

COLO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Grateful for Community and Alumni Support

The Colo Historical Association is incredibly thankful and excited for the outpouring of financial support from our community members and alumni who responded so generously to our recent letter about the new museum building fund. Your contributions and encouragement show how deeply people care about preserving the history and stories of our community.

Because of your support, we are taking meaningful steps toward creating a new museum that will honor our past and serve as a place of learning and connection for future generations.

We are grateful for the enthusiasm and generosity shown by so many. Your support is helping turn this vision into a reality, and we look forward to sharing the progress of this exciting project with you. Thank you for believing in the importance of preserving Colo's history.

Museum Update

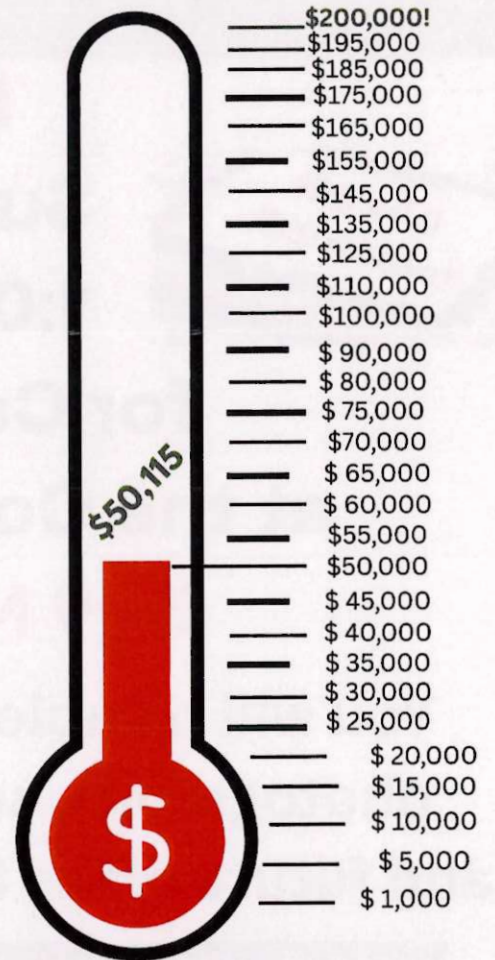
Newmark, out of Pella, is our contractor for the new history museum. They are hoping to begin work this fall.

Several grant applications are currently being prepared and submitted.

In the meantime, fundraising efforts will continue as we work to make the new museum a reality.

Truly Grateful for you.

Colo Historical Building Fund



Our vision of the future Colo History Museum

America's 250th Birthday

Memorial Day

Beefburger Dinner

Hosted by the Colo Historical Association



Please join us

Monday, May 25th

11:00 am - 12:30 pm

We will begin serving immediately
following the cemetery services
(take out available)



Colo Community Center

309 Main Street in Colo

FREEWILL DONATION

**Come and enjoy a beefburger meal, see our
expanding Veterans Wall as we honor and
remember our local heroes. Also take time to
view our military displays and read the stories.**



OLD MEMORIES

Taken from a 1978 article in the Nevada Journal

COLO - It looked like any other auction, crowded, with people wearing Saturday's work clothes. The atmosphere was different because it was a school auction. Books, globes, desks, chairs and memories were for sale.

I noticed many people walking by the rows and rows of student desks lined up, empty, on one side of the gym floor. What were they looking for? Probably their initials scratched or carved in the wooden desk top while the teacher was out of the room or busy. Or were they looking for that heart shaped design that signified their first crush?

Most of the action was in the gym keeping time with the auctioneer's chant, but children and adults alike wandered off. Walking slowly they toured the old school house for the last time. There were the sounds of footsteps running again, and of laughter magnified by the emptiness. Some people just stood at those tall wide windows gazing out at the world. Others poked around in closets. Everyone says "Goodbye" in their own way.



JOIN US

**CHA meets the first
Tuesday of every month
at the Colo United
Methodist Church
at 6:30 pm
Come every month or
whenever you can!**

Available this summer!

**T-Shirts
NEW & Fun DESIGNS!**

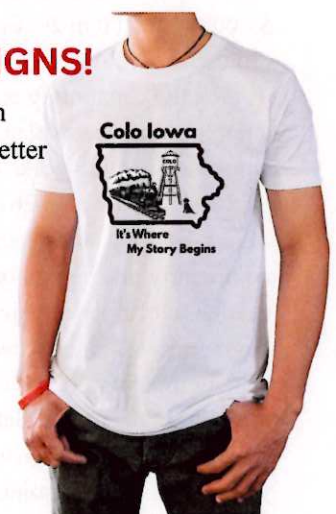
Details will be in
Jul/Aug/Sept newsletter



It's A Colo Thing



You Wouldn't Understand



THE COLO COMMUNITY BUILDS A CEMENT SLAB

In 1954, the Colo community came together to build a new cement slab for recreational purposes just west of the school gymnasium, which at that time was located across the street, north of the Methodist church. Around the third week of July of that year, the call went out asking for every community-minded, able-bodied person in the Colo area to come and help with the unskilled labor part of laying the cement slab.

A "work day" was set for Saturday, July 31, 1954.

On that Saturday, Colo was a beehive of community activity on the schoolhouse grounds. At 6:00am, around 60 men were on hand to begin the work of mixing and pouring cement. The cement would go into a 90' x 100' area that had been excavated two days earlier on Thursday, July 29. A crushed rock base was also laid at that time when everything was made ready for cement pouring on Saturday. In addition to the 60 men who had arrived earlier that morning, about 20 more volunteer workers arrived soon after and were waiting wistfully for the opportunity to go to work. By 10:30 that morning, the work was more than half done.

Also joining in the community project were 32 Colo church women, representing aid societies of the St Mary's Catholic, Evangelical United Brethren and Methodist churches, and from the Colo Parent Teacher Association. This group staged a large basket dinner at noon for all workers; and they also served a luncheon following completion of the work late in the afternoon. Coffee and donuts were served to the workers at mid-morning by members of the Colo school board and their wives.

It had been decided that the large slab would have multiple purposes. The concrete area contained two regulation basketball courts, each 50' to 90', and two regulation tennis courts. The tennis courts extended north and south and the basketball courts ran in an east and west direction. In addition, there were shuffleboard and badminton courts. Roller skating was planned and a cement curbing, varying in height, from three to seven inches, was built on four sides in order that the area could be filled with water for ice skating in wintertime.

Funds for the project were started by the Colo Community Club. The club donated all profits from the Colo horse pull that was held during the Colo Athletic Carnival in June of that year. The fund also included \$1,000 (\$12,100 in 2026) donated by the Colo school board and \$500 (\$6,050 in 2026) from Colo's city recreation fund.

It took the community conscious residents of Colo just three days to complete a project which under ordinary 1954 conditions would have consumed several weeks of work, and would have cost approximately \$7,500 (\$90,684 in 2026). As it was, the project resulted in an actual cost of only slightly more than \$2,500 (\$30,228 in 2026). With the entire community pitching in, only 12 professional cement workers were needed to complete the job. These workers did the finish work after community volunteers had mixed and poured the cement. Two big cement mixers were in constant operation on the school grounds throughout the day on Saturday. Five tractors, all donated and operated by volunteer labor, assisted in the mixing. The slab was crossed each way with expansion joints into two 50 foot sections. Approximately 900

sacks of cement were used for the entire slab project.

When everything was finished, nearly 150 residents of Colo and vicinity had turned out to complete the work.

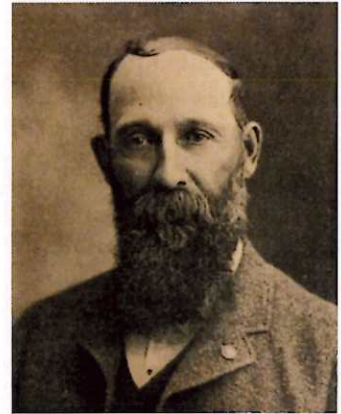
A formal dedication of the slab was held the following year on Wednesday evening, June 22, 1955, during the annual Colo Athletic Carnival. The dedication ceremony was the main event of that evening's activities and was held during a 'free' community dance at the slab, sponsored by the Colo School Board.

The concrete slab was a great addition to the school grounds and to the community of Colo. The area has been used by many kids and families throughout the decades; and it continues to be used regularly to this day.



Cassius Corwin “CC” Wilson

Cassius Corwin “CC” Wilson was born on February 16, 1843 in Washington Township, Shelby County, Ohio, the 12th of 13 children born to Jesse and Abigail Broderick Wilson. CC enlisted in 1862, to fight in the Civil War, as a Private in Company B 118th Regiment Ohio Infantry Volunteers, and was mustered into service at Cincinnati, Ohio in September of that year. He fought in several battles during the war, and was promoted to Sergeant during the Battle of Atlanta. Union forces, commanded by William Tecumseh Sherman, started their campaign to seize the important rail and supply center of Atlanta, Georgia in July 1864. The capture of Atlanta was covered extensively by northern newspapers and this did much to boost northern morale and helped President Lincoln to be re-elected by a significant margin.



In December 1864, CC fought in the Battle of Nashville, which was one of the largest victories achieved by the Union Army during the war. The Union soldiers repulsed multiple assaults and inflicted over 6,000 casualties on the Confederate Army, that included a large number of key Confederate generals, thus doing heavy damage to the leadership of the South’s “Army of Tennessee”. It was here that CC picked up “a trophy of the battlefield” when he found a pipe laying by the side of a dead rebel soldier. He kept the pipe and took it home for his father.

At the close of the war in 1865, CC was honorably discharged at Cleveland, Ohio. In April 1868, he moved from Ohio to Champaign County, Illinois where he taught school for a number of years. At a Methodist revival meeting in 1869, he gave his life to Jesus and joined the Methodist Church. He became interested in Sunday School work and it became his special interest of church work.

On December 22, 1870, CC married Mary Marriott at her home near Urbana, Illinois. They purchased some land in Champaign where he farmed and continued to teach school. They lived there for 25 years and had 3 children together: Cassia Bell, Frank Raymond and Harry Ross. In 1893, CC and Mary purchased land on the west edge of Colo for \$17,000. A year after purchasing the land, CC and Mary and their children, along with Mary’s niece, Maude Prather, moved from Illinois to their new home here in Colo.

Around the time CC and his family came here, there was a thriving variety of business establishments and professionals in Colo including: a drug store, a barber shop, 5 general merchandising stores; 2 hardware stores; 2 lumber stores; a creamery; 2 banks; 2 hotels; a café; a printer; a theatre; a harness shop; a livery stable; a feed shed; 2 blacksmith shops; 2 grain elevators; 2 medical physicians; a veterinarian; a dentist; and 4 churches. With the double railroad tracks, Colo was a very busy shipping point for cattle, hogs, horses, grain, eggs and dairy products.

In February 1902 a meeting was held at the Colo Methodist Episcopal Church, where CC and Mary attended, to discuss the need of a new brick church building. A committee was formed of which CC, as Treasurer of the church’s Board of Trustees, was a member. By September of that year, just 8 months after the initial meeting, a new church building had been built and dedicated at a cost of \$8,900.

While living in Colo, CC was active in G.A.R. (Grand Army of the Republic) activities and at the time of his death was Commander of Colo’s J.B. Steadman Post No. 238. He was also a member of the International Order of Odd Fellows Lodge in town and served several years on the Colo school board. He was a township trustee and sang bass in the church choir, where he also served as Sunday School Superintendent.

In 1903 CC had an appendicitis attack and the doctor had to operate on him on the kitchen table of his home (a common practice in those days). Sadly, an infection developed and CC passed away a few days later on July 27, 1903 at the age of 60. His funeral was held at the Colo Methodist church and was attended by more than 600 people. CC’s position as bass singer in the church choir was honored by leaving his seat vacant and draped in mourning during the funeral service.

Mary started receiving a monthly pension of \$12.00 for CC’s service in the Union Army during the Civil War. In 1907, she and their son, Ross, moved into a new home on the west side of Colo (in to the house where Don and Ruth Wilson lived). Mary did NOT believe in playing cards and considered it a sin. She did love entertaining her grandchildren and great grandchildren in her home and some of them would tell how they would wait until their grandmother went to bed and then they would play cards. When Mary found the cards the next day, she would actually burn them! She was still tending her many chickens and large garden when she passed away on May 7, 1930 at the age of 78.

Both CC and Mary are buried in the Colo Community Cemetery. They left quite a legacy as several of their great-great grandchildren, great-great-great grandchildren, and even a few of their great-great-great-great grandchildren live in Colo still today!

2026 COLO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP LIST

Mike Allie	Bob Dunshee	Elizabeth "Ann" Law	Tammy Spencer
Paul Armbrecht	Patty Dykstra	Bob and DeAnne Lee	Deb Stitt
Bob & Joyce Ausberger	Garrett & Karlee Eley	Dale Lyon	Kevin & Linda Torgeson
Bob & Connie Barrett	Doug & Mary Eley	Brenda McGuire	Bill & Nancy Tucker
Kevin & Diana Bell	Craig Erickson	Nancy Milleson	Ken Untrauer Family
Yvonne Bellegante	Joyce Finch	Amy Nichols	Jolene Van Waus
Adrienne Bergman	Kyle Foley	John & Joan Niland	Ben & Maggie Weir
& Kaden Peterson	Rita Foley	Mike Olson	Bob Welsh
Brian's Collision Center	Joyce French	Pat & Linda Peakin	Gene Welsh
Jerry Cable	Janice Gammon	Ron Phares	Kay Wessman
Barbara Carlson	Dwayne & Geri Gerlach	Joel & Christine Powers	Jim Wheelock
John Carlson	Jan Halverson	Kristin & Randy Pyle	Lisa & Ardee Whitaker
Pat Carmody	Doug Harper	David Rankin	Norman & Margo Wibholm
Fred & Dorothy Cerka	Paul & Ginny Heintz	Charlie & Chris Rasmusson	Greg & Denise Wilgenbusch
John & Donna Cerka	Larry & Marie Hostetler	Ellen Riese	Dennis & Tonnee Wilkening
David & Mary Christy	Avery King	Matt & Sheila Riese	Willow Brook Barn
Colo Telephone Company	John & Cheryl Kingland	Bob & Jan Robinson	Wilson Auction Services
Craig Cummings	Sue Knoesel	Rhonda Smith	Bob & Sharon Wilson
Steve & Jan Cummings	Brad & Amy Kohlwes	Brad Snodgrass	Clare Wilson
Tom Cummings			

WE NEED YOUR HELP! If you have an ancestor who lived in Colo and served in the Civil War or Spanish/American War, we'd like to get their photo. It wouldn't have to be in uniform (we know those are hard to come by) but any photo, young adult or older, would work. Our veteran's wall is full of World War I (*we need help finding more of these too*), World War 2, Korean, Vietnam and other service members ... which is great, and we're getting more all of the time ... but we also want to have our EARLY Colo veterans honored too.

Those who's names we know from the 1996 Colo History book are:

CIVIL WAR

Adkins, Edward; Gaddis, M; Lewis, A.G.; ~~Smith, Robert~~; Illard, A.G.; Gilchrist, A.W.; Martin, William; Templeman, William; Black, James; ~~Gilger, John~~; McKowen, J.R.; Warrington, Enoch; Bruner, William; Graves, Charles; Nauke, Fred; Watkins, Joseph; Cook, Charles; Sefley, Robert; O'Neill, John; Watkins, S.; Daugherty, John; Kemping, Daniel; Reynolds, John; ~~Wilson, Cassius C.~~; Snier Samuel; Hopkins, Peter; Robbins, Harmon; Wood, D.P.; ~~French, Isaac~~; Kaiser, John; Sawtell, J.C.

SPANISH/AMERICAN

Heming, Charles; Harris, Alva

(We have photos of the veterans that have their names crossed out on this list.)

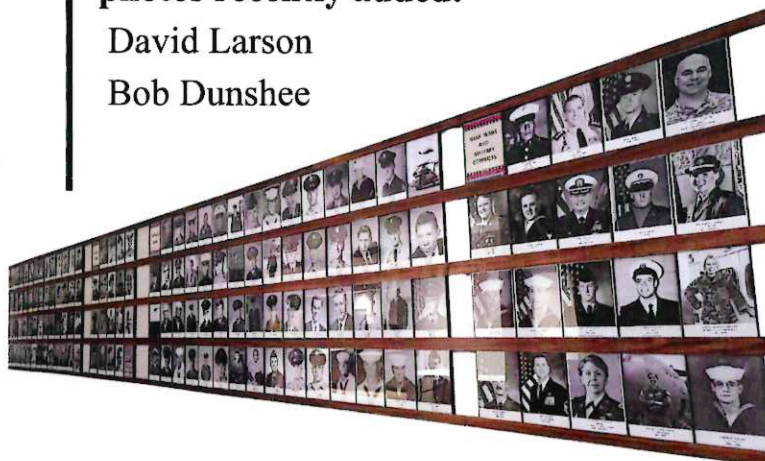
COLO VETERANS WALL

The Colo Veterans Wall is located at the Colo Community Center. If you or a family member are associated in some way with Colo (**Graduate - Resident or Former Resident**) and are a past or current military member, please contact us so we can add your picture to our wall.

email: cha@netins.net

photos recently added:

David Larson
Bob Dunshee



She was in a class by herself!

The 1959 Colo alumni banquet, held on May 16th of that year, honored the 50-year class of 1909 with 100% attendance of the class. The class of 1908 had eleven members and the class of 1910 had eight members, but the class of 1909 – the honored 50-year class – had only one member: Martha May Cozzens. May recalled in 1959 that her 1909 commencement exercises had been held in the Methodist Church, across the street from the old white wooden school building, with Henry Yeager presenting her diploma. There was no Senior class play that year, as there had been at every other Colo commencement, but according to custom May wrote and gave her oration on the topic, “True Education”. Wilford Smiley had been superintendent, and Ima Preston and Florence Schee were her high school teachers. May had been a member of the Colo girl’s basketball team (the only Senior player, needless to say, during the 1908-09 season) and was in the school’s glee club.



May married Al Hambly in 1911, and they were the parents of eight children, four boys and four girls. “I had children in the Colo schools for 30 years”, she said in 1959. The Hambly family, attending from 1920 to 1950, ran up more hours in school than any other family of a Colo graduate, according to statistics compiled at that time by W.P. Truesdell, Colo school superintendent. May and Al’s eight children, five of whom went on to also graduate from Colo High School, were: Harlan Cozzens; Glen Carlton “Jiggs” (Class of 1935); Raymond Norris (Class of 1938); Martha Jean (Class of 1940); Marilyn Ruth (Class of 1943); twins Allan Paul and Ardith Elaine; and Sara Jane (Class of 1950).

Martha May Cozzens Hambly was honored at the 1959 Colo alumni banquet where she was in a class by herself!

Back when Martha May Cozzens was attending the Colo School, it looked like this. The white wooden building was torn down after a new 2 story brown brick school was built beside it.



FOR FUN: HOW TO SPEAK HOBO

Since we’re past the days of hobos traveling the rails in Iowa, you might be wondering what exactly is a hobo? Well, a hobo is a traveling worker who used trains to get from place to place and job to job. Hobos riding the rails in Iowa and other midwestern states provided the necessary labor for agriculture and other seasonal jobs.

In the 1880s, farmers called these seasonal workers “hoe boys” because of the tool they traveled with. Out of this name the word hobo was born. The “bo” part of the word is short for boys and the “ho” comes from the tool they carried, a hoe. There are others who think the word hobo is short for the phrase “homeward bound” used in the late 1800s to describe destitute Civil War veterans who took years to work their way back home after the war.

Hobos would camp in what they called “jungles”, places where they could eat, sleep and refresh for the next job. These “jungles” were typically located outside towns, near water and, of course, the railroad tracks. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, there were 250,000 hobos riding the rails. Because a main part of being a hobo was hopping onto the boxcar of a train without a ticket, hobos don’t really exist anymore. Today, hopping onto trains is illegal and monitored closely. To survive, hobos used a “Hobo Code” or a language all their own. So if you ever hop on a rail car and find a hobo to converse with, here’s a list of a few terms you can use so you won’t sound like a “yegg”!

- ACCOMMODATION CAR: the caboose of a train
- ANGEL FOOD: a friendly house
- BANJO: a portable frying pan
- BIG HOUSE: prison
- BINDLE STICK: a small bundle of belongings tied up in a handkerchief hanging from a walking stick
- BULL: a railroad cop
- CANNONBALL: a fast train
- CHUCK A DUMMY: pretend to faint
- COVER WITH THE MOON: sleep out in the open
- COW CRATE: a railroad stock car
- CRUMS / GRAY BACKS / SEAM SQUIRRELS: lice
- DOGGIN’ IT: traveling by bus
- HOT: a hobo wanted by the law
- KNOWLEDGE BOX: a schoolhouse where hobos sometimes sleep
- ROAD KID: a young hobo who apprentices himself to an older hobo to learn the ways of the rails
- RUM DUM: a drunkard
- SNIPES: other people’s cigarette butts
- SNIFE HUNTING: to go looking for cigarette butts
- SPEAR BISCUITS: to look for food in garbage cans
- YEGG: the lowest form of hobo who steals from other hobos



150 YEARS



Colo Sesquicentennial Celebration

1876 - 2026

Please join us

Sunday, April 26th

1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

for Cake and Ice Cream

at the Colo Community Center

309 Main Street in Colo

CHA Annual

Memorial Day Beefburger Dinner

at the Colo Community Center

Monday, May 25

11:00 am - 12:30 pm



FREWILL DONATION

We will begin serving following
the cemetery services



Celebrate
Colo
150
Years

If you would prefer to receive the quarterly newsletter by email as a pdf attachment rather than a paper copy in the mail, please email us and let us know. (cha@netins.net)

America's
Birthday
250