



ELDORA HIGH COUNTRY ©2011

Newsletter of the Eldora Civic Association

May 2011



Moose keeping cool in the pond across from Nederland High School
Photo by Tanner Billingsley

The ECA Mission is to improve civic conditions to promote a feeling of good fellowship and sociability, to maintain the historic fabric, and to establish and maintain a reasonable balance between preservation and use of the natural environment in the Eldora area.



A cow moose and her yearling spent the winter in Eldora.
Photo by Susan Merrill

ECA Board of Directors for 2010-11:

Joe McDonald, President
joedmcdonald@gmail.com 303-886-7674
Pete Birkeland, Vice-President
birkelap@colorado.edu 303-442-0304
Fran Sheets, Secretary
fran.sheets@colorado.edu 303-444-3037
Dale Johnson, Treasurer
djohn7000@yahoo.com 303-442-5903
Randy Leever, Member at Large
rdblsg@comcast.com 303-494-1243

ECA Committees:

EEPP - Randy Leever & Dave Hallock
ELPF - Diane Brown & Fran Sheets
Noxious Weeds - Diane Brown
Newsletter - Diane Brown - eldoradh1@rmi.net
USFS/Ski Area/County & State Liaison –
Pete Birkeland, Audrey Godell & Randy Leever
History - Diane Brown, Fran Sheets, Earl & Barbara Bolton
Eldora Road Cleanup - Earl & Barbara Bolton
Nominations - ECA Board
Social - Fran Sheets
Transportation - Pete & Sue Birkeland, Audrey Godell,
Joe McDonald
Member participation on these committees is welcomed!

Calendar of Events:

First Friday of every month at 5:00 PM: Eldora Night at the Pioneer Inn (Call Ted at 303-258-7273)
Wednesday, June 15, 2011 - Deadline for submissions for the July issue of the Eldora High Country
Thursday, June 16, 2011 at 6:30 PM - ECA Board Meeting – McDonald Cabin at 695 Bryan Avenue
Saturday, June 11, 2011 at 9:00 AM - Eldora Road Cleanup – Bolton Cabin at 502 Eldorado Avenue
Thursday, July 7, 2011 - Date of determination of eligible ECA voting members
Saturday, July 9, 2011 at 2:00 PM - Annual Business Meeting – McDonald Cabin at 695 Bryan Avenue
Wednesday, August 10, 2011 at 7:00 PM - Eldora History Night – Gold Miner Hotel at 601 Klondyke Avenue
Sunday, August 14, 2011 from 12:00 - 2:00 PM – Eldora Community Picnic – Boltons at 502 Eldorado Avenue
Saturday, August 20, 2011 at 2:00 PM - Annual Member Meeting – Gold Miner Hotel at 601 Klondyke Avenue
September 15, 2011 - Deadline for October issue of the Eldora High Country newsletter

ELDORA CIVIC ASSOCIATION

Minutes for Board Meeting

Thursday, February 17, 2011 at 6:30 PM

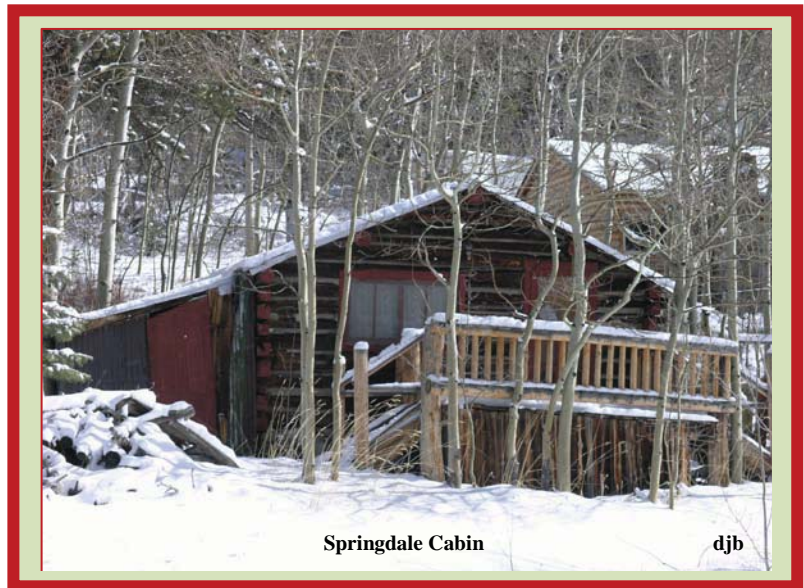
Joe and Pam McDonald's house, Boulder

Call to order 6:40 PM

ECA Mission Statement was read.

Financial Report: Property taxes are due.
We have \$5,190.33 in the checking account.

Minutes were approved by email and published in the last newsletter.



Old Business

- Update on Community commons: Mark Johnson wants Spencer Avenue running through his property vacated in order for the community to keep access near 6th Street Bridge.
- Update on website: Joe reported that his daughter Lara is working on the website, translating the old website to a new Google site. This will make the website easier to update. Currently though, it is down.
- Update on the North Fork Council meeting with the Forest Service: See attached minutes from the meeting by the North Fork Council.

New Business

- Audrey Godell and Ted Warren came at 7 PM to speak about traffic and speeding on Eldorado. They have a plan to have rumble strips, removable plastic posts and Eldora speed limit signs at both ends of Eldorado by summer. The rumble strips and plastic posts would be removed during the winter months. There is a community meeting set for March 14 to inform the year-round community and get their feedback.

This is what is being proposed:

1. A welcoming sign at the east and west ends of Eldora which will post the speed limit, Eldora's population and elevation. These will be designed and built by local talent. The ECA will pay for construction costs, no more than \$350.
2. Plastic posts in the road that might be as high as 18 inches to 2-3 feet.
3. Rumble strips at both ends of town, near the Pryor cabin on the east end and near the Fishers on the west end. John Pryor will be contacted for his approval.
4. After the March 14 meeting with residents and County transportation staff, we will attempt to notify the ECA members about the plans, probably by email or letters to those without electronic communication.

A motion was passed to support the plan for traffic mitigation and the proposed welcome signs at the east and west ends of Eldora. ECA will contribute \$350 as part of the cost of these signs.

- Community bulletin board: Joe would like the board to think about a community bulletin board and where it might go.

Adjournment 8:20 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Fran Sheets
ECA Secretary

Wilderness is an idea as much as a place, with modern man learning to pass like the shadow of a cloud across what he did not make and cannot improve. - Gilbert M. Grosvenor



ELDORA CIVIC ASSOCIATION

Minutes for Board Meeting

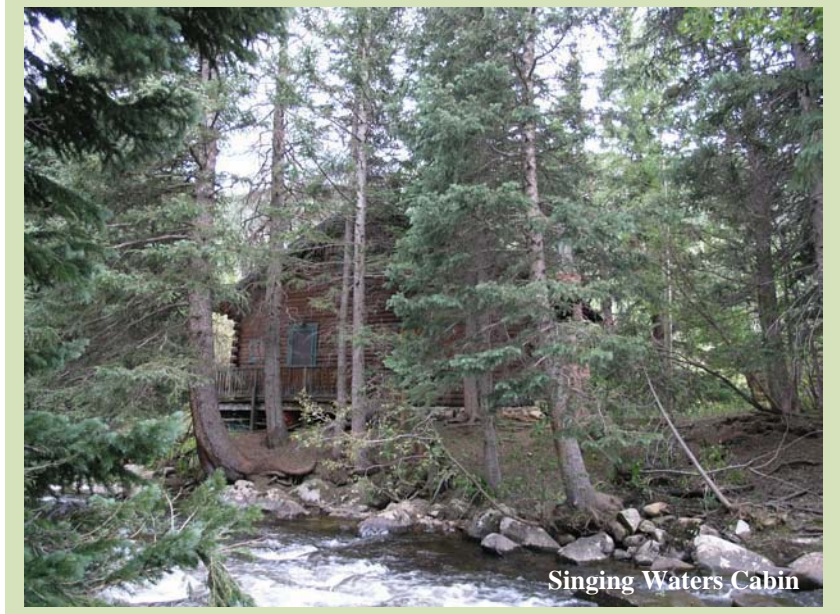
Thursday, April 21, 2011 at 6:30 PM

Joe and Pam McDonald's house, Boulder

Call to order 6:15 PM

ECA Mission Statement:

The ECA Mission is to improve civic conditions to promote a feeling of good fellowship and sociability, to maintain the historic fabric, and to establish and maintain a reasonable balance between preservation and use of the natural environment in the Eldora area.



Financial Report

- Discussion of the ECA financial status with a breakdown of newsletter costs. The newsletter pays for itself.

New Business

- Analysis of current newsletter expenses which are being covered by the membership fees

Old Business

- The traffic mitigation project and the Welcome signs at both ends of Eldora: Ted Warren reported to Joe and Fran that the road posts and rumble strips will be in place in May as planned. He reported almost all the responses to the plan were positive. The Board would like to pass an opinion on the welcome signs since we are funding them. Joe will call Ted Warren about this request.
- ECA website: Lara McDonald is working on the website. We need to decide if we want everything moved over to a Google website she is building. She is doing this out of the kindness of her heart and it is a time consuming process, but we should be able to access the website when she is finished. Many thanks to Lara! We need to find another volunteer to run the site for ECA.
- North Fork Council and meeting with the Forest Service: The NFC put out a short summary to membership about their Board's interactions with the Forest Service this winter. The Forest Service agreed to the signs being posted where no parking or camping or fires are permitted along the road. The NFC is going to "police" the area themselves, notifying visitors of the issues and restrictions. No action required by the ECA Board at this time.
- Spencer Avenue right-of-way "change of use": Mark Johnson is filing for vacations along his property which includes the property on both sides of the 6th Street Bridge that has traditionally been open to the community for creek access. Joe is concerned that public access along the creek at the bridge be maintained in perpetuity. The County has indicated that this is an appropriate use of that right-of-way. The Board must decide if we will, as a Board, take a position on the issue, that this community property be maintained if a vacation on the rest of Johnson's property is granted. We will follow the issue and advocate for the community property with the County as the process continues.
- Location of community bulletin boards: Someone is willing to put up a bulletin board up at 6th and Eldorado. Can we legally put up a bulletin board in the right of way? Does the ECA want to be supporting this? We need to ask year-round residents if they are interested in a community bulletin board for communication.

New Business:

- There was discussion that the new member of the ECA Board for next year possibly be a year round resident. Current board members are going to contact people who might be interested in the election.

Three motions were submitted by Dale for consideration and passed:

- 1) It is moved and approved that the ECA Board authorize and pay Diane Brown an honorarium of \$1000 for creating the current 2010/2011 fiscal year newsletter.
- 2) It was moved and approved that the Board ask Diane Brown to continue producing the newsletter for one more year, fiscal year 2011/2012.
- 3) It was moved and approved that the ECA Board authorize an honorarium for creating the next 2011/2012 fiscal year newsletter the amount to be paid no less than \$1000.

The meeting was adjourned at 9 PM.

Sincerely,
Fran Sheets, Secretary

The 2009 Boulder County Resolution for Eldora Townsite ROW vacations states that if there is a current or foreseeable public need for a property, and if a ROW facilitates access to Middle Boulder Creek, and if it preserves environmental resources such as a riparian area, it may be considered for public use, such as open space. These factors may disfavor a ROW vacation. The 6th Street meadow is a highly accessible community resource worthy of preservation.



ELDORA "MEADOW" AT RISK ▲

The area of a 50-foot Spencer Avenue right-of-way (ROW) located just west of 6th Street is slated for vacation if adjoining property owner Mark Johnson has his way. This area known as the "Meadow" has been used by the public as long as anyone can remember for picnicking, swimming, fishing, dog washing and just hanging out. While it is not clear on the ground where the boundary of the ROW is, locals have felt free to take advantage of this beautiful and inviting access to Middle Boulder Creek for generations. The Eldora Civic Association approached County Planners in January to determine how the area could best be preserved for public use in perpetuity. They responded that the ROW could be dedicated to public use as a community park through a "change of use" process with the County. Discussions were held with Mr. Johnson to see if something could be worked out cooperatively between him and the ECA to preserve the public rights of use and access for future generations, but he has stated his intent to move forward with an application for vacation of the entire Spencer Avenue ROW stretching from 6th Street west to 7th Street. He has sent an invitation to his adjoining neighbors to join him in the vacation request.

HAPPY VALLEY HAPPENINGS

Nominations for the 2011-12 ECA Board must be made at or before the July 9 Annual Business Meeting. Please contact Joe McDonald for a nomination form. Required by the ECA Bylaws, this form must have the signatures of both the nominator and nominee along with a brief candidate profile. Only full voting ECA members may run for the board.



Arapaho Peak from North Fork by Diane J. Brown

The Friday Social and Industrial Review

May 19, 1899

Twenty-one weddings in camp are reported for June and still there's a host of bachelors left. Send up your "summer girls" or old maids if you have any surplus.

Senator Udall and Representative DeGette are introducing the **Ski Area Recreation Opportunity Enhancement Act** of 2011, which would amend the National Ski Area Permit Act of 1986. The proposed act expands what is technically allowed at ski areas and tries to put some bounds on the uses. The Ski Area Permit Act defines the uses as "Nordic and alpine skiing operations and purposes." Other winter sports such as snowboarding are not mentioned. And summer uses are not mentioned. But the Forest Service is allowing snowboarding and various summer uses, though the allowed uses have been inconsistent from Forest Service region to region throughout the U. S. The wording is changed by the proposed act to "skiing and other snow sports and recreational uses authorized by this Act." "Other Recreational Uses" are then further defined as those which "harmonize with the natural environment" and are "located within the developed portions of the ski area." Then there are lists of appropriate uses: zip lines, mountain bike terrain parks and trails, frisbee golf courses and ropes courses; and prohibited uses: tennis courts, water slides and water parks, swimming pools, golf courses, and amusement parks. This is a national act dealing with ski areas from New England to California.

Udall's bill would definitely expand the number and variety of activities that would be legally authorized at ski areas. There are pros and cons to this. On the pro side, it would (hopefully) lead to more consistent regulation of ski areas, as some areas have been allowed to construct things like mountain bike parks and zip lines while other areas have not. Providing clear guidance to the agency should help with that, and also avoid construction of clearly inappropriate facilities like amusement parks. Some also argue that there is value in concentrating recreational uses at ski areas where there is generally infrastructure to handle people (restrooms, parking, etc.) and therefore reduce the pressure on the backcountry. Of course, the flip side is that authorizing further commercial use at ski areas will continue to degrade these sensitive alpine environments, and lengthen the annual duration of human presence there. These impacts and concerns about them are mitigated somewhat by a new provision in Udall's bill that would concentrate new developments in the already disturbed portion of ski areas' permits. This helps, but certainly doesn't eliminate the risks associated with the bill.

Donations to the Eldora Land Preservation Fund:

Diane Brown for Roxie Pup
Robert & Nancy Goolsby for Roxie and Ellie Pups
Sara Goolsby for Roxie Pup
Virginia Springer Overlees (general donation)
Virginia Springer Overlees in memory of Bill Springer

Donations to Boulder Parks and Open Space Foundation/Eldora Land Preservation Fund:

Stephen & Suellen Bryan Jerry & Barbara Donahue
Nancy Merrill & George Horner Balancing Rock LLP
Nick & Mary Jane Newens Michael & Susan Weissberg

Current balance in ELPF savings:
\$24,256.65

A complete list of all 2010-11 donations
will appear in the July 2010-11 newsletter.

Current balance in Foundation:
\$8035.00



HAPPY VALLEY HAPPENINGS



Old Man on the Mountain by Dave Hallock

James Bell Benedict, 72, acclaimed Colorado geologist and archaeologist, died peacefully on Tuesday, March 8, 2011, at his mountain home west of Jamestown in the guardian shadow of Sawtooth Peak.

Jim devoted his remarkable genius for multidisciplinary research toward investigating the record of Holocene climatic change in Colorado's high mountains and the ways in which prehistoric peoples adapted to these changes. Though his field research focused primarily on the Colorado Front Range, Jim spent considerable field time in the Mt. Everest region and in the Alaskan and Canadian Arctic. His research was often groundbreaking, running the gamut of studies of Front Range glaciers, alpine plant ecology, mountain archaeology and prehistoric game-drive hunting systems, timberline dynamics, lichenometry, and ethnobotany.

Dr. Steve Cassells, Jim's longtime friend and colleague, recently wrote of Jim: "For nearly 50 years he scrambled over most of the terrain from Rollins Pass and James Peak on the south to Rocky Mountain National Park on the north. During those years he managed to publish more than seventy professional papers and books (including the widely praised Center for Mountain Archeology Research Reports, of which there are eight). His exacting methodologies and creative research approaches have inspired generations of archaeologists and geologists."

Jim knew the high country near Eldora well. He and his wife Audrey at one time owned a cabin in Eldora.

At the Boulder County Parks and Open Space 2010 Land Conservation Awards Ceremony on April 13, 2011 Scott Bruntjen and Carol Rinderknecht were presented with the Heritage Award for Excellence in Historic Preservation for their continuing restoration of the Gold Miner Hotel in Eldora. Congratulations, Scott and Carol, and thank you so much for your dedication!

Eldora Weather Report

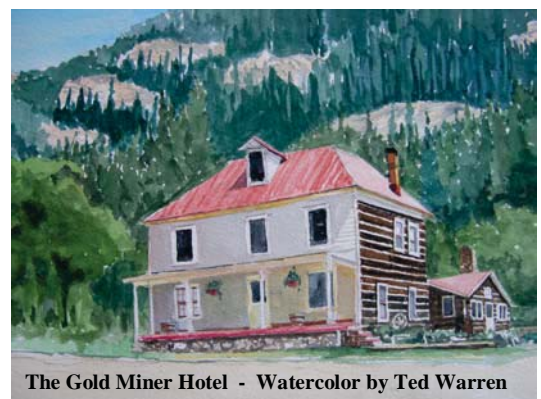
By John "Brock" Brocklehurst

Today, April 14th, is a shocker – with almost 2 feet of snow and powerful blizzard-like winds forming drifts. Schools are closed and for a time, even the Canyon Boulevard. However, spring is on the way! Robins returned in March and aspen leaf buds are swelling. The coldest spell was New Year's Eve with -49 degrees accompanied by 70 mph winds. February was the coldest, windiest and snowiest month. Total snowfall for the winter was 160 inches.

Spring in Eldora is slow and fickle; she just doesn't want to commit!

Eldora History Night

will be held at the Gold Miner Hotel on Wednesday, August 10 at 7:00 PM. Our featured speaker will be local author Kay Turnbaugh, who wrote the newly published book "Around Nederland." Kay will give a slide presentation that focuses on the history of our area.



The Gold Miner Hotel - Watercolor by Ted Warren

HAPPY VALLEY HAPPENINGS

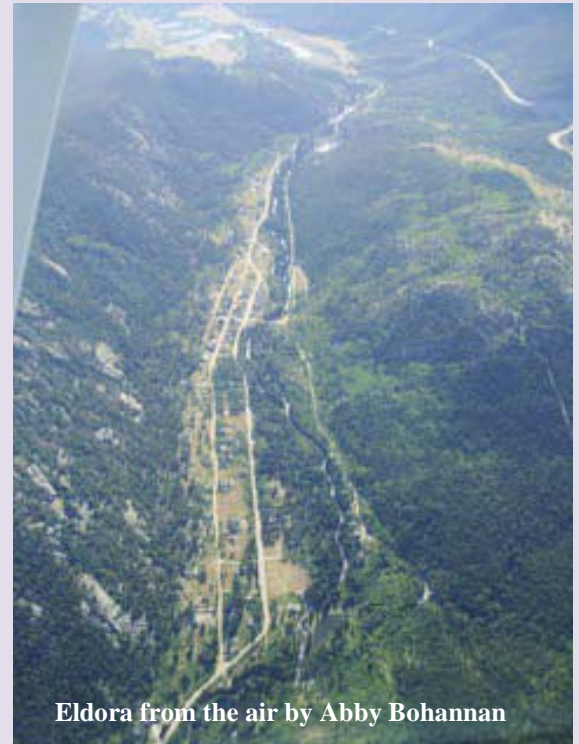
Ski Area Update

The updated Eldora Mountain Resort (EMR) Master Development Plan was recently accepted by the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest. Forest Service acceptance of the plan does not mean that all projects proposed will be given the go-ahead. Each project will now require more detailed environmental studies and a public review.

The ski area is proposing to extend the Corona and Indian Peaks runs (sometimes called the backside) down toward Middle Boulder Creek and Hessie. If you know where the old log dam is located, which took water out of the creek for the flume on the south side, the runs would begin a little west of this point and extend for ½ mile along the creek. For those of you that like to snowshoe or cross-country ski up the Fourth of July Road, the lifts, runs and sounds of snowmaking will be within 150 feet of the road. Snowmaking noise will also increase in the town of Eldora. And an important piece of habitat along the creek will be chopped up with ski lifts and runs.

If you want to be put on an e-mail list to receive updates and know when to comment on the plan, let me know.

Dave Hallock
eldoradh@rmi.net



Eldora from the air by Abby Bohannon

Efforts are underway to develop graywater legislation that would allow wastewater from sinks, bathtubs, showers and washers to be used for toilet flushing and landscape irrigation by the next session of the Colorado legislature. Toilet water and kitchen waste water will not be included as graywater because of high organic loads and potential pathogens. Larry A. Roesner, CSU

EEPP Update

The Eldora Environmental Preservation Plan update is now over half complete. Sections on cultural resources, wildlife, vegetation, climate change, and land conservation have been drafted. Thanks to Carol Beam (Historic Preservation Specialist with Boulder County Parks and Open Space who worked on cultural resources), Mike McCoy (he called on an array of scientists in crafting the section on climate change), Dave Hallock (conservation planner who drafted the sections on wildlife, vegetation and land conservation), and Diane Brown (she is updating the community plant list). Pete Birkeland, with help from Mark Williams of the Boulder County Health Department, is working on the geology and hydrogeology sections. Pete Fogg and staff of Boulder County Land Use Department are working on the land use section.



Boulder County Mountain Transit Study

Recommendations for an expanded mountain transit system have been finalized, some of which will affect Eldora.

On the positive side, vehicular traffic may be reduced through town and local residents will be able to use public transit, if desired, instead of private cars.

On the negative side, in order to fund mountain transit a special tax district may be formed which would increase our property taxes and/or increase sales tax on purchases made in Boulder County.

If a full-sized RTD bus comes into Eldora, a large paved turn around area would be needed. Two ideas for solving this problem have been proposed: a round-about traffic circle (where?) or possibly paving another road in town, presumably Klondyke Avenue.

A better solution may be a smaller circulator bus that can more easily maneuver through Eldora without the need for costly road paving.

THE SWITZERLAND TRAIL OF AMERICA



◀ Sulphide Flats in 1899 - This view taken by Harry H. Lake is looking east from what is now the west end of the Arapaho Ranch. The St. Julian Hotel is visible in the distance on the left, and on the right several cabins can be seen at the base of Tennessee Mountain. The route of the railroad crossed Sulphide Flats and went west approximately where today's paved road is located until it reached Marysville, where it veered left along the south side of Middle Boulder Creek towards Bryan Avenue.

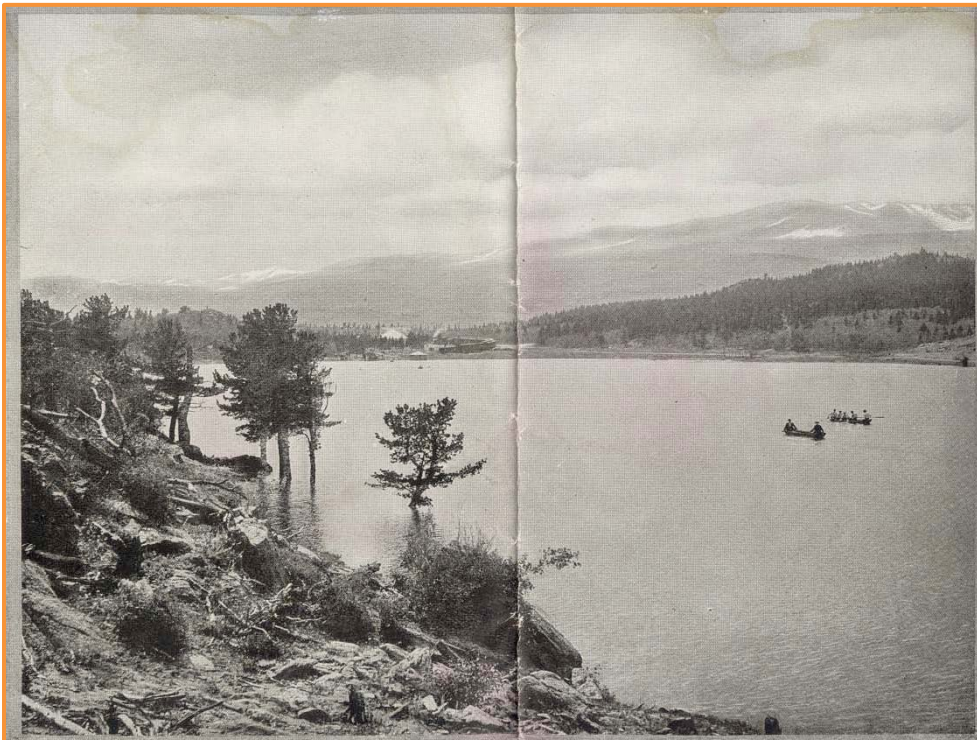
The Friday Social and Industrial Review (Courtesy of Bolton Collection)
Boulder, Colorado - May 19, 1899

Railroad Officials Who Will Build The Eldora Line Arrive In The City

The party that arrive comprises Col. C. W. Mackey, New York; C. H. Schoen, Pittsburgh; George T. Randolph, Boston; Richard H. Vaughan, New York; James D. Callery, Pittsburgh; Thomas H. Given, Pittsburgh; and Mr. McDonald, Pittsburgh.

The party will remain here three days, during which time they will inspect the district to be reached and study the resources upon which they will have to rely. It is stated that reports that the line is determined upon definitely are premature, but that there remains little doubt that it will be built is well known. It is strongly hinted that the Eldora branch is merely a starter for a line over to Middle Park and that this project will be the outcome of the visit to Boulder. Although the reports that contracts are let and the time set for the completion of the road are not well founded, it is true that the road will be built this summer and will probably be in operation before fall. The visitors enjoyed a ride Monday over the C. & N. to Ward to view the mining districts. Tuesday they drove up to Eldora and vicinity. While a number of the gentlemen are C. & N. stockholders, the Eldora branch will be an independent scheme.

The winter of 1906-07 was a dilly. This was the winter the snow blocked the train at Marysville for a week. The snow blew in faster that the section hands could shovel it out. They finally got a rotary plow from the C & S and opened the track. The first class mail was brought to Eldora on a man's back. Freight and passengers came by wagon. - Jack Langley



William Fagan (1847-1940), grandfather of William Gross and great-grandfather of Richard and Bill Gross and Kathy Gross Dugan, worked on the preliminary survey of a railroad to Middle Park in 1871. He got to hold the survey pole. The Boulder and Western Railroad was later built to Eldora over this same survey. He remembered the brush was so thick in Pennsylvania Gulch that it had to be cut to clear their line of sight. Pennsylvania Gulch leads up to what was then called Pennsylvania Lake (now Glacier Lake). At that time there were many bears and mountain lions in the gulch. They hired two miners who were good hunters to clean out the "varmints," and they got 3 cinnamon bears and 2 lions.

◀ Beautiful Glacier Lake

RAILROAD RUMBLINGS

The Colorado and Northwestern Railway's trains rumbled into Eldora in early January, 1905. This railroad practically eliminated the horse stages, which were replaced about 1914 by the famous Stanley Steamers. The C. & N. W. trains left Boulder immediately after the Denver morning train arrived. The route traversed Boulder Canyon to the mouth of Four Mile Creek and followed that stream to Sunset; thence, via Sugar Loaf and Glacier Lake, the route swung toward the southwest, and the train arrived in Eldora about noon. Understandably, the tourist preferred the more scenic and longer railway ride to the canyon trip.

At the Eldora terminus, visitors were courteously accosted by a talk, sandy complexioned man with a thick handle-bar moustache. He wore no coat, but a corduroy vest protected a light colored cotton shirt. The lower pocket of the vest carried a gold hunting case watch attached to a massive gold chain, from the center of which dangled a large gold mounted elk's tooth. Occasionally there peeped from beneath the vest a wide elastic strap running downward from each shoulder and terminating in a pair of leather buttonholes attached to large buttons suitably placed on the trousers waist band. Suspenders, of course, often called galluses.

"Passengers for Lake Eldora, please climb into that buggy," he would say, "and let me have your baggage checks." Such would be the visitors' introduction to John Lilly, already mentioned as running a stage line and livery stable in Eldora. The buggy was a three-seated spring wagon, drawn by a well-kept bay team. Under John's expert guidance the two-mile journey from the depot to Lake Eldora was negotiated without mishap. The road, little better than a trail, climbed the steep, rock-studded gulch from Marysville, just below Eldora, to the lodge at the lake. To visitors who never had travelled mountain roads, the journey was an hour of torture, but the "initiated" manifested little or no concern. For John Lilly the haul was just another of many similar, or worse, which fell to his lot during the day's work.

"Gold, Silver and Black Iron" by Donald C. Kemp



Louise Long, Isabella O'Connor and Helen Long – Pierson Collection



▲ 6th Street Bridge with welcome sign circa 1905 by W. C. Spratt ▲ 6th Street Bridge with welcome sign circa 1905 by W. C. Spratt



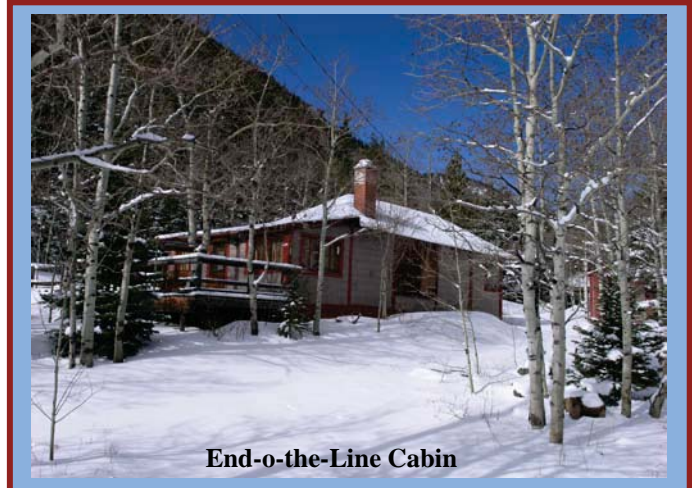
◀ The Lilly Pasture circa 1922 was photographed by Don Kemp from the hillside above Bryan Avenue. On the left is a trestle that crossed Middle Boulder Creek from a railroad loading bin at the Mogul Mine. Just beyond that is the power house to the Mogul. The large spruce tree near the trestle continues to grow there today. Several horses are grazing in the pasture. This property is still in the Lilly family, belonging to Earl and Barbara Lilly Bolton, who are gracious hosts of the Eldora Community Picnic on the meadow near their cabin.

David Barrett - Night Hostler for the Switzerland Trail Engines at Eldora

Submitted by Cleo Billingsley



▲ The Eldora Train Station Then and Now ►



End-o-the-Line Cabin

Colonel David D. Barrett was a retired U. S. Army officer and Chinese language expert, who spent twenty-five years in the Orient. He was a night hostler in Eldora during the summers of 1911 and 1912, when he was a student at the University of Colorado. The Barrett family still owns Casapalca Cabin at 701 Klondyke, perched on the hillside northeast of the old Kemp cabin (now belonging to Billingsleys).

Except in the summer months, the DB & W ran one train a day to Eldora and return. For about three months in the summer, however, beginning about June first, they operated a mixed freight and passenger car, which left Boulder at two o'clock in the afternoon and was supposed to reach Eldora about five. Time of arrival, however, was anything but certain, as the train was often delayed in handling freight at various stations en route.

Duties of a night hostler were not too onerous, but the pay was anything but generous: one dollar and a half per night. After the train came in, I would shake down the fire in the locomotive, fish out the clinkers, clean the ashes from under the grate bars, wipe down the locomotive, sweep out the coach and, if necessary (and it usually was), wash the windows in the same. I would then bank the fire in the firebox, and from then till next morning I had nothing to do but watch the steam gauge to see that the boiler pressure didn't get so low there wouldn't be steam enough to work the blower to get up steam next morning.

C. J. Kennedy, Master Mechanic of the DB & W, used to tell people he had a night hostler in Eldora who never closed an eye on duty. This wasn't altogether true, for I had a bed in the freight shed part of the Eldora station and after the engine had been put to bed for the night, I was accustomed to gather the draperies of my couch about me and lie down to pleasant dreams. I did, however, get up once or twice during the night to take a look at the fire in the boiler firebox and the steam gauge.



This picture from the Reavis-McCleery collection was taken on Klondyke Avenue near 7th Street in 1916. The location near the Barrett cabin and time period are a close match to David Barrett's story and give the reader an idea of how Eldora and its residents looked then. Photo courtesy of Jeanne McCleery



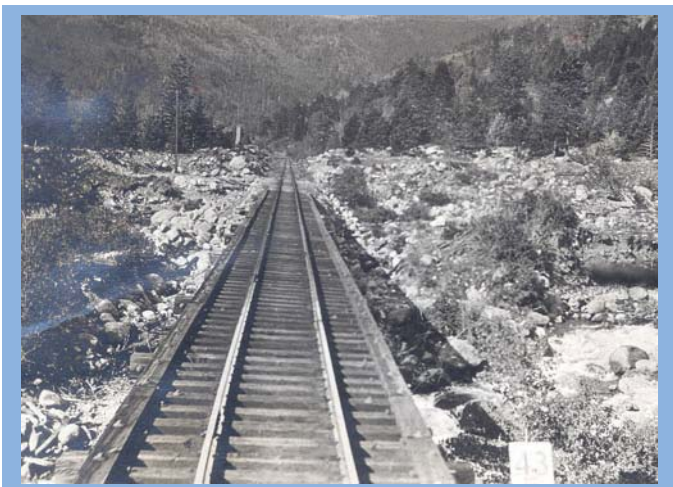
One night I slept too soundly and next morning the boiler was horrifyingly cold. There wasn't a whisper when I turned on the blower, and it looked as if I might not be able to get steam up in time for the train to leave on schedule. There were the remains of a pile of lumber near the station, however, and by burning a good portion of this, I finally got up enough steam to work the blower. To my intense relief the boiler pressure gradually rose, so that by time for the train to leave, there was enough steam to start it rolling down the grade to Sulphide Flats. That was a lesson to me, and I have never let the boiler get so cold.


As soon as the train had pulled out, I headed for the cabin owned by my brother, A. C. Barrett, who died a couple of years ago, and consumed a hearty breakfast, prepared by my mother who spent the summers there.

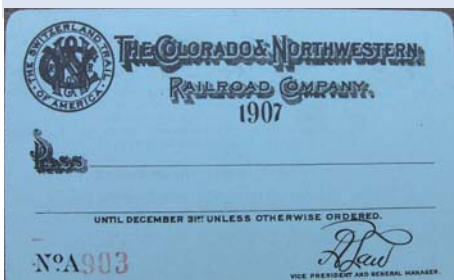
After breakfast I spent three hours or so working for Harry Martin, who was then operating a grocery store and meat market in Eldora. I drove a horse and wagon around to the cabins of the tourists, soliciting grocery orders and later delivering them. For this morning's work Harry paid me a dollar, so that with my wages from the DB & W I made pretty good money for those days. After lunch, or dinner as we called it then, I had time for an hour or so of shut-eye before going to the station to wait for the train to come in.

"Shag" (Wesley) Bent was engineer on this evening train and a boy name of George Gentry was fireman some of the time. Bill Tripps was the senior engineer of the road. His fireman in winter was one Pat Dinley, and I believe in summer Pat was engineer on the Sunset-Ward branch. The conductor on the night train to Eldora was one Patterson, but I have forgotten who the brakeman was. I think the brakemen were mostly temporary hired help. Shag Bent was always nice to me, but most of the other engine crew personnel seemed to resent me as a college punk. One day I got into a fight with Conductor Patterson's boy on the station platform and he beat the ---- out of me.

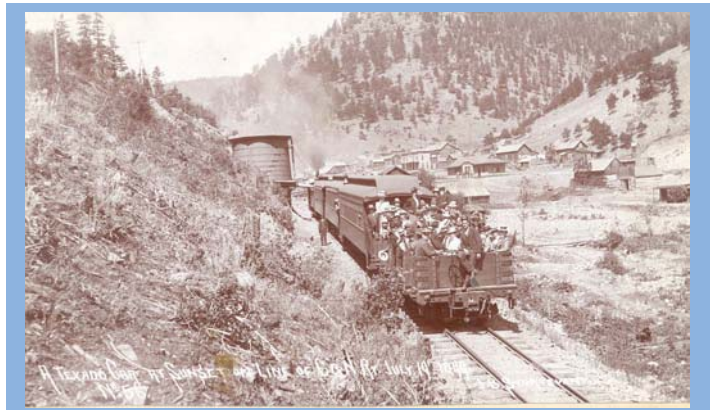
One of the sights I have never forgotten in connection with my job was watching the Shay engine come toiling up the gentle grade into Eldora, hissing like a huge teakettle and spewing steam from a number of joints. The Shay (a slow-g geared engine) was used only as a last resort when all the other engines were on regular runs or pulling excursion trains to Glacier Lake and other picnic spots.



▲ Tracks into Eldora 1916  Box Cars at Mogul Dump ▲
 McCleery Collection Pierson Collection
 Texado Car at Sunset in 1899 by J. B. Sturtevant ►
 Lee & Virginia Evans Collection

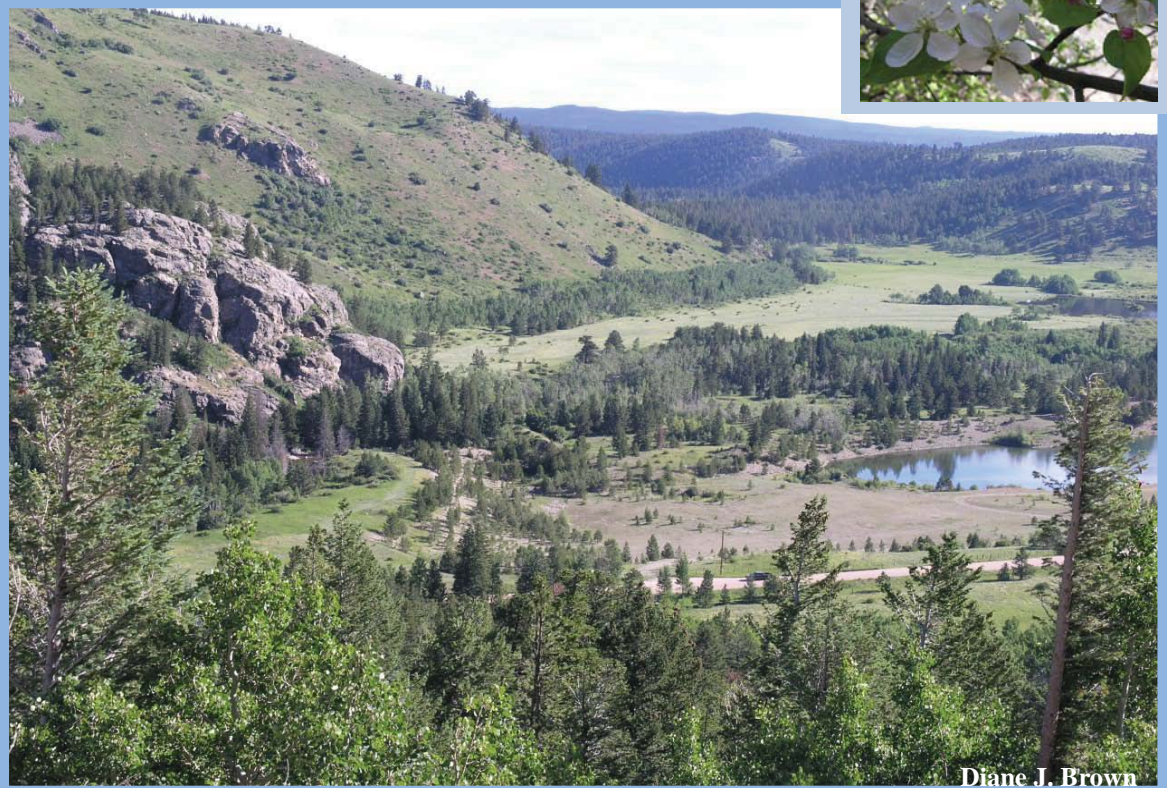


◀ Facsimile of a ticket for the Switzerland Trail of America
 Courtesy of the Earl & Barbara Bolton Collection



THE SWITZERLAND TRAIL TODAY

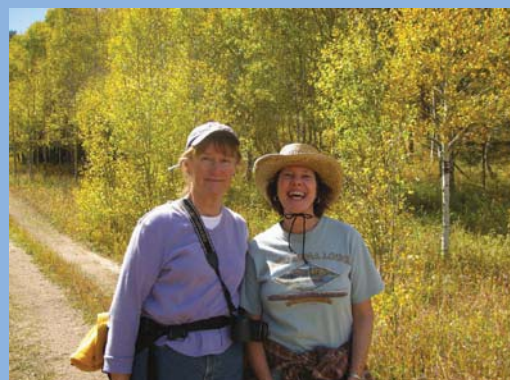
A section of the Switzerland Trail crossed the Arapaho Ranch, following the eastern base of Eldorado Mountain and continuing across the west end of Sulphide Flats toward Eldora. The body of water that formed after gravel was extracted in 1953-54 is called Kingfisher Lake.



Diane J. Brown

Along the route of the Switzerland Trail there are to be found occasional apple trees. There is one in Marysville and one on the Arapaho Ranch. These no doubt got their start when a passenger on the train tossed an apple core out the window of the train. At this altitude the apple trees are more like shrubs and only every few years produce fruit the size of golf balls, depending if the blossoms survive frost danger. The apples on the Arapaho Ranch were taste-tested and determined to be Jonathans.

In 1907, during the construction of Barker Dam, a spur of the Colorado and Northern Narrow Gauge Railroad, sometimes referred to as the Switzerland Trail, was reorganized and named Denver, Boulder and Western. The Eldora Branch of the railroad was built in 1904 and continued operations until July 3, 1919, when a cloudburst flooded the canyons near Boulder and destroyed the roadbed. The rail grade through the Arapaho Ranch is still very evident, and one can still see cinders, a few chunks of anthracite coal, and even a few rotted ties and railroad spikes. From the Eldora line a spur was branched and ran eastward from a point in the northeast quarter of the southwest quarter of Section 22, which is in the meadow area west of what we now call Kingfisher Lake. The branch followed a path very near the present Eldora Road through Nederland to the dam location. The train carried gravel from the pit across from the present high school down to the dam site for the concrete construction. All evidence of this rail line has vanished, except that the old railroad bed can be seen in the bottom of Barker Reservoir when the water level is very low. "From Happy Valley to the Mountaintop" by Lee S. Evans



Diane Brown and Kathy Dugan on the Switzerland Trail ► Both photos were taken by Tom "Skip" Dugan in fall 2010.



About 86% of moose calves do not survive. Therefore cow moose are very protective of young. They can be edgy, unpredictable and liable to attack.

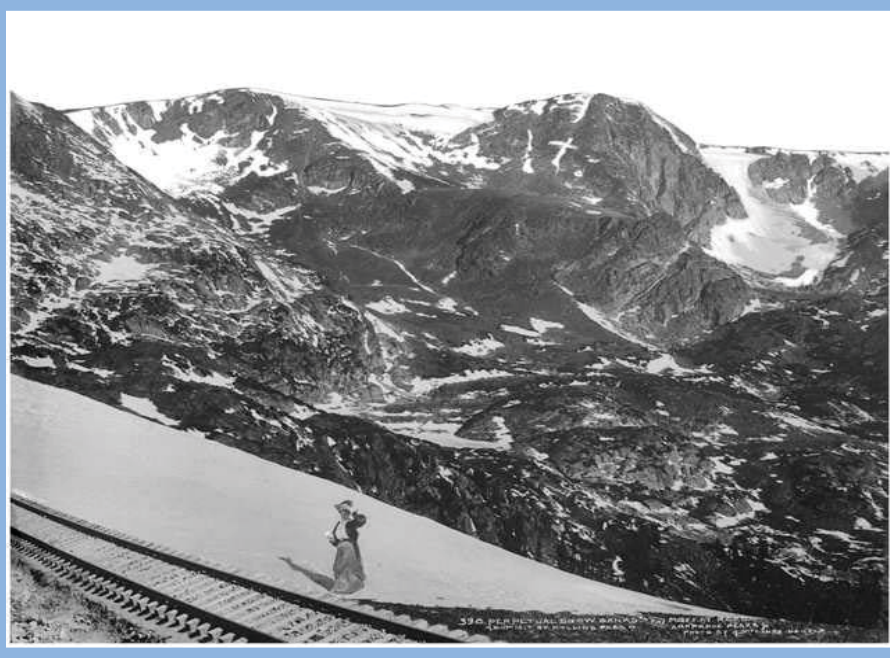
At birth a calf moose is a tiny, ungainly copy of its mother. If it is one of twins, it may weigh 13-14 pounds; if born singly, between 25-35 pounds. The calf is helpless at birth and is kept in seclusion for a couple of days, hidden from its many enemies in a thicket or on an island. The voice of a newborn calf is a low grunt, but after a few days it develops a strident wail that is almost human. At the age of only a few days it can outrun a man, and swim readily. Calves stay with the cow for a full year, sometimes longer.

Of all North American big-game animals, the moose calf gains weight fastest. During the first month after birth it may gain a pound or even two pounds per day, and late in the summer may begin to put on as much as five pounds per day for a time.

The moose lives almost solely on twigs and shrubs during the winter months. In summer this diet is varied with leaves, some upland plants, and water plants in great quantity. An adult moose eats 40-50 pounds of twigs each day in winter, and in summer eats 50-60 pounds of forage. When food becomes scarce, as it often does toward spring, moose will strip bark from trees. In summer, especially when fly season is in progress, moose take to the water for several hours each day. They dip their heads under the surface for water lilies and other water plants. Moose are quite at home in the water. They sometimes dive 18 feet or more for plants growing on the bottom of lakes and ponds. Moose have been known to swim 12 miles. A moose calf is able to follow its mother on a long swim even while very young, occasionally resting its muzzle on the cow's back for support.

From a Canadian Wildlife Service brochure shared with us by Kathleen Henningsen

BOULDER PASS = ROLLINS PASS = CORONA PASS



▲ Louis Charles McClure captured this Rollins Pass panorama circa 1904. Near the tracks a woman in a long skirt shades her eyes from the bright sun.

To the north a beautiful restaurant-hotel was built. The lodging allowed workers to help keep the rail line free of snow in the winter. Trains were often stranded for several days during heavy winter snows. The foundation can be seen today, as well as the deeply-anchored cable supports used to keep the roof from blowing off. Most of the dismantling of salvageable structures on the Hill was done in 1936. L. C. McClure photo ►



Cutting through a 30-foot drift allowed train passage on Rollins Pass. L. C. McClure photo circa 1904

Boulder Pass was the first name for Rollins Pass. In 1865 following the Civil War, a group of Mormons had to take their 39 wagons apart and pack them piece-by-piece up the last part of the trail. They were led by John Quincy Adams Rollins. He then began construction of a wagon road in 1866, finished it in 1873, and hauled much freight over the pass, which now bears his name.

Naming of “Corona” Station and Hotel has resulted in some confusion to the visitor. The mountain pass on which Corona Station and Hotel were erected is officially known as Rollins Pass. Corona is Spanish for “crown.” On top of the world as it is, this area is usually covered with snow from October to June. Westerly winds sweep across the Continental Divide the year round.

At an elevation of 11,660 feet



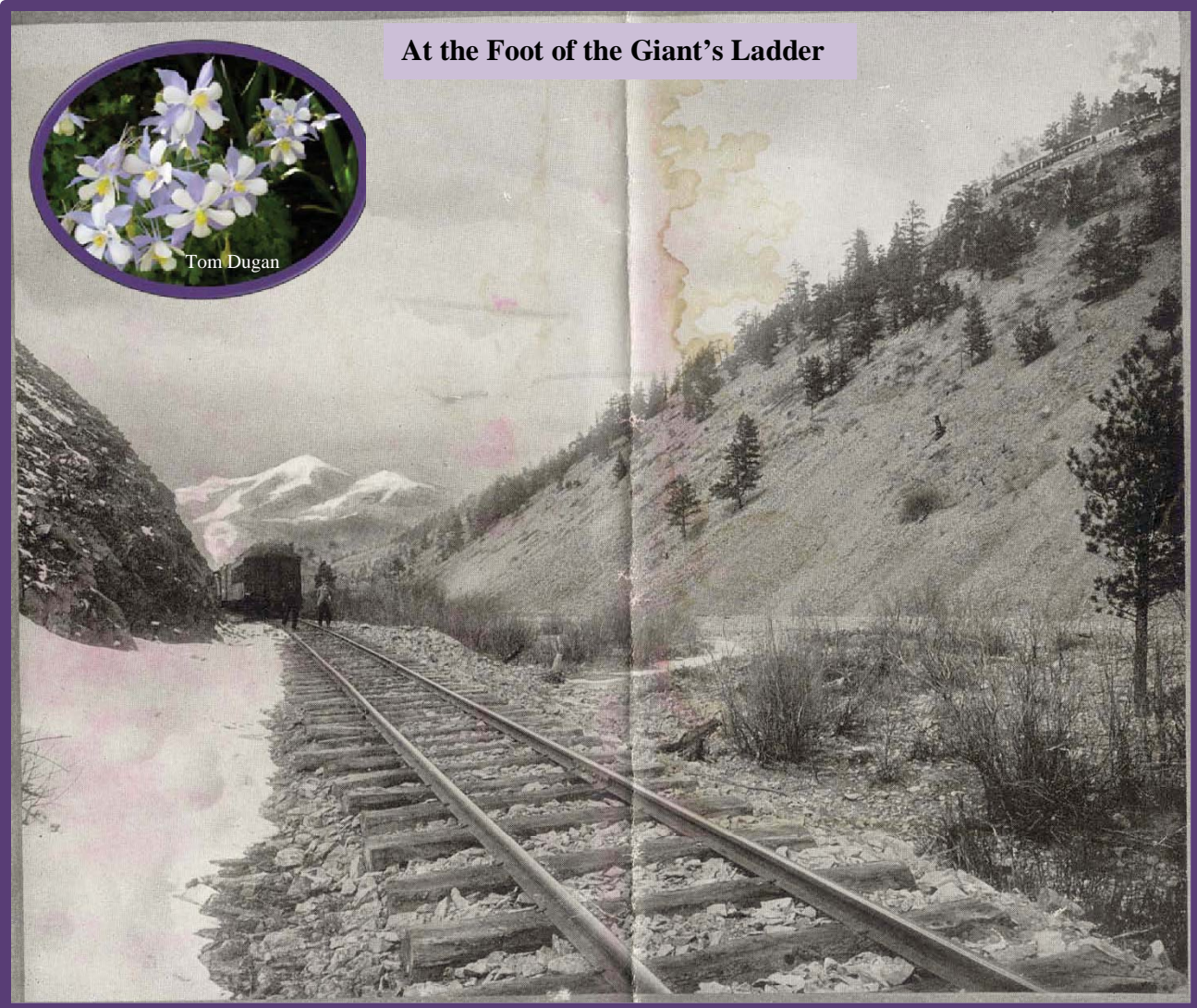
Tolland (Elev. 8,889 ft.)

Seeking relief from Denver’s summer heat, hundreds of tourists flocked to this little town on the railroad. They found comfort in the cool mountain air, walking among the flowers and pine trees of nearby Medicine Bow Forest Reserve (now called Roosevelt National Forest). Here in South Boulder Park, Tolland Station (originally named Mammoth) was the first tourist stop of the Moffat Railroad west of Denver. The original Moffat Station in Denver was torn down and moved brick-by-brick to where it was reconstructed in Tolland. With its lunchrooms, souvenir shop, picnic shelter and picturesque National Forest setting, Tolland was a favorite weekend trip for tourists. As many as 3,011 people were brought up in 11 trains in one day by the railroad that never lost a passenger’s life.

At the Foot of the Giant's Ladder



Tom Dugan



▼ Walking up the old Moffat railroad grade, you will arrive at a square water tower. It is one of the few square water towers ever built in the United States, and possibly the only one still standing.



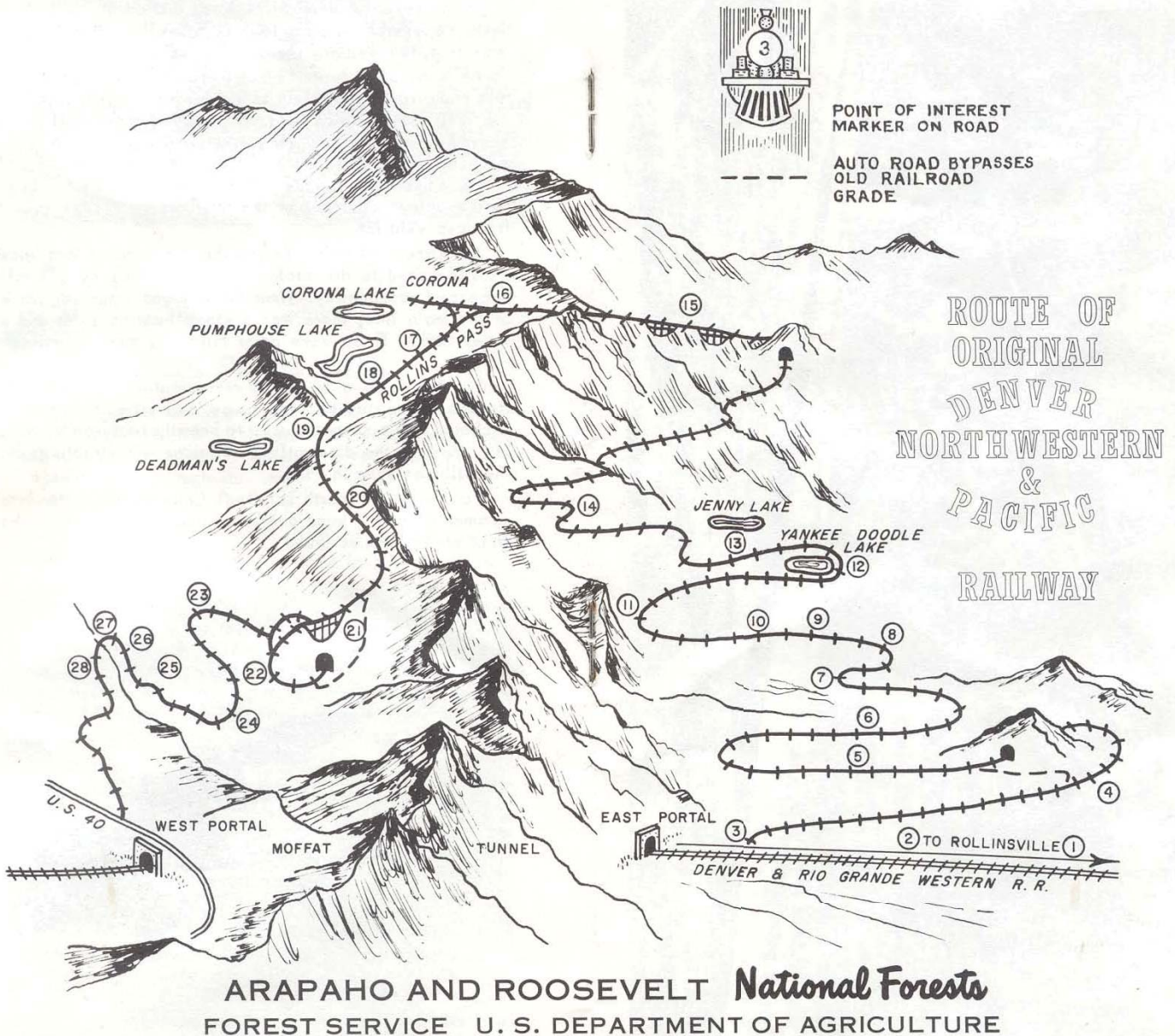
Square Water Tower
Moffat Road
Near Eldora, Colo



Early blooming
Pasqueflowers

THE MOFFAT ROAD

FORMER "HILL" ROUTE



Cleo Billingsley shared an old forest service brochure on the Moffat Road and an original Denver, Western & Boulder Railroad brochure entitled "A Trip to Cloudland over the Switzerland Trail of America" with us for this newsletter. A portion of the text and some of the photos for the Moffat Tunnel and Switzerland Trail articles come from these brochures.

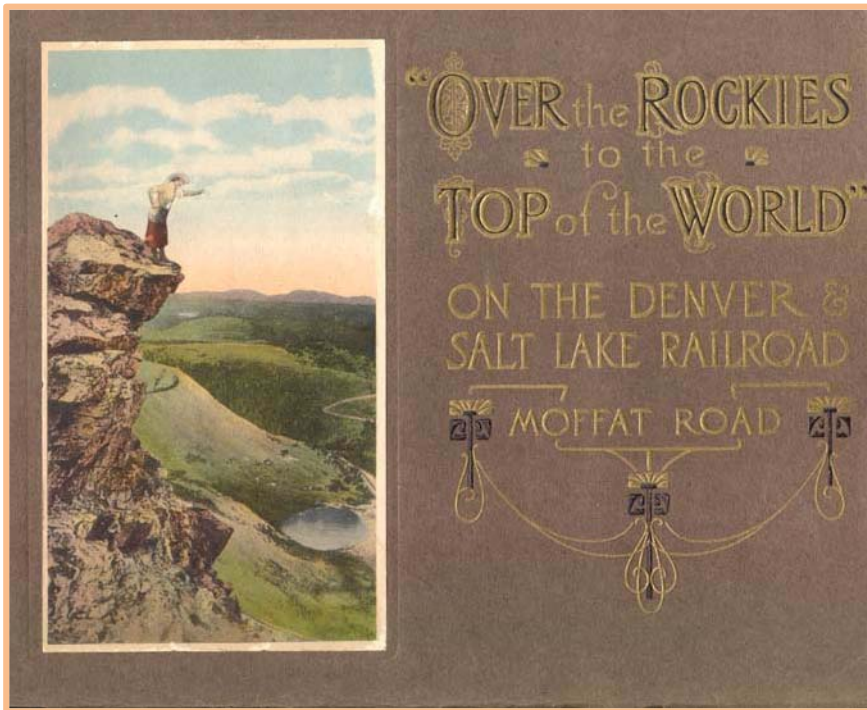
Sometime in the 1940s my dad drove us in a passenger car on the Hill Route over Rollins Pass. My mother made him come back on US 40. All the tunnels were still open and the high trestles still intact. It was terrifying, though. This was long before the Forest Service established a self-guided auto tour of the route. - Virginia Haffner Reid



Yankee Doodle Lake was the most advertised and most popular scenic spot on the old railroad. Circa 1904 Louis McClure shot this amazing photo of the track encircling the lake. On the left in the distance is James Peak. At the upper right is a train coming through the Needle's Eye Tunnel. McClure was standing on the old wagon road on the ridge above the lake.

◀ Railroad engineers found it easier to build in valleys as they wove their rails through the Colorado Rockies. But at the head of Boulder Creek, near the backbone of the Continental Divide, the railroad curved out of the valley in giant switchbacks up the mountainside. Three levels of railroad grade make up the “rungs” of the Giant’s Ladder. Carved through the pine forests, they are still visible on the mountain.

My last venture on the old Moffat RR trail was in summer 1936 or 1937, when Al Marron and I with dates drove my mother’s heavy 1934 Nash sedan all the way up that winding RR way up to Corona. The tracks were obviously gone and the roadway was smooth – except for the trestles. What a thrill! They were not surfaced, just closely laid ties, maybe a bit of something in between. So it was bump, bump, bump across the trestle, which shook slightly in the crossing – long crossing. Midway once, I stopped to open the car door and look out. But the running board of the car obscured view of the trestle edge. Nothing there, to my vision, but the great way-down-there. We drove all the way up to Corona, right around lovely Yankee Doodle Lake. Then down again. Unforgettable. - Henry Meyer



Between 1912 and 1914 a deluxe gold-lettered brochure describing the Moffat Road was published by Barkalow Bros. of Omaha, Nebraska. All the photographs are in full color. The brochure was shared with us by William F. Gross, who turns 94 in June 2011. It was found in the Peek-a-Boo cabin library in 1923 when his family bought the rustic cabin.

The 19th century was the turning point for technical development in color illustration. At the beginning of the century, books with color plates were hand-colored by the artist, using techniques dating back to the Renaissance. A hundred years later the photo-reproductive techniques and the steam-driven printing press took printing out of the hands of the artist and introduced processes which would be used until the computer revolution of our day.

Looking North►
In the foreground is Tolland, 47 miles from Denver at an altitude of 8,889 feet and Boulder Lake. In the background is the Giant's Stepladder, the most wonderful climb made by any standard gauge railroad in the world. The once meandering South Boulder Creek has been "improved," straightened and rip-rapped, and the wetlands largely destroyed. The lake still remains; it is now called Karel Park Lake.



A couple of years after the Moffat Railroad stopped running Mrs. Ora Fagan Gross got the idea to drive the family car over the railroad grade. They had just pulled up the rails and there were lots of nails from the snowsheds that were torn down, so her son Bill told her, "Be sure to take extra tires!" Sure enough, she had to change tires twice, as she drove alone. At Yankee Doodle Lake along came another car from the opposite direction. Amazingly it was a good friend, Stuart Gilbert, who had started at West Portal from Highway 40.

As told by William F. Gross

OVER THE ROCKIES TO THE TOP OF THE WORLD

Twenty-seven miles from Denver at your right and looking down from an elevation of seven thousand feet is the bewitching little summer village and resort of Eldorado Springs

At every turn huge mountains of rock seem to have been placed by nature as a barrier to the march of civilization. The unequalled engineering features presented by this railroad cannot fail to impress upon the traveler the seemingly insurmountable obstacles which have been overcome in the construction of this famous railroad.



Alpine Clover by Diane Brown

In 1927 Mrs. Ora Gross with son Bill (10) and daughter Nancy (5), Mrs. Sophia Meyer with son Henry (14), and friend Irene Courtney (8) hiked up over Spencer Mountain to the Ladora flag stop, rode the train to the top of Corona, had a picnic, then hiked back down the King Lake trail to Eldora, all in one day.



Avalanche Lilies by Audrey Godell



IN THE "LAND OF PERPETUAL SNOW."

King Lake is the tourist's delight. On the hottest days of summer hundreds of tourists visit this point, snowball, take and have taken pictures, climb to higher elevations and gather wild flowers which seem to spring from the earth through the banks of snow. This picture was taken July 28th, 1912.

FROM LADORA TO ELDORA



▲ East Portal in 1951 by Donald C. Kemp



▲ East Portal dormitory for engineers/contractors December 1927

Ladora, a bustling railroad settlement during 1903 and 1904, served as an important railroad siding, one of five on “The Hill.” Section crews that maintained the line lived here. Loggers also lived here. The lumberjacks remained until 1929 when the Hill route was discontinued. Without railroad transportation it was unprofitable to haul lumber to Denver.



In winter, snow on Rollins Pass drifted 20 to 30 feet deep, necessitating an extensive snowshed to cover the main line, the wye and the passing track. As many as a dozen helper engines would be found in this shed waiting to return to Tabernash or Tolland. Coal, oil and cattle trains usually required five mallets to ascend from the west. This created the problem of coal gas. The pyramid-shaped snow shed ventilators often could not exhaust the gas-laden locomotive fumes fast enough to prevent an engineer or the trainmen from passing out from asphyxiation.

Tourists boarded the standard gauge Denver and Salt Lake “Moffat” train at the old D. & S. L. depot a few blocks west of Denver’s Union Station. The train departed daily about nine o’clock, leisurely followed its scenic way along the foothills bordering the plains, plunged into the canyon gorge of South Boulder, high above the stream channel, and followed the course of that creek westward. There were frequent stops along the way. These included Plainview, Eldorado Springs, Pinecliffe, Rollinsville and Tolland. Twenty-eight tunnels blasted through cliffs along the route added to its scenic grandeur.

From Tolland the roadway led up the zig-zag called the Giant’s Ladder to the Continental Divide at Rollins Pass, on which was the railway station of Corona, located in the long snow shed which protected the right-of-way across the summit of the pass.

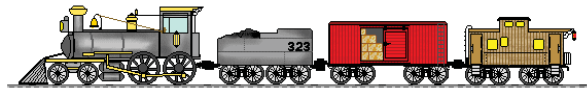
Eldora Lake tourists traveled only a short distance on the Giant’s Ladder section. From Tolland they could plainly see the trains, often double-headed and with a pusher engine at the rear end, slowly and noisily negotiating the countless curves on the road to the summit of the pass. Their train journey terminated on the lower rung of the Ladder a few miles north of Tolland at a whistle stop called Ladora. This station, if such it could be called, was nothing more than a long plank platform to which the passengers alighted from the car steps.

The wagon road from Ladora to Lake Eldora followed the canyon of Jenny Creek a mile or so north to the mouth of Deadman’s Gulch, so called because of the legendary burial of four soldiers at that point. The road here swung east and climbed to the head of the gulch, turned north and threaded its curving trace through the thick pine forest along a fairly level terrain. The total distance was more than four miles, but the journey for the visitor was much more comfortable and a great deal less of a strain on his nerves than the shorter stretch from Eldora.

“Silver, Gold & Black Iron” Don Kemp

TRAIN SOUNDS

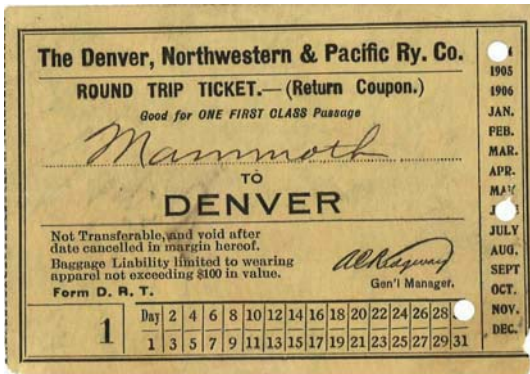
By Virginia Haffner Reid



Wildlife sounds have always been part of the ambiance up at Peterson Lake. Surprisingly, the muted noises of trains have also been present. In the early twentieth century, steam engines coming into Marysville and Eldora and pulling up the Giant's Ladder could be heard. Today the sounds of diesel engines going into and out of the Moffat Tunnel float over the hills. It is always fun to listen as a train labors up to the tunnel. When all is silent, we know that the last engine has gone in and the tunnel doors have closed. It is quite dramatic when there have been no trains for a while, to hear one come out of the tunnel, engines throbbing and whistle blasting. If one hikes or drives over to the East Portal to watch for a train, it is literally an earthshaking experience when a train roars out.

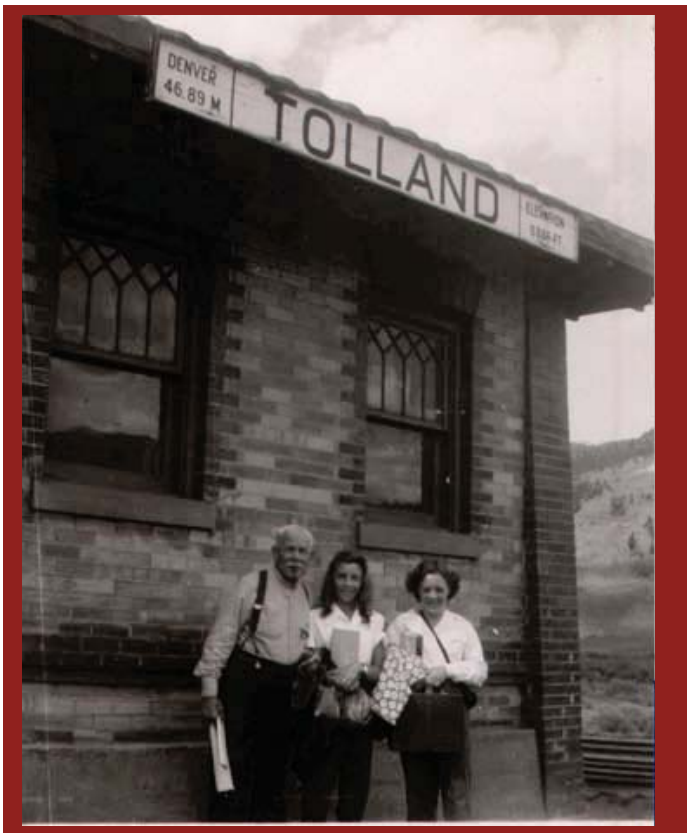


I recently found a June 1904 train ticket used by my father, Ed Haffner, when he was 13. It was for a trip on the Denver, Northwestern & Pacific Railway from Mammoth to Denver. To get to the train, he walked the logging road from the old Eldora Resort at Peterson Lake to the Zarlengo sawmill and on to the Mammoth station. Shortly after this ticket was used, the station was moved east to Tolland.



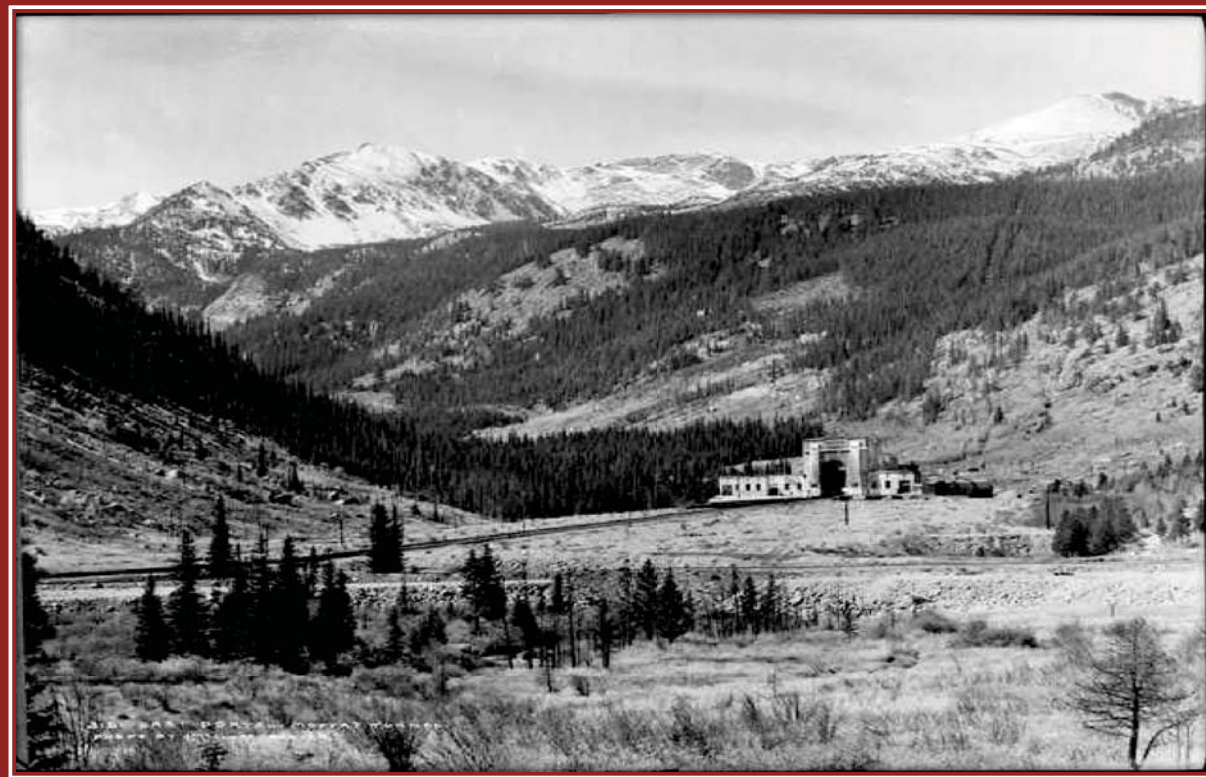
One summer around 1948, a friend and I rode the Denver and Salt Lake "Mountaineer" from Denver to Tolland, where we were warmly greeted by the stationmaster. My father then drove us to our Peterson Lake cabin on the same road he had walked in 1904 to get to the Mammoth station. Tolland remained a passenger stop until service was discontinued in the late 1960s. The station was eventually torn down. Today, according to the Colorado Railroad Museum, two AMTRAK passenger trains pass through Tolland daily, but the first passenger station stop west of Denver is in Tabernash. The tracks are now a part of the Union Pacific and there is heavy freight traffic on them, primarily coal trains.

◀ Stationmaster, Virginia Haffner & friend at the Tolland station circa 1948



When I was in junior high I rode the original steam powered ski train to Winter Park from 1948 through 1951. After a day of skiing in lovely white snow and often fresh powder, we would return to Denver in the evening with our faces spotted with soot. As we went through Tolland, I always looked over at Zarlengo's sawmill and the hills between Tolland and Peterson Lake and would think of our cabin, not to be visited until the snowdrifts were gone in late May or June.

THE MOFFAT TUNNEL



The six-mile long Moffat Tunnel under the Continental Divide was completed in 1927. The East Portal contains huge fans to force the smoke and gas westward out of the tunnel. During times of low cloud cover, the fans can be heard in Eldora. Photo taken by Louis McClure in the 1940s

Men began driving the rail line westward from Denver to Hot Sulphur Springs in April 1903, and they completed it in June 1905. They had to bore 33 tunnels on a 2% grade up South Boulder Creek and on a 4% grade over Rollins Pass.

Built during 1923 to 1927, the 6.21-mile Moffat Tunnel cost 19 lives and \$18,000,000. It is the second longest railroad tunnel in the United States. Moffat Tunnel shortened the line from Denver to Craig from 255 to 232 miles. The Tunnel passed under James Peak and cut the time from 3 to 4 hours down to just 12 minutes. It eliminated a 27-mile trip up the steep grade of Rollins Pass.



David H. Moffat (1839-1911), pioneer Denver banker, mining man, and railroad builder, organized his railroad July 18, 1902, incorporating it as the Denver, Northwestern & Pacific Railway Company. “To build and to operate a railroad west of Denver in 1902 was almost as daring as to fly to the moon sixty years later,” wrote Edward Ballinger and Frederick Bauer in their book “The Moffat Road.”

Moffat dared. At the turn of the century he was one of the wealthiest men in Colorado. He owned much of the Colorado gold mining areas around Florence and Cripple Creek. It was his ambition to provide access to the natural resources of northwestern Colorado and a more direct rail route to Salt Lake City and the West Coast. Moffat also wanted the lower freight rates such a direct route would provide. This could only be done by building a railroad directly west from Denver. Such a line would cancel the need of a 175-mile detour either north to the Union Pacific or south by way of the Rio Grande Railroad. Moffat died on March 18, 1911 in New York City at the age of 73. The DN&P had cost him \$75,000 a mile, and Rollins Pass had cost him the rest of his fortune, a total of 14 million dollars.



◀ February 26, 1928
 The opening of the Moffat Tunnel was celebrated. It must have been cold judging from the heavy coats and hats that were worn by the onlookers.



Louise Rouse

▼ A locomotive steams out of the West Portal of the Moffat Tunnel on a winter day in March 1935. Photo by Otto Perry



Before the tunnel was built: In the alpine meadows to the east of the road is a long row of telegraph poles that served the Moffat Road. In winter blizzards when snow was almost as high as the crossarms, men from stranded trains felt their way along these wires to shelter. Once, when a train was stalled in a snowdrift, George Barnes, the conductor, struggled to a nearby telegraph pole, hooked up his telegraph instrument, and reported the train's plight. – "Engine's gone dead because of low water and inability to shovel snow in the terrible gale." The trainmen had to abandon the train and walk to Corona in a 50-mile an hour wind at 20° below zero!

Eldora Civic Association 2010-11

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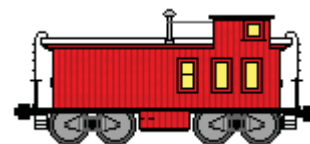
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Johnson, Don/Dorothy
Kent, Jinny
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Martin, Margaret
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McHenry/Duvall Family
Merrill, Nancy
Miller, Kent/Kay
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Pierson, Bill/Kathleen
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Postlewait, Timothy/Miller, Lindy
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Rouse, Romaine
Ruhnka, John/Sallie
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Boulder County Commissioners
Boulder County Parks & Open Space
Boulder County Land Use Department