

Women's Gold Tapestry

This hand-stitched embroidery and appliqué tapestry is 9x12 feet and took 4,500 hours and two years of intensive effort to complete. It was unveiled in July 1977, as part of Colorado's centennial celebration. Originally conceived by Eva Mackintosh, it was brought to life by designer Carol Carpenter, historian Geraldine Merrill, and embroiderer Betsey Gottschalk. It pays homage to the courage, perseverance, and sacrifices made by women in Colorado.

The title, *Women's Gold*, is derived from the practice many pioneer women had of carrying the roots of flowers and herbs from their former eastern homes to their new homes in the west. The Harison's Yellow Rose, in particular, flourished along the mining town mountain slopes, and the miners dubbed them "women's gold".

The tapestry river represents Clear Creek, where gold was discovered in May of 1859. All of the plants and animals displayed are native to Colorado (blue spruce, cottonwood, aspen, pine, and queen's crown, bighorn sheep, mule deer, lark bunting, cottontails and grizzly bears). Along the border, you will find the words, "America the Beautiful," which were written by Katharine Lee Bates after an inspirational journey to the top of Pike's Peak. The motto, "Their Heritage Gives Colorado Women Faith in the Future", was written by Eva Mackintosh's 15 year old son, Todd.

1. Chipeta, Native American Rights Advocate and Diplomat (June 10, 1843 - August 1924)

The second wife of Ute Chief Ouray, she worked with him to keep the peace between new settlers and the Ute Nation during Colorado's early development. She served as her husband's trusted advisor and confidant for many years before his death. She was highly respected during her lifetime.

2. Mother Frances Cabrini, America's 1st Citizen Saint (July 15, 1850 - December 22, 1917)

She and the "Sisters of the Sacred Heart" built a convent and farm that served as a summer camp for the orphan girls living under Cabrini's care at the Queen of Heaven Orphanage in Denver. The land she once owned became the Mother Cabrini Shrine in 1946, the same year she was canonized by Pope Pius XII as the first American saint.

3. Elizabeth Eyre Pellet ("Betty"), Politician and Legislative Leader (January 15, 1887 - April 7, 1976)

She was the first woman Minority Leader in the Colorado House of Representatives and served as Chair of the House Rules Committee. She sponsored laws providing education for disabled children and worked on legislation to provide women with equal pay. While in office, she helped to preserve the railroads and the Galloping Goose train, serving Southwestern Colorado, saving the towns from possible extinction. She was also the first Colorado woman to run for Congress.

4. Olga Schaaf Little, Operator of pack burro train (July 26, 1883 - September 1970)

Born in Germany and brought to Colorado in 1893, she learned how to wrangle horses and cattle at an early age. She became one of the only female "jack whackers" in the San Juan Mountains and ran a pack train of burros out of Durango to carry supplies to the miners and bring ore down to the smelters.

5. "Aunt" Clara Brown, Businesswoman and Philanthropist (c. 1800 - October 23, 1885)

Born as a slave in Virginia, she worked for various owners until she was finally given her freedom in her 50s. She was hired to work as a cook on a wagon train headed for Denver, and later, in Central City, where she set up the area's first laundry business. She became very successful and made investments in land and mines and gave to those in need. After the Civil War, she helped about 16 former slaves relocate to Colorado and aided them in finding employment.

6. Captain Ellen Jack, Prospector and Businesswoman (November 4, 1842 - June 16, 1921)

Born in England, this colorful Colorado pioneer opened a boarding house in Gunnison and became a partner in the Black Queen Mine. She became known as "Captain Jack" and her colorful legend began to take shape. By 1903, she had moved to Colorado Springs and owned a few rental cabins above Bear Creek Canyon. Her curio shop, with exotic pets and colorful stories about her life, became quite the tourist destination.

7. Antonia Brico, Musician and Conductor (June 26, 1902 - August 3, 1989)

Born in the Netherlands, she became the first woman to conduct the New York Philharmonic in 1938. After moving to Denver in 1942, she founded such organizations as the Women's String Ensemble, the Denver Businessmen's Orchestra, and the Denver Philharmonic, which she conducted until she retired in 1985. Her courage and perseverance opened the door for other women to enter this traditionally male dominated field.

8. Doña Genoveva Gallegos de Salazar, Business Woman (January 3, 1860 - September 18, 1907)

In 1851, her parents helped to found the first permanent Colorado settlement, San Luis. She became a very prominent business woman in the community. Her daughter described her as being, "a tiny woman, but big in spirit". Her store, now known as the R&R Market, is still in business and is still owned and operated by the Salazar-Gallegos family.

9. Dr. Florence Rena Sabin, Professor and Scientist (November 9, 1871 - October 3, 1953)

This Colorado native became the first woman president of the American Association of Anatomists and the first woman to be elected as a member of the National Academy of Sciences. She worked tirelessly to help reform Colorado's public health system. In 1959, Colorado recognized her with a statue in the National Statuary Hall of the US Capitol.

10. Agnes Reid Tammen, Philanthropist (September 19, 1865 - July 1, 1942)

She was married to one of the owners of the *Denver Post* newspaper, and donated generously to the Children's Hospital in Denver. She was given the title of Honorary Life President of the Children's Hospital. Since the couple was childless, most of their multimillion-dollar estate was left to the hospital.

11. Emily Griffith, Educator (February 10, 1868 - June 18, 1947)

She opened the Opportunity School, in 1916. This school, whose motto was "For all who wish to learn," was open to everyone regardless of age, race, gender or background. The school was later renamed the Emily Griffith Opportunity School. In 1976, she was honored in the Colorado State Capitol with a stained glass window.

12. Mary Coyle Chase, Journalist and Playwright (February 24, 1906 - October 20, 1981)

This Denver native began working at the *Denver Times* and the *Rocky Mountain News* as a journalist in 1924, and later pursued her passion for writing plays. Her greatest success was, "Harvey," which opened on Broadway and ran for four and a half years. She received the Pulitzer Prize in Drama, and "Harvey" became a Universal Studios film in 1950, starring James Stewart.

13. Helen Gilmer Bonfils, Philanthropist, Theater Producer (1889 - June 6, 1972)

Helen moved to Denver in 1895 when her father took over a fledgling newspaper, the *Denver Post*. When her father died, Helen took over as the paper's manager. An avid lover of the arts, Helen, also made large contributions to Denver's theater district, including taking charge of the Elitch Theatre and building the Bonfils Theatre and the Denver Performing Arts Complex. She also built the Belle Bonfils Memorial Blood Center.

14. Mary Elitch Long, founder of Elitch Gardens Amusement Park (May 10, 1856 - July 12, 1936)

Mary and her husband bought a 16-acre apple orchard in the Highland neighborhood and on May 1, 1890, Elitch Zoological Gardens was born. The successful park contained exotic animals, gardens, orchards and entertainment. When Mary sold the park, she stipulated that it must keep the Elitch name and that she could live on the property as long as she wished, which she did until she died in 1936 at the age of 80.

15. Frances Wisebart Jacobs, Philanthropist (March 29, 1843 - November 3, 1892)

Upon her arrival to Denver, Colorado's "Mother of Charities" was struck by the poverty and the growing number of people with tuberculosis. So, she founded organizations like the Ladies Relief Society and the Charity Organization Society, which in 1922 became the United Way. She also helped create the National Jewish Hospital and is the only woman of 16 Colorado pioneers to be memorialized in stained glass in the State Capitol Rotunda.

16. Diana Goldberg, Student of Frances Wisebart Jacobs (?-?)

17. Margaret Crawford, Co-Founder of Steamboat Springs (? - 1939)

Margaret and her husband, James, staked a claim in an area of the Yampa Valley that would later become Steamboat Springs. The family moved there in the spring of 1876 and they were the only permanent residents for the next five years. They befriended many of the visiting Utes and traded with them. Their home also served as the area's first post office, school, church and library.

18. Silverheels, Dance hall girl and heroine (?-?)

Legend tells that this lovely performer entertained the crowds of Buckskin Joe with her beauty and silver heeled dancing shoes, until a Small Pox epidemic struck the mountain town. She risked her beauty and health to stay behind and help those who had fallen ill, eventually contracting the disease herself. After her disappearance, the townsfolk honored her memory by renaming a nearby mountain peak to Mount Silverheels.

19. Patricia Mackintosh, Doctor (1961-?)

Sixteen years old when the tapestry was completed in 1977, she represents the next generation of Colorado women who are to carry the ideals and principals of their ancestors to 2076 and beyond. Later, she became a doctor with an extensive practice in Montana. There she lives on a ranch with her husband and children.

