



GHOST TOWN CLUB

OF COLORADO

Exploration, enjoyment, and preservation of historical sites

Field Trip: Four Mile House Bonus Trip

Date of trip: 06/15/2022

Time: 10:30 AM-2:30 PM

Where: Four Mile House Historic Park

715 S. Forest Street, Denver, CO 80246

Cost: \$7.00 / person (payable on day of trip)

Leaders: Shannon Kanan and Gary Wallden

Four Mile House, site of our GTC Bonus Trip on Wednesday, June 15th, holds the unique distinction of being the oldest surviving structure in Denver. Four Mile House, built in 1859, served as one in a series of mile houses for travelers along branches of the Cherokee and Smoky Hill wagon trails near Denver. The history of Four Mile House is intertwined with the history of the earliest years of Denver. Named for its location four miles from the intersection of Broadway and Colfax in Denver, it was also the final stage stop for the Wells Fargo Butterfield Stage route from El Paso to Denver. It was added to the National Register in 1969.

History Colorado provides the following information on the building's structure: "Over the years, the current U-shaped plan evolved as three buildings were butted together to accommodate changing needs. Together, the 1859 squared log, the circa 1860s wood frame, and the 1883 brick portions reflect the evolution of rural housing during the Denver area's early settlement period. The house and several adjacent agricultural buildings are now part of a living history museum known as Four Mile Historic Park."

Description of the day:

We will meet at the free parking lot area on the west end of the site. This lot is adjacent to the Grant Family Education Center, which is also the main entrance. There, we will pay our entrance fee (\$7.00) and have a brief site orientation from Gary and Shannon. We are planning on a relaxed morning to tour the historic Four Mile House, nearby structures, and other features of the park, with the assistance of knowledgeable Four Mile House staff and volunteers.

If you have arrived wondering about any of the "Questions of the Day" (see below), there will be plenty of time to discover answers during our visit. We will not have the opportunity to see "ruins," such as those we might encounter on many GTC trips, but we hope to learn more about "archaeological investigations," begun in 1976, that have uncovered "the foundations of several lost buildings" on the site.

We will begin our outdoor picnic break at about 12:30 (bring your own food & drinks, please! Note: No glass containers permitted on site). After the picnic, we anticipate time for a little more investigation prior to our 2:00/2:30 finish. Those who wish to stay and explore more on their own after this time may do so until the park closes at 4:00.

Questions of the Day: Many of our members and guests have lots of knowledge about sites we visit, so plan to come on this trip even if you already know the answers to some, or all, of these questions:

1. What was the First Attempt Ditch?
2. Who built the Four Mile House?
3. What is the Bee House?
4. What happened to the old Bee House?
5. How many mile houses were there in the group with the Four Mile House?
6. How many of these are still standing?

Itinerary:

As a shorter “Bonus Trip” that is also occurring at only one location, we have a simple itinerary:

10:30 AM - Meet at the parking lot adjacent to the Grant Family Education Center (west end of site). Pay our entry fees, have a brief orientation, then tour the site as a group until our picnic break.

12:30 PM (approx.) - Picnic time! (Bring your own food & drinks, but no glass containers.) Flexibility after picnic for more site investigation.

2:30 PM - End of trip, but you can explore on your own until 4:00 PM closing time if you wish.

Accessibility: We will not be hiking but would rate the walking as easy to moderate. This natural setting, appropriately, does not have sidewalks, but seems to be very accessible. The loop path is mulched, and the middle path is gravel, so participants should be comfortable with these surfaces. The website suggests that heavy duty wheelchairs or strollers may provide easier mobility. The Four Mile House building/museum has “a single step to access the first floor of the log house, with three more steps to access the brick addition. There is no elevator to the attic or basement.” (These two areas have stairway access only.) Accessible restrooms are in several locations on the site.

Additional Trip Information:

1. Phone/ text numbers for the day of the trip: Gary Walden: 720-299-5252; Shannon Kanan: 303-929-5032.
2. Folding chairs: You are welcome to bring your own chair if you prefer it instead of picnic bench seating.
3. Four Mile Mercantile: A small shop in the visitor center that stocks history-related and other specialty items. Some of their handmade items are made by Four Mile’s blacksmithing and sewing guilds. All proceeds directly benefit Four Mile House programs and preservation, so stop in if you have time!

To sign up for the trip, or for any questions, call or email:

Shannon Kanan:

(303) 929-5032

shannonkanan@gmail.com

Or

Gary Wallden:

(720) 299-5252

garywallden@hotmail.com

(Advanced sign-up is appreciated, but if you have not signed up in advance, just come anyway!)