

Cañon City, Colorado 81212  
December 2012  
Volume 1, Issue 4

# FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM and HISTORY CENTER

## NEWSLETTER

Royal Gorge Regional  
Museum and History Center

Reading Room  
for local history

Exhibits

Free admission

719-269-9036

612 Royal Gorge Blvd

[www.royalgorgehistory.org](http://www.royalgorgehistory.org)

### WE NEED YOU!

The Friends of the Museum & History Center are a group of volunteers who support the events and exhibits at the Museum & Local History Center. Notice of the annual meeting of the members is enclosed with this newsletter.

Please come!

*JOIN US TODAY  
SEE PAGE 6 FOR  
MEMBERSHIP INFO.*



***In this issue:*** This is a biographical edition, containing stories of the people who made a difference in our daily lives. (Page 2)

### LETS TALK ABOUT FIRE - HISTORICAL AND RECENT

The history of the Fremont County area was written in the smoke and ashes of many fires. We hear the tale over and over again about houses, businesses and in fact entire towns burning down during the late 1800's and early 1900's. We sympathize with the grief and loss felt by all people who are affected by a fire. Cañon City had a few spectacular fires: The Flour Mill on 1<sup>st</sup> and River Street along the Mill Ditch burned twice, and was never rebuilt after the second disaster.

The South Cañon High School was consumed by fire and the students had to find other places to attend school while it was being rebuilt. The Gibson Lumber Company burned to the ground in 1943, and later, the Short Lumber Buildings were also destroyed by a major fire (2008). The Laclede Christy Brick manufacturing company was razed by a fire in 1951.

In Cotopaxi, the school house burned down in 1939, and all that saved the brand new gym was a bucket brigade that carried water from the creek about 200 yards away. The school basement was then converted into the cafeteria and a new school was built attached to the gym.

There are many stories from the old timers about kerosene lanterns falling, wood stoves getting too hot, chimneys catching on fire, and people standing too close to fireplaces got their clothes singed, charred and burnt. Our refined heating devices today save us from many of those disastrous consequences. Was it really the "Good Old Days"?

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# FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM and HISTORY CENTER

## DAVID LUCAS

David Lucas was born on Feb. 27, 1816 at Homer, Cortland County, New York. He moved to Pittsfield Ohio and then to Cañon City, Colorado where he died on June 15, 1879.

He received a land grant of 160 acres in Lincoln Park. On Nov. 1, 1870 the Lincoln Park Ditch and Irrigation Company was organized, and David Lucas was elected President. Other members of the Board were Henry Ripley and William Shepherd.

David married Louisa Waters and to that union the following children were born:

**Ira Hiram, Lucy Maria, Amasa Waters, Sara Elizabeth, Ormal (Oramel) William, Clarence Hartley, and Nettie Velma.**

The Lucas children went on to discover and promote the Dinosaur Quarries in Garden Park. Oramel was a school teacher and County Superintendent of schools. Amasa, known as A. W. was a prominent member of the Fremont County pioneers.

The DeWeese Dye Dam and ditch which watered the Lincoln Park area was developed by Dall DeWeese with the help of many of the land owners of the area – including David Lucas.



David Lucas



Judge Joseph Maupin



## JUDGE JOSEPH MAUPIN

The Honorable Joseph H. Maupin was born in Columbia, Boone County Missouri on April 13, 1856. He showed the strength of character early by earning money to pay his way through school and college, and graduated from State University of Missouri. He studied law and devoted five years to the private practice of law in Missouri prior to moving to Cañon City.

In 1888 he was elected Mayor of Cañon City and was reelected the succeeding term. His skills as a lawyer were recognized and in 1890 he was nominated to the office of Attorney General of Colorado, defeating S. W. Jones, the incumbent. He gave many years to the State Penitentiary Board.

He built the Maupin Block and the Post Office Block on 5<sup>th</sup> Street in Cañon City. He married Lily J. McClure, only daughter of John McClure, one of the pioneers of Fremont County.

Mr. Maupin is a typical example of a young man who chopped wood and worked in the harvest fields to attain his education.

He was greatly respected in Colorado and in his chosen home, Cañon City, Fremont County.



# FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM and HISTORY CENTER

## ROBERT WESLEY AMICK (1879-1969)



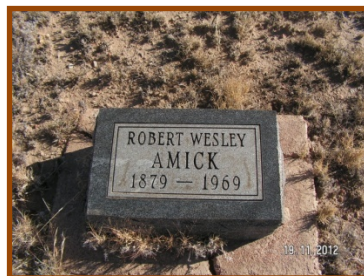
Robert Wesley Amick was a painter, teacher and illustrator. He was born October 15, 1879 in Cañon City, Colorado. Amick was one of six children born to rugged pioneer stock. He was raised in the Cañon City rural area near Tallahassee among scenes of the everyday cowboy life which he painted.

After a common school education he attended the University of Pennsylvania, but soon thereafter, he transferred to Yale University at New Haven, Connecticut, where he graduated with a law degree in 1903. He had been doing pen and ink drawings, as a little boy, and worked for a short time in the art classes at Yale. However, the law professors discouraged his unmistakable talent in art due to the lack of financial stability that came with the life of an artist.

*Continued on Page 4*



Robert A. Cameron



There is no portrait available of Robert Wesley Amick. This is his inurnment marker at the Historic Greenwood Cemetery located on South 1<sup>st</sup> Street.

## ROBERT ALEXANDER CAMERON

1828-1924

Robert Alexander Cameron was a Civil War Union Brevet Major General. When the Civil War began, he was a doctor practicing in Valparaiso, Indiana and a member of the Indiana State Legislature. He entered the service as a Captain in the 9th Indiana Volunteers in 1861, became Lieutenant Colonel of the 19th Indiana the same year and Colonel in command of the 34th Indiana Infantry in 1862.

In August 1863, he was promoted to Brigadier General and led the 13th Army Corps in the Banks' Red River expedition of 1864. After this he was placed as Provost General in command of the District of La Fourche, LA and served until the close of the war. For merit and devotion to duty, he was brevetted Major General of US Volunteers on March 13, 1865. Cameron was one of only two physicians that attained the rank of Major General officer during the Civil War.

After the war, he relocated to Colorado and was town superintendent of Greeley in 1870. In 1885, he was appointed Warden of Colorado State Penitentiary, serving until 1887. (bio by: [John "J-Cat" Griffith](#))

# FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM and HISTORY CENTER



(Continued from page 3)

## **ROBERT WESLEY AMICK:**

Amick left his law practice to study art seriously. He moved to New York and began to study under private tutors and entered the Art Students League. He acquired that technical expertise which is essential and a marked characteristic of his canvases.

He began his art career by illustrating for many of the popular magazines and periodicals of his day, such as Harper's, Scribner's, The American, Redbook, Harpers Bazaar, and Metropolitan. This work earned him a comfortable living, and membership in the Society of Illustrators in 1913. In his New York studio, he began to express himself on canvas with oils. perhaps he is best known for the twelve subjects that have been reproduced in art prints used in American schools. He was known as one of the foremost horse portrait painters. The portrait of Man O' War is perhaps his most memorable work.

## Fire levels Cañon City buildings June 18, 2008

by TRACY HARMON, THE PUEBLO CHIEFTAIN

**CAÑON CITY** - A cluster of 64-year-old warehouse and outbuildings burned to the ground Tuesday sending a huge plume of black smoke into the sky at the middle of town, closing U.S. 50 for about an hour and demolishing a log furniture construction business.

Cañon City firefighters were called to the blaze at 11:37 a.m. Tuesday to find the entire series of interconnected buildings between Eighth and Seventh streets along Water Street just south of U.S. 50, fully engulfed in flames, said Lt. Shane Roberts.

The former Short Lumber buildings had been erected in 1944 after a 1943 fire caused by a stocking railroad engine leveled what was then the Gibson Lumber Company. The Short Lumber business closed in 1998 and had been leased the past two years by the Unique Log Furniture business owned by Steve and Vicki Morris and their children Nicole and Sterling Morris.

Sterling Morris, who was supervising the shop Tuesday while his parents were delivering furniture to South Dakota, said about 11 workers safely escaped the assembly line when they smelled smoke and felt the heat from the flames.

Sterling Morris believed the fire started in the alley next to the warehouse.

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## **Brick industry a valuable Fremont County asset** **Manufacturing once a promising practice in area**

By RACHEL ALEXANDER alexanderr@ canoncitydailyrecord.com  
Posted: 04/17/2012 08:17:59 AM MDT

In October 1951, a fire swept through the production department of the Laclede-Christy Brick Company, Cañon City's largest industry at the time.

The fire, which raged for more than an hour, caused between \$250,000 and \$500,000 in damage. The fire was suspected to have been caused by a short circuit in the electrical equipment. Three firemen were injured in the blaze. The blaze and smoke could be seen throughout the city.

# FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM and HISTORY CENTER

Continued from Page 1: ***FIRE***

For much of the 20th century, wildfire policy in the United States was "all fires out by 10 A.M." This policy was instituted in 1935 and evolved out of "The Big Blowup," a firestorm that swept the Northern Rockies in the summer of 1910. During this catastrophic event, 5 million acres burned and 78 firefighters were killed. (From the Colorado State Forest Service website).

## Cripple Creek, CO Fire In Town, Apr 1896

Posted August 25th, 2008 by [Stu Beitler](#)



**CRIPPLE CREEK'S LOSS. FIRE DESTROYS THE MAIN PORTION OF THE CITY.  
STARTED IN HOTEL AND SWEEP EVERYTHING BEFORE IT –  
LOSS NOW ESTIMATED AT \$1,500,000 --  
SEVERAL FIREBUGS SHOT AND CAPTURED.**

**Cripple Creek, Col., April 30, 1896.** -- The fire which started here yesterday afternoon proved a disastrous event for Cripple Creek.

The entire business portion of the city was left in ashes and last night 1,000 people were left homeless, with a biting raw wind and the thermometer crowding the zero mark. No description can exaggerate the condition of affairs. Two million dollars-worth of property went up in smoke this afternoon, with probably one-tenth of that covered by insurance.

The loss of life is great, owing to the reckless use of dynamite in throwing down buildings that stood in the path of the fire, with the hope of erecting a barrier of debris what would stop further progress of the flames.

The fire started in the Portland hotel, where it broke out in half a dozen places at the same time, giving color to the report that the first fire of last week was designed by incendiaries that they might make a raid on the First National Bank which carried over \$100,000 cash in its vaults to meet the payrolls of the district that mature tomorrow.

The fire spread with a rapidity that can be compared only to the progress of the fire on Saturday. It could not be checked.

Read more at: <http://www3.gendisasters.com/colorado/8757/cripple-creek-co-fire-in-town-apr-1896>

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JOIN TODAY & RECEIVE  
A NEWSLETTER



Individual ..... \$ 10.00  
Couple. .... \$ 20.00  
Family. .... \$ 25.00  
Business/Group. .... \$ 30.00

**PLEASE SEND YOUR MEMBERSHIP CHECK TO:**  
Friends of the Museum  
P.O. Box 481, Cañon City, CO 81215 - 0481

## FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM & HISTORY CENTER

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