TO THE MEMBERSHIP

Hello Everyone,

Earlier this month, our Administrator Stacey Cline sent out a letter wanting to involve the membership and visitors in donating for the replacement of the old furnaces with more modern and efficient heating and air conditioning. Our goal is $20,000. We already have the first seed money in donations of $2,425 so far. We’d like to continue the fundraising effort. One idea might be to save your loose change for a month and send it to us; another is the Alferd Packer Banquet fundraiser. You’ll see more stories in this newsletter about why it’s so important and why we care so much about preserving and maintaining our Museum.

Because we are a museum and a repository of historic documents and artifacts, the correct ambient temperature in the building is imperative to the preservation of the items. The current heating system dates back to 1988, and has only lasted this long because of good maintenance and upkeep. Because of better efficiency in a new system, we’re projecting the heating bills will be lower. We’ve already seen a savings because of the replacement of the windows last year.

I add my plea to that of our Administrator: Look at the work this group of dedicated people, and you are included here, have been doing to protect and preserve this important piece of history. Your contribution will have lasting impact on the preservation of this Museum and its artifacts.

Looking forward to seeing you at the Gibson Mansion on September 30th.

Maureen Sheridan, Chair
Profile of an “Extern” (aka volunteer)

An externship means volunteering for a week at an organization which has agreed to work with Colorado College students as they pursue their degrees in different fields. The Film Department partners with Rocky Mountain PBS on what they call “The Colorado Documentary Project” to encourage young filmmakers. If the documentary meets the criteria, PBS may schedule it for airing, which would be the ultimate compliment for a student’s work.

Emmett de Maynadier is from Montville, Maine, and a student at Colorado College in Colorado Springs. He is currently majoring in “Film in Media” with a minor in Environmental Science. Originally the major was Environmental Science (his parents are both biologists) with a minor in Film in Media. But early into the school experience Emmett found his passion was with the Film degree and switched the major to Film in Media with a minor in Environment Science.

Originally, the Museum of Colorado Prisons was not on the list of organizations from which the students could choose. “The first time I came to the Museum I did the tour. I was both excited and scared. Maybe not scared, but overwhelmed. There are so many stories here. Not only is this a museum but you are actually inside a piece of history itself.”

He wanted to explore the stories the Museum had to offer. So Emmett and the Museum Administrator Stacey Cline approached History Professor Carol Neel for permission for Emmett to be an extern at the Museum. They definitely saw the possibilities and she gave her approval.

As an “Extern” Emmett worked at odd jobs around the Museum, stocked the gift shop, carried boxes, and generally got to know how everything works. The class assignment was to create a 7-9 minute film with audio. His main problem was selecting a topic on which to focus, find a storyline to develop. And then he met Tonya Coleman-Sandoval.

Tonya’s domain is the Archives Room in the Museum basement. There Emmett found a storehouse of information, including recently-acquired VHS tapes from the 1990’s taken at the Territorial and Fremont facilities. These tapes would give him some fairly current footage to use. But there were still “so many stories” that could be done. Working with Tonya, Emmett discovered the thread he needed to connect his storyline and that thread was Tonya.

Her working career was as an officer and employee of the Department of Corrections. This was during a time when the system was concentrating on a transition from harsh punishment to a
culture of treating the inmate as a human being with potential. If that inmate chose, the system would provide opportunity for him to improve himself and have a skill for employment when he was released. This period of time and Tonya’s life with DOC became the focus of Emmett’s film.

Any equipment needed for this project was provided by Colorado College. Emmett rattled off a partial list of equipment: a 3-point lighting system, two microphones, software that “syncs up” the audio to the film footage, the special cameras needed for the interviews, support from the professors, a car, and any school resources needed to complete the assignment.

Emmett gave a brief run-down of the hours he had invested in putting his film together starting with the five 8-hour days volunteering; then filming interviews and archival footage, converting the VHS to Digital, editing, and he still had to create “credit boards” and put the finishing touches to his film. It added up to 80 to 90 hours. He said, “You soon develop tunnel vision because you’re totally focused on this one thing.”

When asked about his future, Emmett said he hadn’t thought beyond Wednesday night, July 19th, at 7:00 p.m. when his assignment was due to be screened. Besides time and energy, it’s also a huge emotional investment when you realize you’ve created something.

“Actually,” Emmett confided with a smile, “I may cry at the screening.”

Afterword: Emmet’s screening went well. He shared the on-line video with his museum friends who felt he did a very good job. Here are some comments: “extremely well done,” “represented the system in a fair light”, “Professional”, “Well put together to get the essence of the topic.”

Thank you, Emmett. We wish you all the best.

Annual Membership meeting and BBQ

August 16, 2017: The Annual Meeting of the Membership was held on the
museum lawn. The buffet line of delicious dishes was catered by Steel Smokin’ BBQ from Florence.

A new slate of officers for the Board of Directors was unanimously voted in; Maureen Sheridan, Chairman; Malacha Hall, Vice Chair; Paula DeCook, Secretary; and Sandy McCoy, Treasurer. A special plea was made by Director Stacey Cline for someone who is interested in becoming Treasurer for the Museum Board. Sandy McCoy will be unable to continue as Treasurer as of December and will happily train a new treasurer. Stacey will also work closely with the new person for a smooth transition. Please call Stacey at the Museum (269-3015) if you or someone you know has an interest.

Advisory Board Member Ben Johnson stood and thanked everyone for their hard work in making the Museum the good looking property it is today as he remembers the poor shape the building and grounds were in when this idea of the Museum was first started so many years ago.

From Behind the Walls

This issue marks one year for our recipe feature, recipes created by inmates from their canteen credits and using coffee mugs, small crock pots, and a microwave oven. Thanks, guys, for sharing your ideas with us.

**Chinese Rice**

1 Package Crab (or Kippered Herring)
½ Cup uncooked Rice
¼ Cup Honey
1 Tablespoon Hot Garlic Chili Sauce
1 Package Sunflower Seeds
Soy Sauce (To Taste)

Prepare Rice with hot water. Mix in Hot garlic sauce and honey, stir thoroughly. Sprinkle sunflower seeds over top. Add soy sauce to taste.
This event puts the fun in fundraiser. We’re bringing history to life! Alferd Packer himself will be there to greet you—in shackles and guarded by a U.S. Marshall, of course. Come and join us for an evening of good food, good music, and good humor.

Alferd Packer #1389 Banquet at The Gibson Mansion, Sept. 30, 2017

Catering provided by DiRito’s and the Abbey Event Complex. Tickets $40 and include the Dinner, Tours of the Mansion, and Entertainment
July 26, 2017, was a busy day in the Museum, especially in the Archives Room in the basement. Three students, seniors working on their history assignments, were finishing up their research on their chosen topics relating to “Past, Present, and Prisons”. Three other visitors, Colorado College notables, were absorbed in looking at the record books, the photos, and the general organization of the Archives Room.

Jessy Randal is the Colorado College Archivist. She was very impressed with the resources available in the Museum and with the way the material was so well organized. “I expected a lot more chaos,” she said with a smile. Jessy was looking through the record books at the ways crimes were described in the past, crimes against the community, etc., and what kind of an offense was “Uttering”?

Shelley Harper is the History Librarian at Colorado College. She was fascinated with the ledger recording the mail received by the inmates, mail from virtually all over the world, and this was in the 1890’s. Shelley was also amazed with the extent of materials students can make use of, the actual primary documents. Her perceptions included the Museum in the context of the entire town giving current times a flavor of the old times. Shelly also complimented the Museum Archives Room: “I’ve heard stories of chaotic basements in museums all over Colorado...not the case here, this is great!”

Professor Carol Neel is with the History Department of Colorado College. She has been coming to the Colorado Museum of Prisons for two years, bringing students to do their research and “to build their own history of the prisons of Colorado. This is a wonderful place to do that.” Professor Neel offers a course titled “Encountering the Past – The Long History of the Colorado State Penitentiary at Canon City.” She told of the Colorado College website titled “Past, Present, Prison” where CC students have posted their extensively researched essays. This is constantly being added to as students complete their essays. When asked if she had a comment about our Museum she responded without hesitation, “Fantastic!”

These three Colorado College seniors are completing their research for essays in Carol Neel’s History class. The Course title is “Encountering the Past: The Long History of the Colorado State Penitentiary at Canon City.” They have been researching at the Prison Museum and the Royal Gorge Museum and History Center.
Tonya Coleman-Sandoval oversees the Archives in the Museum basement. She observes: "This is what we’re doing this for, to let the younger people know what actually happened in the past. These students have shown great respect for the documents and pictures and materials we’ve given them access to. They are consistent in wearing gloves to preserve the items; when they’ve taken something out, they carefully returned it to its proper place. I trust these young people. They seem to very much appreciate what they are handling.”

Ian Huschle is a Music Major. His focus has been on the creative aspects of music among the incarcerated. He was amazed at the Prison Band, the instruments, etc., and all the photos.

Eviva Kahne is from Houston, Texas. She was overwhelmed with what is available for their research. “My topic is what work was available for the women and the female inmates experience, the differences in how the females were treated. It’s amazing to read the matrons’ reports from the 1890’s to the 1940’s. There’s also such a connection...It’s as if you’re cleaning your grandparent’s house, finding these old items that tell of life in another time. And Canon City also gives these records a sense of place. You feel the hospitality. I come from Houston, the fourth largest city in America, where no one notices where you are or what you’re doing.”

Samuel Andrew enjoyed talking about the Museum. “It’s overwhelming, so much material. It’s hard to focus on one thing and this is a great area to work in. It’s an academic’s dream. There’s something interesting every time you come down to the basement.” His topic: where the prisoners were from; was the crime poverty-driven as in the case of Irish immigrants vs. the law and how the law viewed the Irish. “Every so often,” Samuel commented, “you have to take a breather and regain perspective.”

The students were asked “What would you say to the Museum members?”

Samuel: “Thanks. This got me excited about doing historical work. Students today Google their information. It does more for you to get your hands on the actual material, even though you have to wear gloves.”

Eviva: Thank you. Colorado College is trying to be a part of the larger Southern Colorado community. Our college is a bubble. I’m glad to feel there’s a relationship with the world and the place I am living.”

Ian was pleased that the students’ work would be mentioned in our newsletter. “It’s good to know others are interested. I really appreciate what it takes to keep this place up and running.”

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Just a Reminder:

**Summer Hours end**
September 30
10 a.m – 6 p.m. Daily

**Winter Hours begin October 1st**
10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Wed. – Sunday Only