once called "the cemetery on Coal Creek." After years of languishing, the Cemetery has been deeded back to the Town of Superior and has received Landmark Designation by the Boulder County Commissioners. A plaque was presented to the Town during Preservation Week in 2002 by the Commissioners commemorating this designation.

Mention was made of the Great Influenza Epidemic of 1918-1919 in Part 1 of the Cemetery's story. The best estimates are that twenty million people died world wide and 548,000 in the United States (more than died in fighting World War I) from this catastrophic epidemic. Walter Wood worked as a telegraph operator at the Colorado and Southern station at Louisville Junction (just east of the present day Storage Technology plant). Mr. Wood, buried in the Superior Cemetery, was a victim of the influenza epidemic. German immigrant Frederick "Fritz" Willhausen was a local dairyman who farmed at the Meadowbrook Farm near Marshall and Cloverleaf Dairy lo-

cated south of Boulder. He very magnanimously nursed victims of the epidemic with no apparent damage to his health. In spite of that, his death in 1918 was due to influenza contracted from some source other than the sufferers he helped during their travail.



There were also those who lost their lives in unusual ways. One of the Lemon sisters was killed as she was hit by a train when she became trapped on a railroad trestle. Jerome Shockey suffered the fate of too many coal miners when he died in a cave-in at the Red Ash Mine in Marshall. It was thought, although incorrectly, that John "Dude" Searcy might have been buried in the cemetery as was his infant niece who died in 1911. He was a strike breaker

who crossed the picket line during the miner's strike of 1911 and suffered a fatal gunshot wound during a confrontation at the train depot in Superior. It has since been confirmed that Searcy is interred in Boulder's Green Mountain Cemetery. Charles Seeley was the son of an early settler in Superior and the victim of a fatal wound from a firearm in 1902. The irony is that he was serving as Superior's Town Marshall when he was killed while tending to an altercation in one of the town saloons.

The story of the sad, early deaths of children was mentioned in Part 1 of this story and illustrated by the fact that at least twenty of the fifty-five known graves are those of children aged three or less. Another tragic illustration of the adversity presented by life in the coal camp of Superior was the death of the Gomez baby in 1913 whose first name is now lost to the ages. The Green sisters, Mildred and Mabel, themselves hardly more than children, were asked to be pall bearers for the child. The girls, attired in white dresses, carried the little casket from Superior up a dusty road that followed the railroad tracks all the way to the cemetery. Now some ninety years later, it is not certain whether the toddler was a boy or a girl, and its grave is unmarked and location unknown.

Jacob Wolverton is the second of two Civil War veterans interred in the Superior Cemetery. He was a private in Company A of the 13th Illinois Infantry which was mustered out of Lee County, Illinois. Wolverton was from the town of Dixon and served from May of 1861 to December of 1862 when he was discharged due to what was listed as "disabil." without an explanation of what the disability might have been. His headstone is not legible which indicates that it might have been moved to this site after an original burial elsewhere. Private Wolverton leaves us an unresolved mystery concerning his life in this area.

The Superior Cemetery is typical of most yet a unique place in its own right. Some stones are illegible and others perfectly clear. There are stones flat to the ground and others patterned after Egyptian obelisks. A few family plots are surrounded by ornate fences and, in one case, a fence is in place but there is no evidence of a grave inside it. Another iron railing is complete with pineapple decorations at the corners. One last look at this special place embraces a soaring hawk riding the currents of air, the distinctive chirping of a prairie dog, the sunset turning the clouds pink, and a garter snake slithering his way home. It is a special place, indeed.

In loving remembrance of
S.A. Lemon
Died Jan 17, 1902 Aged 49
God in his wisdom has recalled
The boon his love has given;
And though the body molds here,
The soul is safe in heaven

In Memory of Floyed
Infant son of R & Ann Bowes
Died July 15, 1890
"Safe in the arms of Jesus"



VISITING THE CEMETERY

People are welcome to visit the Superior Cemetery, but are asked to follow proper etiquette when doing so. The cemetery is accessible from the Avista Hospital parking lot. Bear to the left until a dirt road appears at the left of the lot. You can park here and walk to the cemetery or drive on with the understanding that the road is narrow and rough. The road goes under US 36 and up the hillside and the cemetery is obvious at that point.

~Please keep the gate closed at all times.

~Please do not leave any litter behind.

~Since it is a final resting place, please be respectful of the special nature of the cemetery.

~Since many of the stones are unstable, please do not touch or make any rubbings of the gravestones while they are in their unrestored state.

~There is no access from the west due to private property limitations.

~Anyone having questions pertaining to cemetery access can call Jennifer Dunn at the Town of Superior.

SUPERIOR HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Chair — Errol Waligorski, 303-499-1657

Vice Chair — Doreen Ruffe

Secretary — Karen Waligorski

Treasurer — Bob Morgan

Superior Historian Editor — Larry Dorsey

Sources for Issue 3: Cynda Collins Arsenault, Superior Folk History; R. Michael Collard, Superior Cemetery, An Historical Report