

December 23, 2011

40 Attend Postal History Presentation

Potluck and postmarks combined on Dec. 10 in Shawnee

Douglas Stephens, Correspondent

On Dec. 10 more than 40 Park County Historical Society members and guests enjoyed a potluck dinner and a presentation about postal history along the route of the Denver, South Park & Pacific Railroad.



Seated in Shawnee

More than 40 people seated themselves at the potluck and presentation at the Park County Historical Society meeting in Shawnee on Dec. 10. (Photos by Art Hall, PCHS President)

Erwin Engert of Lakewood, who presented the program, is a member of the Denver Post Card Club, the Colorado Postal History Society, the Denver Stamp Club and the Rocky Mountain Philatelic Library.

Members and guests saw rare historical items from places along the railroad in the Platte River Canyon and from Denver to Breckenridge to Gunnison and many locations in between.

That included many places in Park County. For instance, there was one slide of a photo of Lake View Lodge, summer home of Charles Fredrick Weller. It was on the Denver South Park and Pacific line between Singleton and Cassels near Shawnee in Park County. Weller, president of the Richardson Drug Co. in Omaha, Neb., purchased the property in 1905 and built the Lake View Lodge as a retreat for his clients.

Engert also presented information about the Denver & Como Railroad and the Como & Gunnison Railroad. There were rare postmarks and cards from Cassells, Chase/Weller, Farnham, Insmont and Webster, and a rare card postmarked at the post office at Boreas.

And, there were many more non-Park County items from the old town of Divide near Trout Creek Pass, Saunders Cañon, and Newett, as the railroad passed through Trout Creek Canyon into Buena Vista and beyond.

The program was of interest to philatelists (stamp collectors), railroad buffs and overall history fans alike. The sloppy joe dinner was accompanied with several side dishes and desserts.

The next presentation and potluck will be on Saturday, Jan. 14, starting at 5 p.m. at the Platte Canyon Community Center in Shawnee. It will feature special guest Rex Rideout, who has performed music of the 1800s American West at numerous historic sites and museums. He plays the mandolin, fiddle, banjo and tin whistle along with re-enacting living history. He has been featured on TV, radio and in history magazines.

His acoustic music "A Voyage of Such Nature" was featured at the 200th anniversary of the Pike Expedition in Pueblo at its living history museum. He researched music played during that time and pinpointed such music to each of Pike's stopping points. Much of this music is well-known

Western ballads.

Rideout performed with Harrison Ford and Daniel Craig as a fiddler in the movie "Cowboys and Aliens."

The New Mexico Centennial Project 2012 has hired Rideout to perform cowboy ballads in a concert/program setting.