

Colorado State Library Launches New Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection Online Database

Denver, Nov. 3 - The Colorado State Library is pleased to announce the launch of its new Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection (CHNC) online database, located at www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org. The new site, designed by New Zealand based-Veridian, offers public access to over 690,000 digitized pages of Colorado newspapers. The State Library has made the new site faster, easier to navigate and more user-friendly. We want patrons to want to use it!

The Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection currently offers readers free online access to more than 199 local and regional newspapers, primarily including newspapers published between 1859 and 1923. The new CHNC site will eventually hold more than 2.5 million pages from 275 newspapers. The new site delivers enhanced search capabilities, improved Optical Character Recognition (OCR), and gives users the ability to create user accounts to save and share content and finding aids, and participate in public forums and a crowd sourcing text correction interface. Providing these tools enables us to help build a sense of community which is something we strive for.

CHNC allows K-12 students to interact directly with primary source materials by engaging with history as it was originally recorded and interpreted - something the history books can't even begin to do. One Colorado teacher who uses the site says it's great "as a tool for teaching search strategies while working with American History classes." She finds "the local perspectives to be enlightening for students in many ways."

CHNC is also an excellent resource for genealogical research because of the breadth of information that can be found on individuals and families. Newspapers often serve as the record for birth, marriage and obituaries and may also contain stories about families that cannot be found in any other sources. CHNC makes these resources easily accessible to all.

The CHNC is a collaborative service of the Colorado State Library (Colorado Department of Education), History Colorado, and libraries, archives and museums around Colorado. "A newspaper is, metaphorically, the eyes, voice, and spirit of a community," says Kerry Baldwin, Serials Manager at History Colorado. "The recent upgrade is great news because it improves and adds to CHNC's search capabilities, giving researchers even better tools to find specific information or discover a new Colorado story inside the pages of bygone news." Without our partners and the generous support of the libraries and cultural heritage organizations of Colorado, we could not continue to bring this valuable resource to the Colorado community.

Coloradans are eager to ensure that their historical record is not only preserved, but readily accessible to future generations. To meet this objective, communities raise funds to digitize their local historic newspapers. "One of the greatest aspects of the Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection is that it captures the local and regional voice of early Coloradans. The CHNC currently represents local newspapers from 49 of the 64 counties. It is our hope to eventually include titles from all counties, thus helping to preserve the voice of these unique areas," says Regan Harper, Director of Networking and Resource Sharing at the Colorado State Library. On-going support for maintaining and providing access to CHNC is paid for

with state and federal funds administered by the Colorado State Library. Anyone with an internet connection can use CHNC free of charge.

For more information, or to request a quote to have your local newspapers added to the collection, please contact:

Leigh Jeremias, Digital Collections Coordinator, Networking and Resource Sharing,
Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection, Colorado State Library.

ljeremias@coloradovirtuallibrary.org