

FREMONT COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MARCH 2025

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Reader: Betsy Denney

Editor: Tiffany Coleman

website: www.fremontheritage.com Facebook page: Fremont County Historical Society - Colorado

YOU ARE INVITED TO THE PROGRAM

"Rock Art" presented by Anne Whitfield

MARCH 16, 2025 - SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS CHURCH,

801 SHERIDAN, CANON CITY, CO 81212

2:00 P.M. - PUBLIC WELCOME

ROCK ART

ANNE WHITFIELD

Native American rock writing has been a personal interest since moving in the 1970s from North Carolina to Colorado. Being a full-time science teacher, most of my experience comes from summer volunteering for the US Forest Service, BLM, and Parks Services. I have also done project/seasonal work for professional archaeologists.

My educational background includes a BS in Secondary Education Science and a MA in Applied Natural Sciences. I also have shown my artwork professionally.

I've been an officer or board member of Colorado Rock Art Association since its inception in the early 2000s. I am currently president. My primary involvement has been in coordinating rock art recordation and monitoring projects. Many of them were Forest Service supervised efforts in Picketwire Canyon. I did similar work at Pinon Canyon Maneuver Site. I have had the pleasure of recording "arborglyphs" (carvings on trees) at Bryce Canyon National Monument. Additional rock art recording work was done at private ranches.

---Continued on page 2---



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“IS NATIVE AMERICAN ROCK ART . . .ART? READING THE WRITING ON THE WALLS”



For the last few years, I have partnered in the coordination of survey work on a huge rock art site on private land. We have had the excellent help of some 30+ volunteers, members of Pueblo Archaeological and Historical Society. This rock art site consists of 25 panels along a one-quarter mile long canyon wall in eastern Colorado. Field work is mostly complete, and we are now finishing the details of the report. Some of the survey results are featured in this program. Native American inscriptions may be found in canyons throughout the West. Who made them? And WHY?

This presentation is really about the “stories” found on canyon walls. As you probably know, there is no “Rosetta stone” for translating the meaning of rock art (writing). But like many historic and prehistoric mysteries, we can use inferential clues and surviving cultural knowledge to help us approach this question. One must look carefully, and oft times these “stories” will begin to emerge. They are fascinating to me, and I think they will be to you.

Rock art seems to communicate the many important facets of Native American lifeways. We will explore these various themes (and stories) regarding spiritual beliefs, group identity, commemoration of important or unusual events, warnings, maps, and more.



Historical Society Programs Upcoming Events in 2025

◇ ◇ ◇

March 16, 2025 - Anne Whitfield
“Rock Art”

May 18, 2025 - Victoria Miller
“Steelworks: Colorado Fuel and Iron”

July 20, 2025 - Sue Buchanan
“Prospect Heights”

September 21, 2025 - Lisa Stuts
“Interactive Items”

November 16, 2025 - FCHS
“Canon City”, 1948 Movie

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FREMONT COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER MARCH 2025

Greetings FCHS Members,

With spring fast approaching, the FCHS Board thought it might be fun to let everyone know what you might like to see as you get outside for a quick drive around Fremont County. This article will highlight the “Rocks & Fossils of Fremont County Colorado Heritage Guide” book that is available throughout the county. This book was published by the Fremont County Heritage Commission (FCHC) through a grant from the Fremont Tourism Council and Colorado Tourism Office. Fremont County Historical Society are the caregiver of the Heritage Guides and Self-Guided Tour Books published by the FCHC.

Rocks and fossils have been a vital part of Fremont County since before Colorado became a State in 1876. Zebulon Pike in 1806 discovered how unfriendly and rough our area could be when he was trying to locate the headwaters of the Arkansas River. Little did he know how rich a resource there was when he was trying to survive that winter traveling up and down the Arkansas River calling our Royal Gorge the Grand Canyon of the Arkansas.

Dinosaur fossils were discovered in the Garden Park area north of Canon City in 1877 by Henry Felch. Other discoveries were made in this area. Today there are trails through the Dinosaur Quarry in Garden Park that are highlighted in this guide. Other fossil sites are noted in this guide including Skyline Drive and the Fremont County Administration Building on Macon Street, Canon City.

As you explore this guide book, you might be surprised to see that Florence is home to the first oil well in Colorado and the second oldest in the U.S. 500 wells produced 15 million barrels of oil between 1890 and 1920. Oil continues to be produced today. Coal was also a major industry in Fremont County. Other industries noted in this guide include granite, travertine, silica, clay, gypsum, limestone, rhyolite quarries as well as many mines producing millions of dollars throughout their life time. This guide book also includes a map of the county with highlighted spots for the above locations, two Fremont County Geological Timescales, and a resource for Rocks of the Canon City Basin.

Hope you enjoy this “Rocks & Fossils of Fremont County Colorado Heritage Guide” book.

Thanks,

Betsy Denney

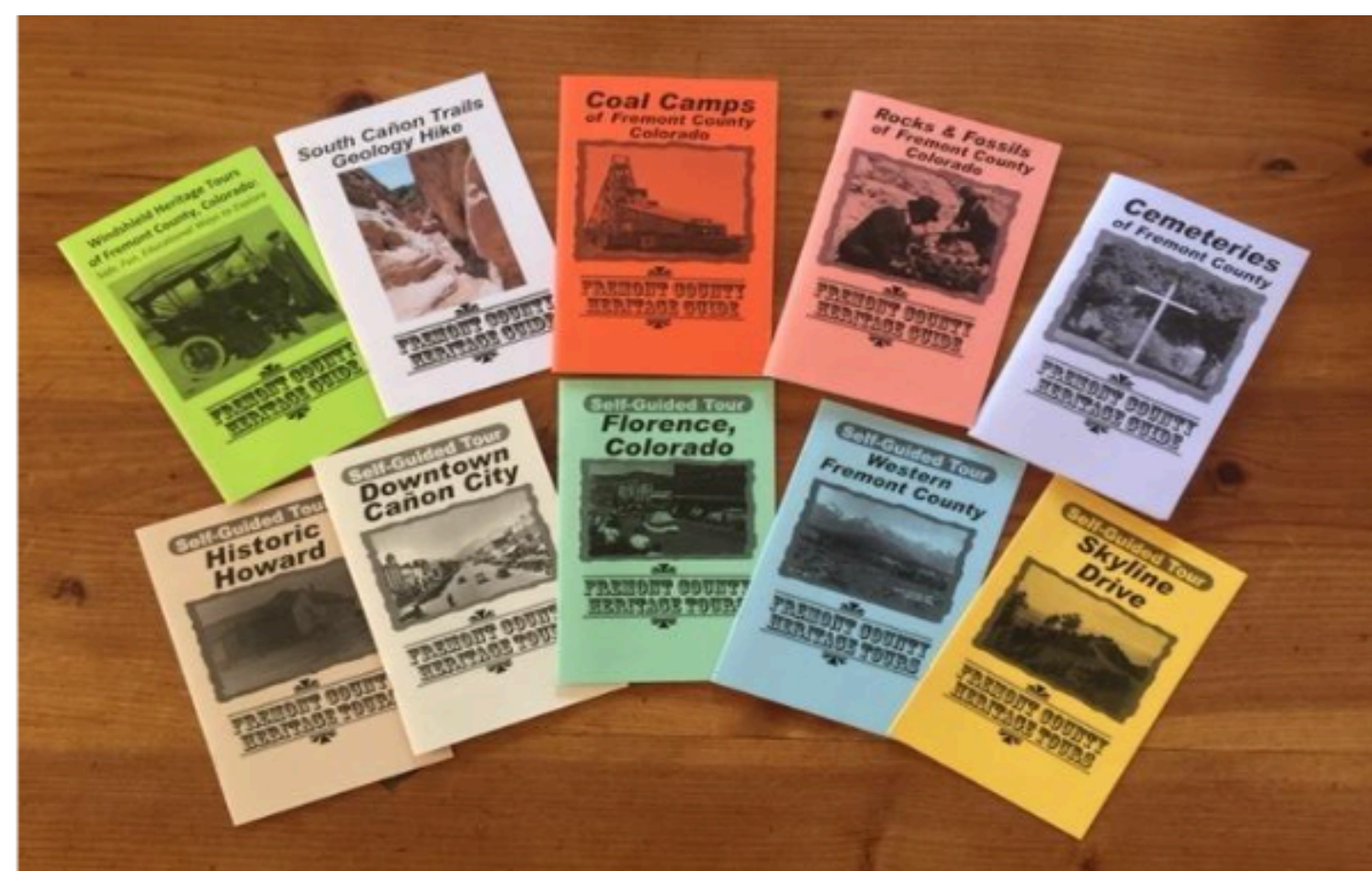
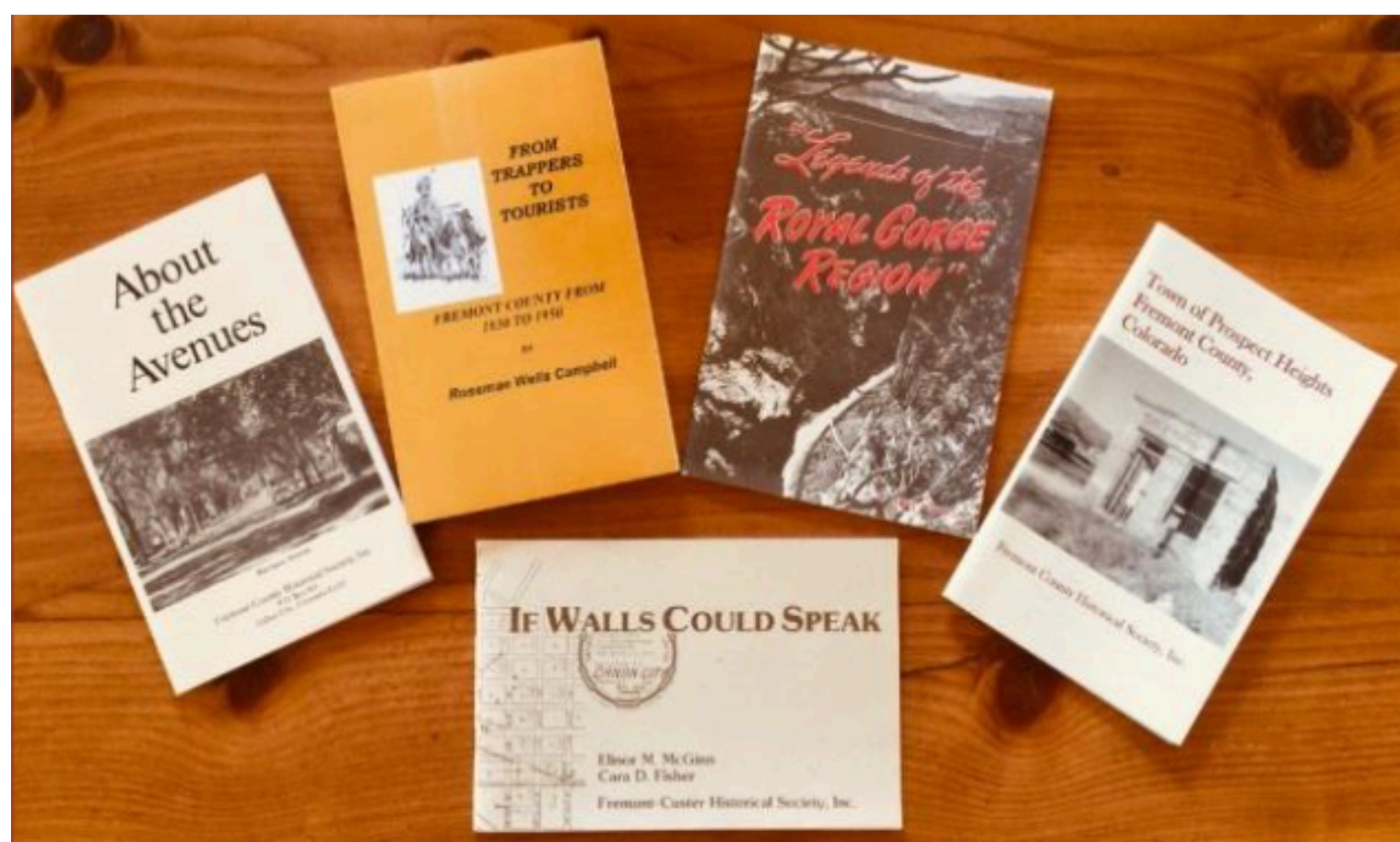
Betsy Denney
FCHS

FREMONT COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER MARCH 2025

ROYAL GORGE REGIONAL BOOKS FOR SALE

The history books written by Cara Fisher and Eleanor McGinn have been reprinted. A new book, *Legends of the Royal Gorge Region* by Janet Sterling, has been added. The new *Prospect Heights Town* book is also available at retail outlets in Canon City and Florence.

These have been added to the library of Fremont County Historical books published in the past four years by the Historical Society. The titles are *Canon City*, *Skyline Drive*, *Florence*, *Howard*, *Windshield Tours*, *South Canon Trails Geology Hike*, and *Western Fremont County*. The guide books for *Rocks and Fossils*, *Cemeteries*, and *Coal Camps* are also available online at www.fremontheritage.com/fchs.



ROYAL GORGE REGIONAL BOOKS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE FOLLOWING OUTLETS -- PRICES VARY.

CANON CITY AREA

1. FREMONT COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
2. ARTIST'S GALLERY
3. AUSTIN AUTOMOTIVE
4. MUSEUM AND HISTORY CENTER
5. PROSPECT HEIGHTS JAIL (SUMMER)
6. COLORADO MUSEUM OF PRISONS
7. ANY BOARD MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY

FLORENCE AREA

1. FLORENCE HISTORICAL ARCHIVE, INC.
2. FLORENCE PIONEER MUSEUM AND RESEARCH CENTER
3. ANTIQUE SALVAGE ON MAIN
4. BELL TOWER ART CENTER

WESTERN FREMONT COUNTY AREA

1. HOWARD MUSEUM (CHURCH)
2. COTOPAXI STORE
3. COTOPAXI-MULLINS HISTORY CENTER

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Thank you to all the new members who have joined this year – we are glad you have joined us. Dues cover December 31, to January 1.

- Individual.....\$15.00
- Family.....\$20.00
- Group.....\$25.00
- Lifetime.....\$150.00

Fremont County Historical Society. P.O. Box 965, Cañon City, CO 81215

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FREMONT COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER MARCH 2025

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The City of Cañon City is pleased to print the Fremont County Historical Society Newsletter as a contribution to the Society. Thanks for all you do for Fremont County History.



ROYAL GORGE **REGIONAL MUSEUM & HISTORY CENTER**

612 Royal Gorge Blvd.
Cañon City, Colorado

Open 10am - 4pm
Wed. - Sat.

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