



HISTORY *Colorado*

TRINIDAD HISTORY MUSEUM

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TRINIDAD HISTORY MUSEUM NEWS

Trinidad, CO--History Colorado's Trinidad History Museum, 312 E. Main Street, is set for another great tourist season and programs to celebrate Japan and Japanese American history in Colorado. Everything kicks off on Saturday, May 1.

Celebrate Japan!

"Celebrate Japan!" is the third in a series of annual events related to World War II, countries involved in the war, and their corresponding ethnic groups in Trinidad and elsewhere in Colorado.

Festivals and workshops will celebrate four Japanese holidays: Children's Day on May 1, the Star Gazing Festival on July 17, Lantern Festival on August 14, and Chrysanthemum Festival on October 2. Activities, all on a Saturday, will take place at the Trinidad History Museum.

Girls and boys will make carp windsocks, dolls, fans, block prints, lanterns, flower arrangements, and other arts and crafts at the workshops. Parents are encouraged to observe so they can do the easy activities at home. Workshops will take place from 10:00 AM-12:00 PM on the above dates.

Festival participants will enjoy Japanese food, music, language, star gazing, and more! By July, Japanese flowers, herbs, and vegetables will be thriving in the museum's Annual Ethnic Garden planted by Kazuko Nosaka, of Weston, Colorado. The garden will be the centerpiece for the later festivals and garden tours will be given.

The Star Gazing Festival will be in the evening, 8:00 PM-10:00 PM, and the other festivals will be held from 1:00-3:00 PM. Marilyn Leuszler, a Trinidad artist and educator who lived in Japan for ten years while studying Asian arts is in charge of the festivities.

Lectures and field trips about the history of Japanese Americans in southeastern Colorado are also planned. Dean Ogawa, of Colorado Springs, will talk about his family's Trinidad roots as former owners of the Trinidad Greenhouse.

On Thursday, June 10, at 7:00 PM, Dr. Bonnie Clark, University of Denver Anthropology Department, will present "The Archaeology of Camp Amache," the World War II internment camp for Japanese Americans near Granada, Colorado. A field trip to see the excavations and learn about the extensive barrack gardens from a visiting archaeo-botanist is also in the works.

The museum also is organizing a field trip to Camp Trinidad, which is just beyond the outer boundary of Cougar Canyon Golf Resort. Camp Trinidad was a World War II prisoner of war camp for German officers and soldiers. A large fireplace and several small structures are still standing.

In 1943, a fascinating incident in Colorado history began when two prisoners, formerly of Rommel's famed Afrika Korps, escaped from Camp Trinidad. After they were captured, an investigation ensued and three sisters from Camp Amache were put on trial for treason for their role in the escape. Dr. William Wei, University of Colorado History Department, will relate the complex story of the Shitara sisters in a lecture on Thursday, July 8, at 7:00 PM.

The lectures by Dr. Clark and Dr. Wei will be held in the Pioneer Room in the Sullivan Student Center at Trinidad State Junior College. Details about the Ogawa family lecture and the field trips will be announced at a later date.

Modest fees will be charged for the workshops, festivals, and field trips while donations are appreciated for the lectures. Advanced registration will be required for the workshops and field trips.

The Bar NI Ranch Community Service Fund and the Colorado Home and Garden Show have provided partial funding for "Celebrate Japan!" The Trinidad Historical Society also supports the lectures.

Trinidad History Museum Opening Day

On May 1, the Trinidad History Museum and Bookstore will open for the tourist season and be open Monday-Saturday through September 30. Doors open at 10:00 AM and the last tour of the day begins at 4:00 PM; purchase tickets at 312 E. Main Street. Please note that everything will be closed on state holidays and furloughs (one is schedule for May 28; others may occur).

Visitors will enjoy guided tours of the unique two-story adobe Baca House, built in 1870 on the Santa Fe Trail. Guides relate information about architecture, the Baca family, and other people associated with the landmark residence. There is a new display about the Rourke Ranch and ranch furnishings in the house. For the comfort of museum guests, there is a new seating area on the second floor.

A grant from the Trinidad Community Foundation partially funded the Rourke exhibit and seating area, restoration of some interior walls, and other upgrades.

Guides will give “behind-the-scenes” tours of the Bloom Mansion, an ornate frontier Victorian home constructed in 1882 that is currently empty for restoration work. Tour-goers will learn about the Bloom family, the building’s transformation into a rooming house in the mid-twentieth century, architecture, and the multi-phase restoration project.

Self-guided tours will be offered in the Santa Fe Trail Museum, an adobe building that housed people employed by the Baca family. Popular exhibits highlight people and events related to the founding of Trinidad and its development from a trail to a rail town.

Gates to the Baca-Bloom Heritage Gardens will open at 9 AM for free self-guided outdoor tours about architecture, history, and horticulture, including the Prairie Patch, Baca Kitchen Garden, and Antique Roses. Maps are available at 312 E. Main Street and at the iron gates on Chestnut and Walnut Streets. Fee-based guided garden tours will be available with reservations.

Schedule through April 30

Looking for unique gifts for Easter, birthdays, and other occasions? Shoppers are snapping up new Trinidad souvenirs: tin candy-filled boxes that feature the Baca House, Bloom Mansion, and Trinidad bricks (only \$6.95 each).

In the Local History section you will find two new books: “Jansen: A Distinctive Town and Its Surroundings,” published by the Trinidad Historical Society, and the reprint of “The Branson Story” by Richard Loudon.

New gifts perfect for springtime include Moonflower Soaps made in Aguilar and Blooms in a Bag, Rice Hull Gardens, and Scatter Gardens made in the USA. Books, bonsai kits, Haiku purses, and other Japanese inspired gifts are featured.

Through April 30, the store is open Wednesday-Saturday, 10:00 AM-4:00 PM (closed for a furlough on Friday, April 2) and by appointment on Monday-Tuesday. Next to the store, “The Trinidad Italian Colony” exhibit and the Trinidad and Byways Information Center are open on the same schedule.

The Santa Fe Trail Museum may be available, pending staffing, for groups of 12 or more people with reservations. The Baca House and Bloom Mansion are closed for clean and restoration projects until May 1.

The grounds are partially open for self-guided walking tours, pending winter conditions, Monday-Saturday, 10:00 AM-4:00 PM (closed on the April 2 furlough). Please use the Chestnut Street gates.

The Walnut Street gate and area around the Bloom Mansion are closed until workers complete restoring the windows, doors, and veranda and plumbers install a new water main to replace the old one, which broke during the December cold snap. As you can see, there is never a dull moment at the museum!

For more information about the Trinidad History Museum and upcoming events, contact Paula Manini, the Museum Director, at 719-846-7217 or paula.manini@chs.state.co.us. The museum is a property of History Colorado (formerly called the Colorado Historical Society). Please visit www.coloradohistory.org to find out more.

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