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**David  
Martinek**

**Colorado  
Realtor**



**Contact information:**

Direct Phone: 719.687.1516  
Toll Free: 800.905.3811, Ext. 1516  
Fax: 719.687.0488  
Cell: 913.707.7547

Redesigned Website:  
[www.davidmartinekc.com](http://www.davidmartinekc.com)

Email:  
[davidmartinek@1stchoicerealtycb.com](mailto:davidmartinek@1stchoicerealtycb.com)

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Photo of Pikes Peak by: D. Martinek

**An Essay on History**

History, they say, is a mystery. Even though the world has a tremendous amount of knowledge about its past, and each new discovery adds a little more to that knowledge base, and brings new revelations of understanding, I would venture a guess that the stuff we still don't know is much greater.

The Bible says ALL will be revealed in time. And that will be a wonderful day. But if we knew a thousand times more about our history than we do now, would we get it right? Some say, "No," we'll never get it right because the history we know is not the *real* history; it's only our *interpretation* of it.



Considering all the millions and millions of souls who have gone before us - who have lived full lives and died before our time - each with their separate backgrounds, motivations and life experiences, how is it possible for us to understand the *complete* history of their times and being? We look through a mirror dimly.

One of the not-so-surprising things I've come to learn in my study of the railroad history in the central Rockies is that "to speculate on what should have logically happened in a given time or place, based on limited information, is usually the wrong approach." In times past, things were different.

The technology was cruder and people's thoughts differed according to their environment. Customs and social biases and attitudes were a product of *their* age, not ours. Even though certain basic human values are ageless, for us to generally apply our modern social issues to individual behaviors and events of the past is to delude ourselves at best. Often we can draw inaccurate conclusions about our ancestors when we do. Perhaps, that's why we have such a variety of opinions about historical figures and events. Perhaps, that's why we have so much revisionist history proliferating the bookshelves these days. Not that they aren't interesting.

This being the bi-centennial of Abraham Lincoln's birth, it's fascinating to hear all the

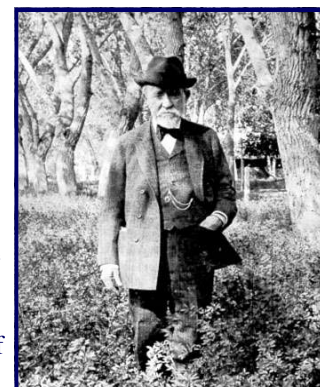
speakers laud Abe for this attribute or that, comparing his life and presidency against the backdrop of later presidents, and often assigning thoughts and values to Lincoln that perhaps he never had, or which evolved into more mature or more sophisticated reasoning later. Maybe the truth of Lincoln is that the man he was, was good enough.

One thing is true. The quest for wealth and the motives for achieving it has not changed much - just the methods. *Greed* seems to be a universal stimulus throughout the ages.

James J. Hagerman, for example - the man who was the driving force that raised twenty million dollars from American and English investors and caused the Colorado Midland Railway to be built in 1887-88 - owned coal fields outside of Glenwood Springs, a silver mine in Aspen and gold mines in Cripple Creek. A standard gauge railroad through the central Rockies and over the Continental Divide, running from Colorado Springs to Grand Junction, one compatible with eastern rail lines, could bring *his* coal to the smelters in Aspen, Leadville, Colorado City and Pueblo, as well as *his* gold and silver ore to market. Did the railroad benefit thousands of people, the mining and agriculture industries and open up the region? Of course it did. But it also benefited Mr. Hagerman.

It's my view that history should always be a little more personal. We strive to preserve the relics of the past so that we can show our children in the future what came before. It's a way of adding depth to our sense of belonging to a community or an area. But the real history is not in the relics, it's in the people. It is the memory of every unnamed person working and living in obscurity upon whose shoulders we stand today.

History is, indeed, a mystery.



**James J. Hagerman, 1838 - 1909. Driving force behind the building of the Colorado Midland Railway in 1887.**



**Sample Buyers' Guide**

**Right - a sampling of properties offered by Coldwell Banker 1st Choice Realty.**

*Prices and status are current as of February 27, 2009*

**The 'Stimulus Package' First-time Homebuyers Tax Credit**

In case you are confused by the complicated Economic Stimulus bill that President Obama signed into law February 17, it includes a revised, refundable first-time homebuyers tax credit.

It's similar to the \$7,500 tax credit allowed in 2008, but differs in the amount and in recapture requirements. Whereas the \$7,500 was essentially a tax-free, interest free loan that needed to be paid back over 15 years, the \$8,000 tax credit is fully refundable and generally doesn't need to be paid back.

The actual tax credit amounts to 10% of the home purchase price up to a limit of \$8,000. To qualify, a buyer must have not owned property for the last three years. And, the buyer's adjusted gross income must not exceed \$75,000 (if single) or \$150,000 if married, filing jointly. To keep the credit, the buyer must also *live* in the home for at least three years.

The law also allows a home-buyer who buys a home in 2009 to treat the purchase, for tax purposes, as if the home were bought in 2008. This would result in the homebuyer receiving the proceeds of his tax credit through his 2008 income tax (perhaps amended) filing.

For example, if a first-time homebuyer's 2008 adjusted gross income requires him to pay \$3,000 in federal income taxes, he would receive a check for \$5,000, in addition to any refund of income taxes he's have already paid into the IRS.

The tax credit also applies to new home construction but you must occupy the home by December 1, 2009. However, you cannot buy a home from a relative or execute a 1031 exchange and qualify for the tax credit.

This information came from news accounts. Potential home buyers should always consult their accountant, not their Realtor, for expert advice on tax issues.

*If interested, please email or call at 1-800-905-3811, Ext. 1516.*



**\$27,900**

**93 Costello Rd., Florissant Land.** Here's a .26-acre commercially zoned lot right in Florissant just off Highway 24. All utilities are at the property line. This would be a great spot for an office or store. Take a good look.



**\$149,900**

**77 Malmsey, Divide Unsurpassed view.** This is a lovely home in Sherwood Forest. Cedar siding; aspen trim and wrap-around deck highlight a sparkling interior w/ French doors. See the snow-capped Collegiate Peaks. #584264



**\$120,000**

**1326 Golden Cycle Cr., CCV A-Frame!** A perfect weekender or vacation rental. Quaint and cozy, it sits on a 1 acre lot surrounded by Aspens. Well-maintained with a new wood stove and a spiral staircase to the upstairs sleeping loft. #480922



**\$330,900**

**105 Pennsylvania Ave, Woodland Park Lots of room!** Live in a beautiful area, close to town w/ an awesome view of Pikes Peak. New hardwood floors. 3200 S.F. w/ 4 BR, 3 BA and 2-car garage on 2+ acres. This home is immediately available and ready to move-in. #547690



**\$315,900**

**2227 Blue Mesa, Divide Currently Leased.** Beautiful custom home on 1.3 acres w/ awesome views of the lakes and mountains. 3 BR, 3 Bath, 2048 S.F. and 2-car garage. Light and bright on the interior. End of cul-de-sac; walk to fish. This home will be available again soon. #556968

**(FEATURED PROPERTY) - \$290,900 - 12036 County Road 102, Guffey - (REDUCED!)**

**Mountain Chalet!** A spacious mountain chalet nestled among trees and rock formations, overlooking secluded meadows, and a mountain behind. Located on 52+ acres just across the Teller/Park county line with easy access to CR 102. The fenced driveway invites a closer look at the open raised ranch floor plan, with lots of windows and plenty of space. Some cosmetic repairs are needed to make this home a delightful permanent residence or vacation retreat. 3 BR, 2 Baths, 2048 S.F. There's also a Quonset hut on the property. This is a deal!!! #544038



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David Martinek  
P.O. Box 1088  
Divide, CO 80814

[davidmartinek@1stchoicerealtycb.com](mailto:davidmartinek@1stchoicerealtycb.com)