

ELMWOOD CEMETERY

October 12, 2024 will be the 11th anniversary of Elmwood Cemetery's annual Cemetery Walk, located in Brighton, Colorado. The Cemetery Walk was created, by then, Cemetery Manager, Aaron Corr, and Lou Ellen Bromley, a small-time newspaper girl, looking for a story about haunted areas and buildings in Brighton and Adams County. In September 2012, Lou Ellen was hoping to do all her research and run the story in the Local Color magazine in the October issue, about the local hauntings. She decided the best place to start would be the cemeteries in Brighton. Aaron Corr was willing to take Lou Ellen on a tour of the three cemeteries in Brighton. During the tour they discussed hauntings, ghosts and urban legends surrounding the area, of which there are several. Aaron explained to Lou Ellen that he didn't feel there were ghosts in cemeteries. Why you may ask? Well, because the dearly departed have no connection to the cemetery as a rule. We agreed that most spirits would go to where they were happiest in life, and that's where you would find them.

During their conversations, Lou Ellen discovered that Aaron Corr was very interested in history. Specifically, the history of the people buried in cemeteries. He felt, as did Lou Ellen, that everyone has a story. Their life represents a story of some kind whether it is a politician, famous person, or just your grandmother who made the best pies in the world. Their lives were valuable, and their stories are worth telling.

It did not take them long to decide they wanted to put together a Cemetery Walk. They decided to choose between eight and ten individuals buried in Elmwood, do some research and then present those stories during an event coming in October. They both agreed it would be historic and not scary. There is enough scary stuff going on in October as it is. Aaron approached the city of Brighton about doing the Cemetery Walk. They agreed that Aaron and Lou Ellen could put it on, but they had no interest in supporting it. Aaron and Lou Ellen hustled a bit to get it together. Lou Ellen was able to locate 10 people that were willing to do the research, dress in costume and represent someone buried at Elmwood. Aaron supplied tents, chairs, tables, drinks and advertising. They agreed on a time and date and were ready to go! Neither of them was sure how well this event would be received by the people of Brighton and surrounding areas. But to their surprise, it was a hit. There were over 300 people that came through Elmwood Cemetery in 2 ½ hours to hear the stories. It was a very positive experience. After that first Cemetery Walk, the City of Brighton got on board with helping them set it up and run it. It has been successful every year. This year several members of the Adams County Museum are going to participate; along with some of the regulars who have been doing this since the beginning.

Some of the people that have been represented in these walks are Tiny Hill, a big band leader from the 40's, Red Barker, son of Ma Barker and her gang, Senator Emmett Bromley creator of Adams County, Sheriff Martin Bromley, the first Sheriff of Adams County, Sheriff James Higgins, the second Sheriff of Adams County, who, incidentally, spent 60 days in his own jail, Max Kuner, who built Kuner's Canning Factory, established in Brighton, and several pioneer

families, also two soldiers from the Civil War, one on the confederate side and one on the union side, and Dourus Miller, the only person with a large above ground tomb in Elmwood Cemetery. There are several more people and families that have been represented over the years in the Cemetery Walk. We honor these people by telling their stories. If anyone is interested in participating in the Cemetery Walk or in seeing it, please email denise@adamscountymuseum.com and she will direct your interest to the coordinator.