



A Colorado River tale, state celebrations, & Barbie in the Collection.

1 message



The Colorado River near Fruita, taken earlier this spring. *Photo by Sam Bock.*

What's in a name? Would a river by any other name be just as Colorado?

The Colorado River has had many names throughout its history. Ute, Navajo, Mojave, and other Indigenous peoples were familiar with the river and had their own names for it. When Colonial

Spaniards began mapping the region, they gave it many more, eventually settling on the Río Colorado.

Where a river starts is often just as much a matter of opinion as a geographical fact, and until 1921, the Colorado did not pass through a single inch of the state that shares its name.

The headwaters of the Colorado were once defined as the confluence of the Green and Grand Rivers...which happened to be in Utah. And for many Coloradans of the 1920s, this would not do. Despite complaints from both Utah and Wyoming, [on July 25, 1921, the maps were redrawn by a joint resolution of the U.S. House of Representatives](#). With the stroke of a pen, the Grand River ceased to exist and the Colorado River flowed an extra 1,450 miles, finally originating in our state.

This odd little story is a good reminder that nature has no boundaries and no names except the ones humans give it. Names come from somewhere. Each carries a story, a history, a culture, and a message.

—Devin Flores, *Digital Content Specialist*



Honoring Our Outgoing State Historian

Colorado's State Historian for the last year, Jared Orsi, has spent his time researching and highlighting the history of public lands, Indigenous people, and Colorado beyond the Front Range. Before he was in the role, [Orsi wrote about the significance of the word "our"](#) in reference to "our Colorado"—reflecting on who has often been excluded when that word's been used and what it might look like to expand the "our" to be truly universal. His year as State Historian gave him opportunities to continue expanding the definition. Orsi's work (including his [award-winning book about Zebulon Pike](#)) is a gift to us all.

When Flowers Fade

With wildflowers exploding in color all over the state, now's a good time to remember that what grows today might not grow tomorrow. And the work of [Marcus Eugene Jones](#) bears that out. The 19th century botanist spent the summers of 1878 and 1879 exploring Colorado's southern Front Range and collecting plants for identification. Now preserved and held at the California Botanic Garden, his extensive herbarium provides a snapshot of Colorado's ecosystem at a time when industry was just beginning to make significant impacts on the natural environment.

From the Collection: Cheers!



Fred Mazzulla Collection. History Colorado. 99.270.1266.33

Summer heat means cool treats! These two boys seem to have figured out a way to make the best of a heat wave, using plant straws to share a refreshment from a wooden barrel. Stay Colorado cool out there, folks!

Celebrate Colorado!

From balloon festivals, live music, and art walks to museum and historic property tours—and so much more!—the Centennial State is [celebrating its birthday](#) in style for a whole week leading up to

Colorado Day on August 1. [Check out the growing list of participants](#) and make your plans to celebrate Colorado's big one-four-seven!

National Buffalo Soldiers Day

On July 28, 1866, the United States Congress passed the Army Reauthorization Act, establishing the all-Black military regiments that we now refer to as Buffalo Soldiers. Then in 1992, President George H.W. Bush signed [Proclamation 6461](#), creating National Buffalo Soldiers Day on July 28 to honor the accomplishments of one of the most highly decorated units in American military history. Buffalo Soldiers in the 9th Cavalry were stationed for a while at Fort Garland, and today you can [visit the museum](#) to learn more about their incredible story in the exhibition [buffalo soldiers: reVision](#).

The Allure of AI?

Conversations about the good, the bad, and the ugly uses of Artificial Intelligence (AI) are exploding across the internet. One recently published article considers the potential pitfalls and benefits of AI in creating and monitoring content for online encyclopedias (especially *Wikipedia*)—and since History Colorado houses the online resource [Colorado Encyclopedia](#), we found this article particularly interesting. [Read it for yourself](#) in the *New York Times Magazine*.

Managing the Mustang Population

In Colorado's Piceance Wild Horse Management Area, mustangs are running, well, wild. The Bureau of Land Management has a goal of removing about 500 horses from the territory—and in the meantime, volunteers are loading up to slow mustang population growth one dart at a time. A [recent Colorado Sun article](#) details how a fertility control vaccine (basically, long-term birth control for mares) is being used to prevent pregnancies among the wild horses. But the dart-shooting method isn't the most efficient. The whole situation reminds us of a [Lost Highways episode from the team's newest season](#), available in a podcatcher near you.

In a Barbie World



Barbie artifacts going on display at History Colorado Center. Photo by Lucy Snow.

Warner Brothers' *Barbie* movie finally hit theaters this past Friday—and sent us [digging through the collection](#) for our favorite Barbie artifacts. While Barbie herself was created in Los Angeles, the plastic icon has Colorado roots: its creator [Ruth Handler](#) was born and raised in Denver, where her family ran a drug store and soda fountain. In honor of the film's release, History Colorado members can enjoy a special exhibition of Barbie dolls and accessories in the Members' Lounge at the History Colorado Center.



Upcoming Events and Programs



**The Wonders of the
Whittier Neighborhood
Walking Tour
Sat. Jul 29, 9 AM**

No part of the city has always been this way or that way, and few of Denver's historic neighborhoods exemplify that like Whittier. We'll hit the sidewalks to talk of Buffalo Bill, beer, architecture, pop-ups, lost schools, racial reckonings and a lot more.

[Learn more.](#)



**Reel to Real: *There Will Be Blood*
Tue. Aug 1, 6:30 PM**

There Will Be Blood tells the story of a silver miner turned oil prospector who starts snatching up land in California in pursuit of becoming a tycoon. The film sparks questions about Colorado's own oil and gas industry and its long history in the state. Rachael Storm, Curator of Business & Industry, will lead the post-film discussion.

[Learn more](#)



**Candlelight:
Celebrating Colorado
Day
Tue. Aug 1, 7 PM**

Candlelight concerts bring the magic of a live, multi-sensory musical experience to awe-inspiring locations like never seen before in Denver. Get your tickets now to discover a selection of music celebrating the best of Colorado under the gentle glow of candlelight.

[Learn more.](#)



**How-To Preserve
Family Papers
Thu. Jul 27, 12 PM**

In this online program via Zoom, hear History Colorado's Curator of Archives, and resident genealogy nerd, Shaun Boyd talk about how to preserve your family papers, especially the conditions that make for ideal storage.

[Learn more.](#)

More Things To Do

ICYMI: Keep the Blues Alive

El Chapultepec was a Denver institution for nearly 90 years. Since 1933, the famous club has been a mainstay for the city's jazz and blues scenes. Now musicians and patrons of "the Pec" hope to preserve some of the memories that made the place pop. Play your part, by lending your El Chapultepec photos and stories to the project.

Jennifer P. Garner Just Marked Seven Years as a History Colorado Member

Jennifer is making history with us and you can too! As a member, you'll get a subscription to the expanded *The Colorado Magazine* and breathe life into eleven museums and historic sites still recovering from a 51 percent reduction in their main funding source during the pandemic. Your support goes a very long way. Please join today.

We Couldn't Do It Without You!

In our mission to share Colorado's rich history, we invite you to donate in support of our programs! By supporting today, you'll provide more statewide historic preservation and education.

- \$25 provides lecture tickets for students to expand their education
- \$50 supports a free fourth-grade family History Buff membership
- \$250 offers a week at Hands-On History for a child who otherwise couldn't attend

Thank you for your thoughtfulness and consideration, we couldn't do it without YOU!

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