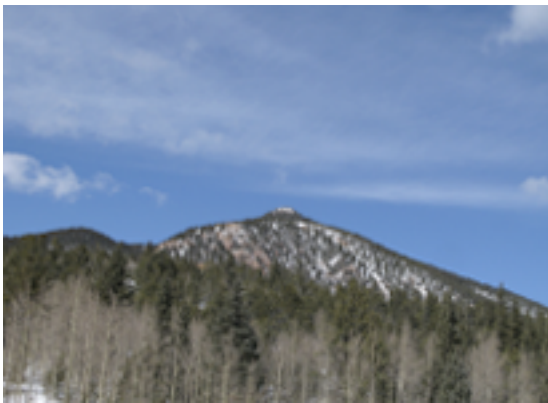


*What Pike saw-* We wanted you to see what Zebulon Pike and three of his men saw on approaching Pike's Grand Peak (Pikes Peak) *as they would have seen it*. This winter view shows Mt. Rosa in the center [from Gold Camp Road southwest of Colorado Springs CO,] with Devils Slide on the right. Judging from the lay of the land, accord with Mike Fink at nearby Bear Trap Ranch, & topographic map considerations, their approach to Rosa would likely have been along the social road below Devils Slide [white with snow] and onto the right and above the now quarried scar of Rosa to it's summit.



This view of 11,499 foot Mt. Rosa [taken from west of Cheyenne Mtn.] shows how Rosa towers over the landscape. The picture on the right is how Pike would have viewed his 14,115 foot Grand Peak from the top of Mt. Rosa.



© Colorado Historical Society

*Let's Go with Pike*

#### ZEBULON PIKE'S JOURNAL

"Arose hungry, dry, and extremely sore from the inequality of the rocks on which we had lain all night, but were amply compensated for toil by the sublimity of the prospects below. The unbounded prairie was overhung with clouds, which appeared like the ocean in a storm; wave piled on wave and foaming, whilst the sky was perfectly clear where we were. Commenced our march up the mountain, and in about one hour arrived at the summit of this chain: here we found the snow middle deep; no sign of beast or bird inhabiting this region. The thermometer which stood at (52 degrees) at the foot of the mountain, here fell to (23 degrees). The summit of the Grand Peak, which was entirely bare of vegetation and covered with snow, now appeared at the distance of 15 or 16 miles from us, and as high again as what we had ascended, and would have taken a whole day's march to have arrived at its base, when I believe no human being could have ascended to its pinical. This with the condition of my soldiers who had only light overalls on and no stockings, and every way ill provided to endure the inclemency of the region; the bad prospect of killing anything to

*subsist on, with the further detention of two or three days, which it must occasion, determined us to return. The clouds from below had now ascended the mountain and entirely enveloped the summit on which rests eternal snows. We descended by a long deep ravine with much less difficulty than contemplated. Found all our baggage safe, but the provisions all destroyed. It began to snow and we sought shelter under the side of a projecting rock, where we, all four, made a meal on one partridge, and a piece of deer's ribs the ravens had left us, being the first we had eaten in that 48 hours."*

Two hundred years to the day, Pike enthusiasts, led by Dave Phillips and John Murphy, bushwhacked Pike's probable route up to Mt. Rosa. [The next day in the snow these enthusiasts did conquer Pike's Grand Peak.]

**Sunday November 26, 2006 By Dave Phillips THE GAZETTE [Colorado Springs CO]**

Fortunately, the toughest legwork {of knowing where to go} has been done by local historian and retired trial lawyer John Murphy. For more than a century, historians have agreed Pike climbed a mountain near Pikes Peak, but disagreed on which one. In the crowd of rocky humps south of Pikes Peak, including Mount Rosa, Black Mountain, Blue Mountain, Gray Back Peak, Mount Miller, and Cheyenne Mountain, all have been labeled "the" peak at one time or another.

When Murphy retired from law in the 1990s, he decided to put his legal training to work identifying the true mountain. He treated Pike's trip to the unknown summit as the crime scene of an attempted murder. "After all, the mountains almost killed him," he said recently. "So I treated all of the mountains like suspects in a lineup, and I treated Pike's journal like a victim's statement. He described what the perpetrator looked like, how much time he spent with it, and everything else."

Analyzing Pike's journal, Murphy came up with 12 characteristics the true mountain must have. On the true mountain, the summit of Pikes Peak had to be hidden by hills during the climb, then suddenly become visible at the top. The mountain must be the "summit of this chain" and have a rock shelter about an hour's walk from its top. Murphy practically turned the 200-year-old journal into an episode of TV's "CSI." The temperature difference Pike noted in his journals between the plains and summit gave a clue to the peak's elevation. Grazing buffalo Pike noted gave hints to topography. Peak by peak, using maps and observation in the field, Murphy eliminated suspects.

The clincher came when Murphy tested the duration of the hike. It took Pike about 10 hours to climb from the foot of the mountains to the cave where he and his men slept. Then it was another hour to the summit. Murphy needed to time the hike of each suspect peak. Since the retired lawyer couldn't expect to keep a young explorer's pace, he persuaded two strapping young men to do it. He even made them walk in the winter to match conditions Pike faced.

Black, Blue and Cheyenne mountains were too short. Rosa was a perfect match.

Every detail Pike mentioned in his journal checked out. "I used to tell juries, truth is like a well-founded bell. A fine bell will sound the same no matter where it is struck. No matter what aspect you look at with Rosa, it matches up," he said. "It's way beyond conjecture. Either Pike was lying or he climbed Mount Rosa."

Generations that attempt to retrace the steps of Pike in another 100 years might have new technology that can find clues unavailable today, but Murphy thinks they will confirm what his boots-on-the ground approach has found.

**John Murphy's Corner** Here is how Pike and Co made it up Mt. Rosa.

**Monday, Nov. 24, 1806:** They left the S bank of the Arkansas just a bit W of the confluence with Fountain Creek-not today's but 200 years ago. Then it was near River St. in Pueblo-see Coues. They leave at 1 and march north on the west side of Fountain Creek. After 3 or 4 miles Pike saw Fountain Creek bend a bit to the east, as it still does today, and heads northwest toward Pikes Peak. They camp after making good about 12 miles. The camp, I believe, is west and a bit south of the T Cross Ranch that you can see from I 25 N of Pueblo.



**Tues, Nov. 25:** They marched all day across now Ft. Carson and camp on Little Fountain Creek, on post, just east of CO highway 115 at Deadman's Canyon.

**Wed, Nov. 26:** This was a huge day. They climbed the ridge above LSU Geology camp and gained basically flat Goat Mountain, then lost elevation on Gray Back Peak's southeast ridge. They gained the summit of Gray Back (the S summit above Emerald Valley Ranch) and then followed the N ridge of Gray Back toward Sugarloaf Mtn. They circled Sugarloaf on the E side and gained the ridge joining Sugarloaf, where one stops going up, and starts going down to

the Bear Trap Ranch. Now they stayed on the ridge heading west and crossed the Gold Camp road just E of Devil's Slide which is part of the St. Peters Dome Ridge. Once on this ridge they followed it to its intersection with Mt. Rosa's S ridge. They climbed this ridge just above the Wye campground to the cave at 10,700 feet and slept.

**Thurs.:** They followed the ridge to Rosa's summit, and descended to the Wye Campground area. This is one of the sources of Little Fountain Creek, where Pike knew his base camp was, and followed the stream, down to Bear Trap Ranch, then on to Emerald Valley Ranch, and back to the base camp. So it was a ridge hike on the ascent and a valley/creek march back.

**Fri.:** They chose to climb out of Deadman's Canyon to the S and followed Little Turkey Creek to near its confluence with Turkey Creek. Here they found Comanche petrologists, shot buffalo and camped under a "shelving rock" which I found. They were beat and turned in early.

**Sat:** They followed Turkey Creek until it went too far S, and left it and went directly home across Pueblo West. They could see the line of Cottonwood trees lining Fountain Creek, and its confluence with the Arkansas river for a guide as the weather was clear, since there is no mention of any more snow until the next morning.

# Newsletter *Pike National Historic Trail*

Association March 2008

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**Monty Pike** I had a chance to hold Pike's sword. The person in charge of the State Museum on 14th Avenue in Denver [Colorado Historical Society], found out my connection with him. So I was invited to come to the museum. I didn't have any idea what was available so I went down to the museum. The exact time has slipped my mind but it was about 1960.

When I got to the museum and had an escort to the basement and a guarded container was opened, I was asked if I wanted to hold the sword and scabbard. My answer was- It was great that the sword was viewed by me, but to hold it was more than I could ever expect. The sword was replaced carefully and almost reverently in the case. My seeing the sword and knowing where it now was, was beyond my greatest wish. What a thrill!

*Monty Pike's actual name is Zebulon Montgomery Pike. He is nicknamed Monty as his famous relative was called by Pike's family. Monty grew up in Golden, CO and now resides in Salida, CO with his dear wife Grace, near where Pike spent Christmas 1806 (see photo of Monty and the Christmas Camp sight [right]).*

*Monty is past president of the Pike Family Association, a retired Army Captain, and the Great, great, great grandnephew of ZM Pike.*



Pike's sword and scabbard courtesy Colorado Historical Society  
The "Stars & Stripes" or 15 star flag in background- Pike's flag



*Pike National Historic Trail Association*  
10060 Blue Sky Trail  
Conifer CO 80433

Pike stockade in the snow  
(taken 3/10/2008 HH)



Zebulon Montgomery Pike (Monty)  
Christmas 1806 Encampment site  
(3/10/2008 HH)