

# PIKE NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL



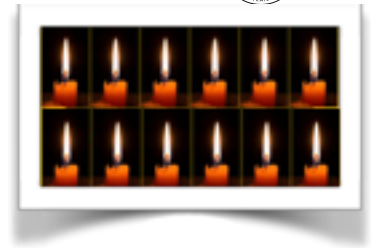
Newsletter — 2019 Vol. 13 No. 9 Nov.



## OUR TWELFTH BIRTHDAY

Our Association celebrated its twelfth birthday in September.

It has been pointed out the actual birth date of the **Pike National Historic Trail Association** was late in September of 2007. The informal organization of the Association took place in Trinidad, CO fittingly near the Equestrian statue of Kit Carson. The Founding Board was included Dr. Clive Siegel from Texas; Dr. Leo Oliva from Kansas; John Patrick Michael Murphy from Colorado Springs and Harv Hisgen from Conifer, CO.



### Memories

We fondly recall the Santa Fe Trail Association's Pike Bicentennial events in 2006. The Pike "Siting of the Small Blue Cloud" location and Memorial plaque dedication in Las Animas, CO was particularly impressive. The dedication occurred at 2 pm on November 15, 2006, on the same spot Pike and his men stood **200 years to the minute prior** when Pike sited Pikes Peak, or as he called it the Grand Mountain. From 171 miles distance (to Pikes Peak)- *"At 2 o'clock in the afternoon I thought I could distinguish a mountain to our right, which appeared like a small blue cloud; viewed it with the spyglass, ..."* -Pike Journal November 15, 1806

### We are particularly happy this year 2019

★ The main goal for which we exist — To begin the process of a Feasibility Study leading hopefully to the

dedication of the **PIKE NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL**, was passed by Congress in March. We look forward to working with the National Park Service.

★ The Pike Trail in Colorado was also established.

## PIKE STYMIED BY CAÑON OF ARKANSAS

### EXPLORER CAMPS AT AWE-INSPIRING CHASM

Credit: Royal Gorge Regional Museum

Jefferson territory, December 5, 1806

Lieut. Zebulon Montgomery Pike and party of 22 arrived at the Grand Canyon of the Arkansas late this afternoon after a march of 18 miles. Both men and horses were extremely weary, having covered some rough terrain in the past few days.

Lieut. Pike and four the party are now recovering from the chilling experience of trying to climb snowcapped mountain peaks while clad in cotton overalls and buffalo hide moccasins. They did not reach the top of the peak which they had sited several weeks earlier, but became thoroughly tired, hungry and gosh awful cold in the attempt.

Lieut. Pike and party plan to spend several days in the vicinity. Great numbers of deer and wild turkey have been discovered and the dauntless explorer and his crew have been enjoying a change from their rather steady diet of tough buffalo meat. "it is hard to select the tender ones when you shoot in a hurry," was that comment of Sparks, one of the hunters of the party.

Pike believes that this expedition has completed at least half the objectives they set out to accomplish when they left St. Louis last January [actually August]. He feels that he has definitely established the headwaters of the Arkansas River and now has only to ascertain the headwaters of the Red River before returning to civilization. After several days of reconnoitering, mending gear and further replenishing the larder from the game which abounds here, Lieut. Pike plans to move northward thus keeping clear of Spanish territory which lies south of the Arkansas River.

#### **From Pike's Diary**

Dec. 5, 1806: Marched at our usual hour. Passed one very bad place of falling rock (near the present town of Florence) where we had to carry our loads. Encamped on the main branch of the river near the entrance of South Mountain. Heard 14 guns at camp during my absence which alarmed me considerably; returned as quickly as possible, and found that the cause of my alarm arose from their shooting turkeys. Distance traveled, 18 miles.

Dec. 6, 1806: Sent out three different parties to hunt the Spanish trace, but without success. The doctor and myself followed the river into the mountains which was bounded on each side by rocks 2000 feet high, leaving a small valley of 50 or 60 feet. Killed two buffaloes, two deer and one turkey.

Dec. 7, 1806: we again dispatched parties in search of the Spanish trace. One party discovered it on the other side of the river and followed into the valley of the stream at the entrance to the mountains (Grape Creek) where they met two parties returning from exploring the two branches of the river; of which they reported they had ascended until the river was merely a brook, bounded on both sides by perpendicular rocks impractical for horses ever to pass. (Now the main line of the D. & R. G. Railroad.) Killed one wildcat.

#### **Finds River Source**

After leaving the Cañon City area on December 10, Pike and his party marched along Oil Creek coming eventually to South Park, where Pike established the source of the North [actually South] Platte River. They proceeded in a southwesterly direction from here finally again striking the Arkansas near the present town of Buena Vista. [Pike and 2 men spent two days following the Arkansas upstream to present day Leadville where the headwaters were ascertained.] Pike thought that now he had discovered the Red River and proceeded to follow this downstream, eventually reaching the west entrance of the Royal Gorge. Pike's party here was in several groups and he started through the canyon alone, his men and few remaining horses going around the chasm itself.

Jan. 4, 1807: I detached Baroney and two soldiers with horses, in order to find some practical way for them to get out of the mountains without their loads. I determined to continue down the river alone until I could kill some provision—for we now had no food left and everyone had to depend on his own exertions for safety and subsistence. I marched on about 5 miles down the river which was one continuous fall after another through a narrow channel and the immense cliffs on both sides. Near night I came to the place where the rocks were perpendicular on both sides and no ice except a narrow border on the water. I discovered one of the men of the other party and called for him, and he and his companions joined me. They said that they had not known where the rest of us were—that they had eaten nothing for two days and this night they intended to have boiled deerskin to subsist on.

#### **Discover Ravine**

We discovered a narrow ravine —we ascended with utmost difficulty in danger —wounded a deer but in the darkness of the approaching night could not find him; when I returned hungry, weary and thirsty and had only snow to supply the calls of nature. Distance advanced, 8 miles.

Jan. 5, 1807: I went out in the morning to hunt ... about 10 o'clock arose the highest summit of the mountain, when the unbounded extent of the prairies again presented itself to my view, and from some distance peaks I immediately recognize our situation to be one outlet of the Arkansas, which we had left nearly one month since. This was a great mortification—. This was my first birthday, and most fervently did I hope never to pass another so miserably.

(The point at which Pike climbed out of the Royal Gorge was probably the first cleft in the canyon west have the one and which the World's Steepest Incline Railway operates. About 2 miles from the rim of the canyon is where Pike probably saw the peak which was later to bear his name, and then realized that he had been traveling in a circle.)

(Our addition—we believe the Pike climbed up Pike's Gulch in the Royal Gorge Bridge and Park which at one time was called Telegraph Gulch. It is impossible to see Pike's Peak from there—near the suspension bridge over the Arkansas. But they had in fact traveled north to South Park, discovered the headwaters of the South Platte, then SW to the Arkansas, discovered the headwaters of the Arkansas and traveled back east to Cañon City.)

## A LIFE WELL SPENT, FORT BELLEFONTAINE AND PIKE GRIZZLIES



Ed French has completed another three paintings to show events in various portions of Pike's life.

### A LIFE WELL SPENT

In July he completed **A Life Well Spent**, a unique view of Pike being transported back to Sackets Harbor after suffering a fatal blow in the Battle of York, April 27, 1813.

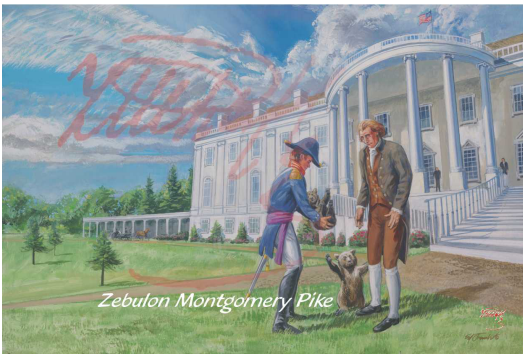
### CANTONMENT (FORT) BELLEFONTAINE

In October he painted **Fort BelleFontaine**, a view of Pike leaving on his first expedition sailing down the Missouri River from the Cantonment (old Fort) BelleFontaine to turn north on the Mississippi on Friday, August 9th, 1805.

Actually the painting could be turned around to show them leaving up the Missouri River on Tuesday, July 15th, 1806 on the second expedition to America's Southwest.



### PIKE GRIZZLIES



**Pike Grizzlies** was completed in September showing Pike presenting two grizzly cubs to President Jefferson in front of the original White House. While this is not completely accurate- it is a metaphor showing an effort Pike made.

it does show an accurate moment in Pike's life.

There are twenty-one of these works and you can view and purchase them on our website, as original paintings, canvas prints, poster prints, or greeting cards.

He is working on the 22nd and 23rd - Trout Creek Pass and Camp Independence.

**CORPORATE SPONSORS** We are also grateful for the support of our Corporate Sponsors.



*Our Purpose:* To Establish federal designation of the  
Pike National Historic Trail

We are a Charitable nonprofit organization      Our website is [www.zebulonpike.org](http://www.zebulonpike.org)  
"Zebulon Pike was an American hero, a patriot who lived and died for his country." -Thomas Jefferson

**NOW THAT WE ARE MOVING TOWARD POSSIBLE DESIGNATION OF THE PIKE NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL**

**Have you joined our Association?  
Have you renewed your membership?  
Have you donated to our effort?**

**Two people have joined as Life members and three joined in September.**

We need you to renew your membership or join for the first time. Click here for a membership form:  
<https://www.zebulonpike.org/product-category/membership/> or  
complete and mail the membership form below.

Contact us: 303/816-7424 [harv.pike@gmail.com](mailto:harv.pike@gmail.com) Additional gifts are tax deductible.

Make checks payable to: Pike National Historic Trail Association      Mail membership and donation checks to:  
Pike National Historic Trail Association, c/o Brian Pike, Membership Chair, 5357 Bristol; Arvada, CO 80002

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**PIKE NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL ASSOCIATION** 10060 Blue Sky Trail      Conifer CO 80433      303/816-7424

Pike November 2019 Newsletter

We are a tax exempt not-for profit Association under Section 501 (c) (3) IRC. Your contributions are deductible under section 170 of the Code.

**Our Vision is TO PROVIDE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT PIKE AND  
CELEBRATE HIS MEMORY AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

## Membership Form

*Join Now!* Please consider membership in our organization

Level	Amt.	Level Name	Level	Amt.	Level Name
Student	\$15	<b>Corporal Jackson</b>	Small Business	\$75	<b>Robinson-Brown-Miller</b>
Individual	\$25	<b>Sergeant Meek</b>	Corporation	\$200 & up	<b>Carter-Gordon-Mountjoy-Roy</b>
Family	\$35	<b>Menaugh-Stout</b>	Benefactor	\$500	<b>Sparks-Daugherty</b>
Non profit organization	\$50	<b>Vasquez-Smith</b>	Life	\$1000	<b>Zebulon Pike</b>

Name \_\_\_\_\_

I will be able to help with:

Address \_\_\_\_\_

The Pike Assoc. website

Town \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Historic/heritage investigation

Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Providing educational opportunities

Producing educational materials

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

I /we will personally contact legislators for legislative support

I /we will write letters of legislative support

I/we would like to help in any way (Assoc. will contact)