San Luis Valley
Museum Association, Colorado

April 2015

Summer Schedule

- Featured Museum -
Saguache County Museum

Saguache – a Ute word meaning “water at the blue earth” is pronounced “sa-watch” derived from the Ute spelling Sa-qua-qua-chi-pa. The Museum was established in 1959 in what was the town’s schoolhouse. It was officially dedicated on June 20th, 1959, in a big centennial celebration to celebrate the 1859 "Gold Rush to the Rockies." Otto Mears Park (just down from the museum) was also dedicated on that day.

The 1874 adobe structure has also been used as a courthouse, and residence for the jailers and their families. The Museum’s collection and buildings provide a very realistic view into the life of the settlers as well as a glimpse at persons who have passed through or settled in the town including Chief Ouray, Alferd Packer, Otto Mears, Zebulon Pike, Hazard (via the Hazard House Museum), and John Fremont.

Summer Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 24&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Saguache - Memorial Day Weekend Opening Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 23&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Fort Garland Living History Encampment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun 13&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Francisco Fort – Projectile Point Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun 25&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Saguache – Hollyhock Festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 30 – 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Rio Grande County – Covered Wagon Days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Saguache – International Pow Wow</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See our calendar for a full listing of events at the Valley’s Museums

Memorial Day Weekend – Opening Events

The weekend starts on Sunday, 05/24 with a pancake breakfast at the Otto Mears Park, then walk across the street to see the Museum’s new exhibits that include the Native American-Spanish room, and Old Spanish Trail “Bunker Site” items. Back at the Park enjoy historical vignette performances, live music with Seat of the Pants String Band and a sloppy joe lunch then back to the Museum for so much more to see.
Water at the Blue Earth
Graffiti, Recipes and Blacksmithing

Recipes, Remedies, and Recollections
Photo 1 (on the left above) - The museum volunteers and community members have compiled a cookbook titled, “Collectible Cookery from Pioneer to Present.” The introduction contains history about the town of Saguache, the Museum, and the County’s Centennial Ranches.

There are 248 pages of recipes, beautiful photos by Trish Gilbert, and artwork by local artists Yvonne Halburian, and Tedi Roi Coleman.

Blacksmith Shed
Photo 2 (in the middle) - The blacksmith shop was originally located in the town of Villa Grove. Built in the mid-1800’s it was placed on the Museum grounds by John Woodard and friends in the fifties. It was "shored up" and dirt roof repaired.

Graffiti
Photo 3 (on the right) - The graffiti on the walls of the Jail accumulated over a 50-year span. The inmates carved the graffiti, and in some places has several generations of an individual family. The graffiti on the ceiling of the cells is what the Museum considers "artwork" and was burned on with cigarettes. Museum visitors will sometimes come in and point to graffiti left by family members.

Alferd Packer – Colorado Cannibal

The town of Saguache is also part of the Alferd Packer story, aka the “The Colorado Cannibal.” Just over a year after Packer’s failed attempt to cross the Rocky Mountains in the winter of 1873 where he reportedly resorted to cannibalism Packer was in a saloon in Saguache where he met up with some of the original party members. His story of self-defense was not believed. He signed a confession on 08/25/1874. He was imprisoned in Saguache, but later escaped. He wasn’t sentenced until 1886 in Lake City, Colorado but later paroled in 1901 by Governor Thomas. His story continues to fascinateiness with further investigations into the Packer story in 1989, ’94, and 2000 with the use of forensic science. Questions still remain.