



## Upcoming Events

- *Looking Back for a Vision Forward*, “History and Nostalgia,” Feb. 3, 2022, 6:30-8 p.m., via Zoom [REGISTER HERE](#)
- *Looking Back for a Vision Forward*, “Transportation” Apr. 7, 2022, 6:30-8 p.m., hybrid session (Depot and Zoom)
- *Looking Back for a Vision Forward*, “Land Use” Jun. 2, 2022, 6:30-8 p.m., hybrid session (Depot and Zoom)
- *Looking Back for a Vision Forward*, “Water” Aug. 4, 2022, 6:30-8 p.m., hybrid session (Depot and Zoom)
- *Looking Back for a Vision Forward*, “Public Health” Oct. 6, 2022, 6:30-8 p.m., hybrid session (Depot and Zoom)



THE BROOMCORN EXPRESS  
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As the new year begins, our hearts are filled with hope. We want to express our heartfelt gratitude for our members, whose generous donations have provided much-needed funding for the Broomfield Depot Museum.

This year, more than ever, we need our community to join together and support the museum’s work in preserving local history—information as well as artifacts. Your continued support for this important work will help illuminate and inspire future generations in and around Broomfield.

Please visit <https://friendsofbroomfieldhistory.org/shop> to renew your membership today!

# Oh Wow!

A letter from the President,  
Annie Lessem

## Looking Back for a Vision Forward

Growing up, I thought history was the dulllest, most useless subject ever. It was just a bunch of names, dates, and places that had no relevance to anything I could imagine. Its only saving grace was that it was so easy—just remember those names, dates, and places for the tests and be done with it. No thinking was required. But



then, being in college in the 60s, came my engagement in protests and my push for civil rights. Eventually, also came an awareness that what we were doing was making history, and that history could be something alive, something that could have meaning beyond those names, dates, and places. My awareness broadened even more when I moved from the northern part of the United States to Texas. Having never lived south of the Mason/Dixon Line before, I wondered what might be taught about the Civil War. What I learned was

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# Looking Back for a Vision Forward

Mark your calendar for **Feb. 3, 2022, 6:30-8 p.m.** This is the first of five facilitated “conversations” about the past and future of our city. In this meeting we’ll consider the important differences between history and nostalgia, as well as the ways in which history can be changed or enhanced when viewed through different lenses.

Additional sessions will be held on the first Thursdays of April, June, August, and October. We’ll look at Broomfield history as it relates to transportation, land use, water, and public health. The first session will be via Zoom, but we hope to offer hybrid sessions beginning in April. Register in advance for this meeting: [Registration link](#). After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.



*Photo by Edward Eyer from Pexels*

## *Oh Wow! Continued from page 2*

that there was no such thing as the “Civil War.” However, there was a “War of Northern Aggression” that took place at the same time and had the same battles, and in this war, Southern heroes fought gallantly against the stealing, cheating Northerners. As a result, Southerners were beaten into submission and subjected to unjust repercussions that would never be forgiven or forgotten.

As a result of these types of events in my life my thoughts about history changed. I became aware that history was malleable, and that it could be different depending on who you were, where you lived, what you believed, and who had the power and resources to publicize, teach, broadcast, etc. that history. It was from those realizations that I finally understood not only the importance of history, but also that its importance was greatly enhanced when considered from different points of view. And I also understood that even though, by definition, history is about the past, its critical importance is about how it would impact the future.

Through a generous Arts, Culture, and Science grant from the City and County of Broomfield, the Friends of Broomfield History will be sponsoring a series of five community conversations titled, “Looking Back for a Vision Forward” about several things that impacted Broomfield’s history. The conversations will explore specific aspects of that history from different perspectives and will include facilitated discussions about where we might go from here. Sometimes that history might make us feel good, sometimes it might make us angry or sad, or embarrassed. Regardless of the emotions we might feel, we hope that history can provide insights we might not have had otherwise about ways to move forward. The first of these conversations will set the stage by contrasting history and nostalgia and will take place from 6:30-8 p.m. on February 3, 2022. In other sessions we will look at Broomfield history related to transportation, land use, water, and public health. The first session will be via Zoom, and subsequent sessions will be hybrid—in person in the lower level of the Depot Museum, or via Zoom—and they will take place on the first Thursdays of February, April, June, August, and October. I hope to see many of you there. §

# Walk this Way

—Sallie Diamond



*The Honey House*

A few steps behind the Depot Museum sits a building called the Honey House. It belonged to Harry Crawford, Broomfield’s first major beekeeper. Harry migrated to Broomfield in 1891 and convinced A. J. Zang to sell him an acre of the Zang ranch property, which served as the Crawford farm. He and his family worked about 500 bee colonies. Harry won the silver medal for comb honey at the World’s Fair in 1904 and the family built the Honey House in 1905. The family sold their honey from this building for the next several years and even shipped it all across the Western U.S. The building was declared a local landmark in 2006 and now serves as a museum exhibit at Zang Spur Park. §

# The Year that Broomfield Almost Got a Mansion

—Elizabeth Beaudoin, Curator

While digitizing a group of nearly 400 photographs of Broomfield from the 1960's and 70s, one photo made me pause: it was an image of two couples handing a check to a woman. Behind them was a sign that read, "Save the Trianon—\$175,000 Needed to Bring Museum to Broomfield." The sign featured a hand-drawn image of a building that was fit for a European city, not for the small suburban town of 1960s Broomfield. Gee, isn't the Trianon a building in France? I'm relatively new to Broomfield, but I think I would have known if a European-style palace was located here. So what happened? I had to look into this.

The Trianon, or "Claremont" as it was originally called, was a palatial house in Colorado Springs built in 1906 by a New York couple (Charles and Virginia Baldwin) who moved to the Springs for health reasons. The building is based on the [Grand Trianon at Versailles, France](#), built in 1687 by "The Sun King" Louis XIV. This Colorado Springs mansion featured the same Baroque elegance of grand columns and floor-to-ceiling windows as the French version. It was built in Italian white marble and featured rows of arched windows inspired by the original Hall of Mirrors. The interior was of course lavishly furnished with antique furniture, paintings, rare books, and a chandelier that reportedly once belonged to Czar Nicholas II.

After the death of Charles, Virginia remarried an alleged Russian Prince, and the house passed through multiple hands. In 1964, the house was purchased by John W. Metzger, head of the "Trianon Foundation." Metzger, a prominent Denver lawyer and one-time Colorado Attorney General, owned a farm near Broomfield, now the [Metzger Farm Open Space](#).



The Trianon, Western History Department, Denver Public Library, X-14716. Used with permission.

In 1964, the house was purchased by John W. Metzger, head of the "Trianon Foundation."

Initially, Metzger had hoped to run the house as a museum and tourist destination, but due to the neighborhood zoning laws he was banned from doing so. As outlined in the Broomfield Star-Builder (Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection), from 1964 to 1966, Metzger alerted the public that the building was in danger of demolition. Metzger, even after forming a foundation, may have realized that he couldn't afford to maintain the mansion without a steady stream of admission fees, so he decided to mobilize the civic-minded citizens of the newly constructed neighborhood of Broomfield Heights to help save the lavish Trianon. He had received a verbal quote of \$175,000 to move and rebuild the building in Broomfield, where it could be freely run as a museum. Metzger said he would provide the land. (A later news article from Jan. 14, 1965 would state that Joe Huddart was donating a site on "the west side of Highway 287, at approximately 10th Ave" where the Depot Museum and Lac Amora neighborhood is today.)

The citizens of Broomfield, particularly the women in the community, were no strangers to fundraising. Only a

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## Mansion , Continued from page 4

year before, the community had come together to fund the [Mamie Doud Eisenhower Library](#). By the autumn of 1964, a group called “Citizens for the Trianon” was formed and taking action. By October, the Broomfield Star-Builder newspaper began regularly publishing articles about fundraising efforts to Save the Trianon. On November 1, the Broomfield Chamber of Commerce invited fellow Broomfielders to tour the building as part of a full-day excursion to Colorado Springs, including brunch at the Air Force Academy followed by a tour of the Trianon. Over 250 tickets were sold at \$6 each (the equivalent of \$53 in 2021), and interest continued to be high, so the group repeated the trip the following weekend.

Meanwhile, The Broomfield Bank hosted an exhibit featuring 20 color photographs of the Trianon made by commercial photographer Art Gore, with local school children being brought to the bank to view the artwork. Girl and Boy Scouts were mobilized to canvas the neighborhood handing out handbills calling for donations to save the Trianon. The November 5 Star-Builder newspaper reported that “Students of all Broomfield schools are participating in Trianon poster and Trianon model contests.” Meanwhile, various fundraising dinners, concerts, and raffles were held—including one raffle in which the grand prize was a trip to Paris that included a tour of the original Trianon palace of Louis XIV.

On Dec. 17, fundraiser Lois Neuwirth announced, “The Trianon is saved!” and she thanked Mrs. Betty Hubbard of Morrison, Colorado, for a \$65,000 pledge that had helped the organization reach its goal. This gift, along with all the other funds raised over just a few months, brought the total to the \$175,000 goal. By Jan. 14, the Trianon Committee had readied its proposal, which included additional persuasive information,

such as the location’s superb views, accessible location from highways and major cities, access to sewer and water lines, and protection through Broomfield’s fire and police departments. On Feb. 11, the committee announced that the Trianon’s new home would be on Metzger’s farm at W. 120th Ave and Federal Blvd, and that the first “tile from the exterior of the building” would be removed for transport on Mar. 1.

So what happened? After a few months of no reported news, a small, apologetic article appeared in the Broomfield Star-Builder on April 29, 1965: “Trianon Move All Dead; All Money To Be Refunded.” Before releasing the funds, the bank had insisted that a study be made prior to the start of the project. This study reported that the cost of the dismantling of the building,

move, and rebuild would cost between \$850,000 and \$1 million...a far cry from the \$175,000 estimate Metzger had been given initially.

But there is some good news. While Metzger had led people to believe that the Trianon was in danger

of being gutted and razed, demolition wasn’t quite so imminent. In 1967 he found a buyer in The Colorado Springs School, a private college preparatory school that still owns and maintains the property (in its original location) today. In the intervening years, unfortunately, Metzger was forced to sell much of the Trianon’s artwork and rare books. Some of the remaining art he took with him to a museum he opened in Denver.

Most of the money raised by the Trianon Committee was returned to the donors; the committee recommended redirecting the refunds to Broomfield’s Mamie Doud Eisenhower Library. The library received a mere \$637 from former Trianon donations, and eventually, Broomfield built its own mansions as it expanded north and east. §



Trianon fundraiser, 1964

*Continued on page 6*

**Additional Resources on The Trianon:**

Kinder, Libby. (2019, Oct. 2). The Colorado Springs School's roots are in former chateau. *Cheyenne Edition*. [https://gazette.com/cheyenneedition/the-colorado-springs-schools-roots-are-in-former-chateau/article\\_10bb8f3c-e164-11e9-8383-f7c7ad2484d1.html](https://gazette.com/cheyenneedition/the-colorado-springs-schools-roots-are-in-former-chateau/article_10bb8f3c-e164-11e9-8383-f7c7ad2484d1.html)

A Touch of Versailles in the Colorado Rockies. (1964, Feb. 16). *New York Times Archive*. <https://www.nytimes.com/1964/02/16/archives/a-touch-of-versailles-in-colo->

## The Marshall Fire

—David Allison

2021 ended with a tragic fire that destroyed much of the old town of historic Superior. In the wake of the fire, I had a brief email exchange with Larry Dorsey, the chair of the Superior Historic Commission, and he shared that they are facing an almost total loss of the Superior Museum. Elizabeth (our curator) and I have offered to support them however we can, but we know that this is a huge loss for the history of our community—to say nothing of the property damage, emotional toll, and potential loss of life from the Marshall Fire.

Fortunately, many of Superior's historic resources are stored elsewhere—including at 6 Garden Center in the Broomfield History Collection. One such example is on the right. This image depicts Superior's station agent Robert Hillen outside their depot with his pet parakeet perched on his shoulder. As you may know, Superior had a depot that was very similar to Broomfield's, and although Superior's history is different because it was primarily a mining community, the similarities between the two towns are extensive.

The sobering reality of this event brings to our attention the need to be ready for emergencies. In the coming weeks, we will revisit our outdated emergency procedures and look more closely at how we can be prepared for the worst-case scenario, like what we saw this past Thursday.

In addition, with a tragedy of this scale happening so close to Broomfield, we will need to be ready to support our colleagues in Superior and Louisville in their recovery efforts. We do not yet know what form this support might take, but as we do with all of our programs and partnerships, we will enter into the fray with empathy and open minds.

As we begin 2022, we will continue to look back to the past for a vision forward. We hope that you will join us for our first Looking Back for a Vision Forward event on Feb. 3 at the Depot. We'll explore the intersection of history and nostalgia and discover some shared tools to decipher the crucial differences between these two ways of viewing the past. It promises to be invigorating! \$



Robert Hillen outside the Superior Depot with his pet parakeet, ca. 1930

# Broomfield

## Changes Through Time

A timely excerpt from [Sylvia Pettem's book](#), published by Book Lode in 2001.

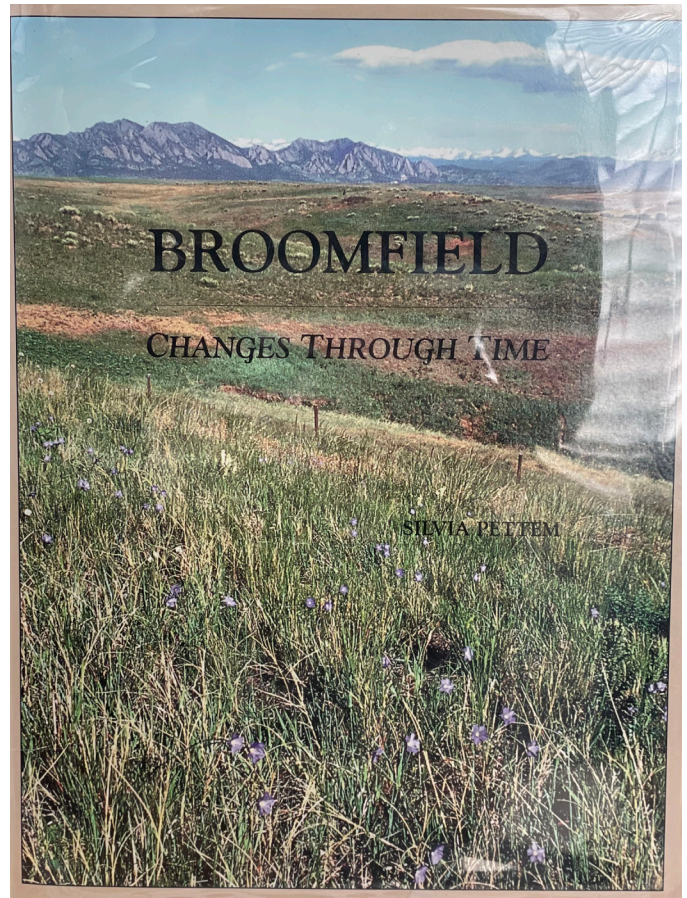
—Elizabeth Beaudoin, Curator

In the wake of last week's destructive and disheartening Marshall Fire, I've heard some say they never thought such a fire was a possibility on the Front Range. It made me think of a historical account published in Sylvia Pettem's 2001 book, "Broomfield Changes Through Time," which tells of another winter prairie fire that occurred in Broomfield in 1910. Twenty-one year old Francis Cron was living with her stepfather William Brown, and years later, Francis related the story of the fire to her daughter:

*It was about ten o'clock p.m. when he [William Brown] was awakened by the smell of smoke. Across the stubble-fields the fire had come from the big freight train. They had not put the cap down over the smokestack. It had already caught onto the horse and cow barn. He hurried and aroused the helper [John Cook]. They could not do anything with it, as it was fanned by a strong January wind.*

The Brown family was able to save their horses and cows, but the fire quickly spread to the chicken coop and bunk house. William Brown almost got trapped in a rack of burning hay, but survived. They all feared the house would burn as well:

*[T]hey put their clothing in gunny sacks and took them down to the orchard in the shelter of the trees. Then the other valuable thing was the piano. It was moved to the doorway so it could easily be moved out. Cinders rolled down and off the house but it did not catch on fire. He [William] collected money from the insurance company and the railroad, but not near enough to pay for the damages. \$*



Broomfield Depot Museum Collection:  
Unidentified woman, Frances Cron,  
William Brown, Ellenor Brown, Blanche  
Brown

# Broomfield Oral History Collection, 1980-1999

—Sandra Roberts, Editor

Last month, the Broomfield Depot Museum received a veritable box of secrets from longtime Broomfield resident and open space advocate, Eleanor (Ellie) McKinley: 20 years worth of interviews (1980-1999) with Broomfield residents, many of whom are no longer with us.

When I was given an opportunity to talk with Ellie about her box of cassette and VHS tapes, I started by asking, “When did you move to Broomfield, and why did you decide to interview people about its history?”

Laughing, Ellie said that when she moved to Broomfield in 1967, one of her neighbors had a strange way of making her feel welcome. “Well,” the woman said to Ellie in a somewhat pretentious tone, “You’re not really part of ‘Old Broomfield.’” But Ellie didn’t let it bother her. “I guess my neighbor had been in town since the 1950s. There used to be an old timers club that met for a picnic every year. I wasn’t part of that because I hadn’t been here long enough.”

After living in Broomfield for more than a decade, in the 1980s, Ellie decided to find out more about the history of Broomfield. She started collecting information from neighbors, friends, and well-known Broomfield personalities. At one point she teamed up with Carol Schank and did a video with the seniors. “We had a lot of old timers. They’ll tell you a lot about how Broomfield got started as the City of Broomfield—not old Broomfield. It was laid out as a planned city and that’s why we were able to plan for so much open space.”

Ellie grew up in Kentucky, where there’s a lot of history. “When I moved to Broomfield, I thought this area was not that old. But there’s a lot of history here, too.” She enjoyed capturing historical stories on tape,



**I think she caught on fire one time from the stove and she was burned pretty badly.**

and among her interviews, she had a few favorites: “I had fun doing those interviews, particularly with Miles Crawford. He was a bee person. I had a new video camera with batteries that you strapped around your waist. I really enjoyed interviewing people, but I expected more about the early days of the Jaycees. There are still people alive who know the 1950s and can talk about those days.” Ellie also said that the interview with Mrs. Edna Hulstrom uncovered some unforgettable stories: “Her children were people that were well known in Broomfield. These people had a pretty rough time in those early days. It was not easy to have a whole bunch of kids. I think she caught on fire one time from the stove and she was burned pretty badly. And she had cans underneath the bed and they froze and broke. It was a mess.” Hulstrom Elementary School bears the name of our brave foremother, 1906-1999.

Over the years, Ellie has generously shared her knowledge of local history through “Grandmother’s Trunk” programs with school kids; she also worked as a docent at the Broomfield Depot Museum. Eventually, Ellie turned her attention to Broomfield’s open space, particularly The Field, and she put all of her energy into her new calling. At 93 years young, Ellie continues to be an outspoken advocate for our open space: “I’m still involved. I still want to be. I don’t believe in vacating the things you love.” §



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Once logged into King Soopers, search for Friends of Broomfield History either by name or KU085 and then click Enroll. If you don't have a King Soopers account, open one today! You will need a loyalty card from the store and an email address.

The Friends of Broomfield History is dedicated to sustaining the history and heritage of Broomfield through our relationship with the Broomfield Museum, our members and other community partners. Your membership or contribution bolsters all our work, and we greatly appreciate your support.

“Be in! Be appreciated! Be connected! Join today!”



Find us on Facebook!  
[@FriendsofBroomfieldHistory](https://www.facebook.com/FriendsofBroomfieldHistory)

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### *Friends of Broomfield History* *Membership Form*

*Donations received now will apply to a membership through 12/2022*

**\$20 donation: Basic Membership**

**\$50 donation: Contributing Membership**

**\$100 donation: Sustaining Membership**

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