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

zebulonpike.org Website

The website for the Pike National Historic Trail Association is zebulonpike.org. The website is a gift to us by the Santa Fe Trail Association.

We have endeavored to continue the website as a resource for educators and their students. Some outdated and irrelevant information has been removed. However, all previous resources remain.

We are excited about our expanded features. For example, we have included:

- † a photo gallery, † all past newsletters [which include new material on the Expedition by noted authors],
- † Pike Field maps [which include MO, KS, NE and CO], † Pike NHT Association information,
- † Members only area, † Products and Resources, and † Our NEW DISCOVERY TERRITORY.

The website, in renewed form, was launched Friday, December 5, 2008. [See what's new on zebulonpike.org](http://zebulonpike.org)

Mt. Rosa Pike Climb 2 The air was cold, the determination was crisp.

In the March Newsletter issue, John Murphy explained [Here is how Pike and Co made it up Mt. Rosa](#), concluding "So it was a ridge hike on the ascent and a valley/creek march back." Dave Philipps continues...

[Photos by John Murphy]

It's a long way to the top Monday November 27, 2006 By DAVE PHILIPPS

THE COLORADO SPRINGS GAZETTE

Bill Mendelsohn, 34, led the team through the thick underbrush Sunday. "I have growing respect for Zeb," he said. "He was one tough hombre."

"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." Pike Journal

MOUNT ROSA - As the setting sun erased the detail from surrounding mountains Sunday, a tired group of eight hikers trudged up the last few near-vertical steps to the cave where explorer Zebulon Pike and his men took refuge for the night 200 years ago.

The modern hikers were probably as glad to see the cave as Pike had been. They'd been retracing his route, step by step, for more than 10 miles, climbing almost a full vertical mile from the plains to a wind-scoured ridge at 11,000 feet.

They started their day while most of the city was still sleeping, and Orion was just kicking his leg over the western horizon. By dawn, they were scrambling up a nameless ridge.

Pike's route presents the same challenge today that it did two centuries ago. He wrote in his journal that when he started his ascent, he found the going very difficult, that he was forced at some points to climb using both hands.

It didn't take long for Sunday's climbers to encounter the same obstacles. Every step for the first few miles was spent fighting brush, since there was no trail.

"This isn't bushwhacking, this is bush climbing," one of the hikers, Susan Paul, said through gritted teeth as she pulled herself up a shifting gravel slope using the branch of a mountain mahogany bush.

Things changed drastically after the explorer made a brief foray into mountaineering, but to a large extent, they have changed back.



Settlers cleaned the forest of its game. Pike reports seeing deer, grouse and buffalo in the hills here. The surrounding streams have names like Beaver Creek, evidence the mountains teemed with life. By 1890, the animals had been hunted to near extinction.

Things started to change in 1891, the year the federal government created the Pikes Peak Forest Reserve, the precursor to the Pike National Forest.

Today, the mountains have more trees than ever before. Deer and elk populations are exploding. Just before sunset, the climbers reached the high ridge on Mount Rosa where Pike took shelter in a cramped cave. They flopped down their packs. (continues on Page 3)



From the examination of the goods and equipment mentioned in the journal and correspondence that relate to Pike's expedition the following categories will be used: clothing, scientific instruments, weapons, trade goods and other equipment. Although precise information about many of the items to be mentioned is not available we can still get a good perspective of these items.

First an examination of the clothing worn by members of the Pike expedition is of interest. It is easy to quickly come to the conclusion that the members in general of the party were ill prepared to meet the weather condition they were going to encounter. On December 3rd Pike states, "The hardships of the last voyage (1805) had now began, and had the climate only been as severe as the climate then was, some of the men must have perished, for they had no winter clothing, I wore myself cotton overalls, for I had not calculated on being out in that inclement season of the year." The climate and general topography of this country was not entirely unknown. It had been traversed by explorers and traders long before Pike began his journey. As early as 1541 the Spanish explorer Coronado passed through this area seeking Quivira, the legendary city of gold. With the information that was available about the area, why did Pike leave so poorly clothed? As early as November 27th Pike mentions that the soldiers had light overalls on, no stockings and in every way ill provided to endure the inclemency of the region. On December 25th he states, "...in the most inclement season not one person clothed for the winter, many without blankets, (having been obliged to cut them up for socks, &c.) and now laying down at night on the snow or wet ground; one side burning whilst the other pierced with cold wind: this was in part the situation of the party whilst some were endeavoring to make a miserable substitute of raw buffalo hide for shoes &c." As early as November 8th Pike mentions that the party has halted to jerk meat and mend their moccasins. This reflects that their Army footwear was now worn out and the need to make their own was part of their clothing. Shoes must have still been in supply on October 20th because Pike mentions that the prize for the best shot at a shooting match was one tent and a pair of shoes. It should be pointed out that at this shooting match their only remaining dog standing at the root of the tree in the grass was struck by a ball and killed. He had reported on July 31st the loss of his dog. The misfortune being that his dog given to him by Fisher at Prairie des Chiens was the only one to bring anything out of the water. At another shooting match of August 11th a prize of a jacket and a twist of tobacco were won by Pike. Pike was reputed to be an excellent marksman. Pike presented his prizes to the young fellow who waited on him, probably Private Thomas Daugherty. The next day Pike mentions the loss of some of his clothing which was blown from the top of the cabin of the boat into the Osage and immediately sank.



In Pike's letter to General Wilkinson dated July 22, 1806 which would be early in the journey, he mentions that he gave each of the "young Savages" a "Soldiers Coate". Exactly what issue these coatees might have been is conjecture. Probably Pike's men were equipped with the new 1804 coatee. We know the giving of out of date military uniforms was often practiced as part of the gift giving process. How many and what type of jacket Pike had in his possession is not known, but if they had been abundant they would have been welcome in the days to come. In the trip to be made to Santa Fe after their capture by the Spanish troops he states that first consideration was ammunition, second was tools, and then came their clothing which consisted of "leather, leggings, boots and mockinsons." He tells us that he left his uniform, clothing, trunks, etc as did all the men except what there had on their backs. Importance was given to footwear that would protect their feet and legs from the cold. He describes himself and accompanying companions when arriving in Santa Fe, "I was dressed in a pair of blue trowsers, mockinsons, blanket coat and cap made of scarlet cloth, lined with fox skins and my poor fellows in leggings, breech cloths and leather coats and not a hat in the whole party". The local populace inquired as to their living standards, if they lived in houses or in camps like the Indians, even if they wore in hats in their county. They party made a very uncouth impression on the inhabitants of Santa Fe.

Lt. Wilkinson's plight should not be forgotten. As he leaves to descend the Arkansas, in his letter to his father he writes, "I am now about undertaking a voyage more illy equipped than any other Officer, who ever was on Command, in point of Stores, Ammunition, Boats & Men." He further states, "My men have no winter cloathing, and two of them no Blankets." In his April 6, 1807 report he refers to his men as being almost naked and that the tatters which covered them as comfortless. There can be little doubt as to the poorly equipped troops of the Pike expedition. But the reasons for such poor preparations by an experienced military person like Pike leaves a lot to speculation.

This was a military expedition assigned the task of gathering important data and information about an area of the newly acquired Louisiana Purchase of which little or no information existed. General Wilkinson in his letter to Henry Dearborn dated August 2, 1806 tells us that he had furnished Pike with two hundred and eighty dollars worth of instruments to enable him to take latitude of places. In Wilkinson's letter to Pike dated June 24, 1806, he states the following, "The Instruments which I have furnished you; will enable you to ascertain the variation of the magnetic needle and the Latitude with exactitude, and at every remarkable point I wish you to employ your Telescope in observing Eclipses of Jupiters Satellites, having previously regulated and adjusted your Watch by your Sextant, taking care to note with great nicetty the periods of immersion & immersion of the eclipsed Satellite." He goes ahead to mention that longitude could be determined with the appropriate tables upon his return. He remarks as to the importance of this knowledge in relation to the direction, extent and navigation of the Arkansas and Red Rivers. He also mentions that Lt. Wilkinson and Sergeant Ballenger are to be properly instructed and equipped to take courses and distances, remarks on the soil and timber, etc. on their trip down the Arkansas. It has already been pointed out how poorly equipped Lt. Wilkinson was on his return trip.

Pike often makes reference to the adjustments made to his instruments. On August 23rd he mentions he adjusted his instruments to take "equal altitudes and a meridional altitude of the sun" but missed the immersions of Jupiter's satellites due to clouds. Again on the 24th he states that he spent nearly half a day adjusting the line of collimation in the telescopic sights of his theodolite. Whether due to Pike's adjustments or his lack of training in using these instruments his range of error was usually thirty-five to forty-five miles on his latitudinal readings. At the home of a priest in San Juan on his journey from Chihuahua, the priest expressed his desire to Pike to see his astronomical instruments. He only had with him his sextant and a large glass which magnified considerably, calculated for the day and night. The rest of his instruments were with Sergeant Meek and his party. The priest showed much surprise at the effect of the sextant and Pike remarked as to the lack of knowledge held by a person so versed in other sciences. He was informed by the priest that the Spanish government took great care in preventing the pursuit of any branch of science.

Mt. Rosa Pike Climb 2 continued

“Sleeping in this cave is the highlight of this trip for me,” Mendelsohn said. “I’m really into the history of it.”

FOLLOWING PIKE'S FOOTSTEPS: ZEBULON PIKE'S JOURNAL

On this day 200 years ago, Lt. Zebulon Pike came closer to Pikes Peak than he ever would again, and made a statement often interpreted as “no man will ever climb Pikes Peak.” In fact it was closer to, “no man in our position with no warm clothes or food could ever climb Pikes Peak.” What peak Pike was standing on when he came to this conclusion is a matter of some contention. Historians know he climbed a minor summit with a view of Pikes Peak, but that's about it. At one time or another, most of the region's mountains have been identified as candidates. The favorites now seem to be Mount Miller and Mount Rosa, with Mount Rosa having the edge after tireless testing by local historian John Murphy.

Editor's note- On 11-28-2008, Philipps, Mendelsohn, Murphy and crew pushed on the remaining 11 miles, from Rosa to Pikes Peak through the snow. The following elevation is from a planning session our Pike Association is considering for an Association hiking activity during 2009.



Top 10 Reasons why

Pike Spent Christmas in Salida-

10. Salida had NO salt for the buffalo.
9. Fireworks and a parade of lights had announced their coming on Thanksgiving Friday.
8. They liked it in the Red River Valley.
Climbing Mt. Ouray [13880'] or Chipeta Mtn. [12916'] on the Continental Divide didn't appeal to his men.
7. They promised to light the Christmas Tree on Tenderfoot Hill.
6. The Christmas parade would start at 7 pm instead of 6 pm.
5. Cider and Cookies were to be served FREE in all the stores.
4. Santa had been spotted on a fire truck over Buena Vista, coming their way.
3. Country Bounty has great food.
2. He didn't want to find Don Facundo Melgares yet in the Sangre de Cristos.
1. His Great Great Great Grand-nephew would Grace them hills.

Join Now! Please consider membership in our organization

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

Name _____

Address _____

Town _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____ Cell _____

e-mail _____

I will be able to help with:

The Pike Assoc. website

Historic/heritage investigation

Providing educational opportunities

Producing educational materials

I/we will write letters of legislative support Yes

I/we would like to help (Assoc. will contact) Yes

Contact us: 303/816-7424 harv.pike@gmail.com Make checks payable to:

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

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