

CAMPFIRE GHOST STORIES: LIVING HISTORY TALES OF THE WEST



**Rocky
Mountain
Conservancy**
FIELD INSTITUTE

JUNE 18, 2020 - IRON THUMB

JUNE 25, 2020 – INNKEEPERS OF RMNP HISTORY

**JULY 2, 2020 – ROCKY MOUNTAIN TALES OF SURVIVAL
(VARIOUS CHARACTERS)**

JULY 9, 2020--“SQUEAKY BOB” WHEELER

PAGE 1 OF 2

COURSE LEVEL: I

COURSE #S: S4006, S4007, S4008, S4009

FEE: \$15 ADULT/ALL CHILDREN 12 AND UNDER FREE

INSTRUCTORS: JAN MANNING, KURTIS KELLY

LOCATION: Moraine Park Discovery Center Amphitheater

Enter Rocky Mountain National Park through the Beaver Meadows entrance. Take the first left onto Bear Lake Road and travel approximately two miles. Turn left, and park in the Moraine Park Discovery Center parking lot. Take the trail/stairs at the northwest end of the parking lot up to the amphitheater.

TIME: 7:30 PM – 9:00 PM

COURSE DESCRIPTION: People from the past come to life in these presentations about the history and adventures of several past residents and visitors to the Estes Valley. Join these characters as they recount tales of humor, exploration, and danger; learn what life was like for them during their stay in and around Rocky Mountain National Park. Enjoy time for campfire questions and roasting marshmallows after the program.

June 18: Iron Thumb: A Fur Trapper’s Life in the Mountains - Iron Thumb is a fictitious character born out of the research and study of 19th century mountain men on the American frontier. His character will tell what it was like to live as a beaver trapper in the 1800s, including dangers, humorous adventures, and everyday tasks for survival in this once-harsh land. Participants at this campfire program will learn about the clothing, tools, and lifestyle of these often-misunderstood characters in history.

June 25: “Welcome, Weary Traveler”: Innkeepers of Rocky Mountain National Park History

One hundred years ago, ranchers and homesteaders rapidly built lodges and cabins for visitors who were flocking to discover Rocky’s scenic beauty. From Abner Sprague, who transformed the land with a human-made fishing pond, to Enos Mills, who insisted that his guests not pick flowers or play cards, each of these innkeepers and their families created lifelong memories for families and famous visitors. Meet these characters through first person living history performances by storyteller Kurtis Kelly: Joe Mills of the Craggs Hotel, Charles Edwin Hewes of the Hewes-Kirkwood Inn, and the famous F.O. Stanley.

July 2: Rocky Mountain Tales of Survival (various characters) - Hear thrilling tales of adventure from pioneers facing perilous encounters and daring escapes. Abner Sprague recounts the 1896 camping trip that left his party lost in a blizzard above timberline. The Earl of Dunraven comes face-to-face with a mountain lion. Joe Mills describes a midnight rescue on wind-whipped Longs Peak. A snow blinded Enos Mills makes a dangerous descent from the Continental Divide.

NEW CHARACTER July 9: “Squeaky Bob” Wheeler - Theodore Roosevelt was just one of many guests treated to the savory cooking, homespun hospitality, and enchanting tales of “Squeaky” Bob Wheeler (1865-1945), who operated a popular tent camp for travelers, hunters, and fishermen journeying through the region that became Rocky Mountain National Park. Bob’s high-pitched, funny-sounding voice earned him his nickname, and visitors relished in hearing him remember his adventures working in the mining camp of Lulu City, while enjoying the scenic surroundings of his “Hotel de Hardscrabble.”

COURSE LEVEL: I

These are campfire programs. No strenuous walking is involved.

BRIEF INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHIES (additional information available at www.RMConservancy.org):

Jan Manning (Iron Thumb) - Jan Manning, a native Coloradan, has a degree from Colorado State University in wildlife biology. His passion for American history led him to begin researching and providing living history presentations to school children in Fort Collins. In the years since, he has continued both his research and his presentations to audiences across the western United States. He now presents his program to about 150 audiences a year, including schools, civic organizations, museums, guest ranches, and elderhostels. Among his patrons are the Fort Collins Museum, the Denver Art Museum, the Museum of Western Art, the University of Northern Colorado, Colorado State University, the National Wildlife Federation, and the Los Angeles Museum of Natural History.

Kurtis Kelly (Innkeepers, Tales of Survival, “Squeaky Bob”) - Kurtis Kelly has been a well-known performer, actor and storyteller in Estes Park for nearly two decades. He has portrayed Abner Sprague at regional museums and for school groups for many years. He has led living history reenactments of local figures like F.O. Stanley and Lord Dunraven. Since 2002, he has worked with the Stanley Museum and has led hundreds of people on popular ghost story talks/tours at the Stanley Hotel. He has also appeared on National Public Radio and performed in dozens of theatrical productions.

EXPECTATIONS: Professional conduct will be expected from participants at all times. Respect for individual ideas will be observed. Except during course breaks, cellular phones, pagers, and personal entertainment devices are strictly prohibited in the classroom and during field sessions.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE:

- 7:30 PM – Arrival/introduction of speaker
- 7:45 PM – Living History presentation
- 8:30 PM – Program ends; time for questions; marshmallow roast.
- 9:00 PM – Depart.

WHAT TO BRING:

- Clothing layers (The nights are often chilly even in summer.)
- Camera

Note: Even in the summer months, nighttime temperatures can drop below freezing at high elevation. Rocky Mountain Conservancy - Field Institute recommends that participants for all courses dress in layers and wear comfortable, sturdy hiking boots/shoes. Participants should be prepared for sudden changes in temperature and weather conditions.

REFUND POLICY:

Cancellations received at least 14 days prior to the start of a class will qualify for a refund minus a cancellation fee of \$25 per participant for a one-day class, \$50 for a multi-day class, \$5 per kid's class and \$15 per half-day class or bus tour seat. Registration money transferred to another class will be subject to a \$10 switch fee. Cancellations received less than 14 days prior to the start of a class or bus tour will not generate a refund. If the Field Institute cancels a class, every effort will be made to place the participant in another class; otherwise, a full refund will be given.