



**ROCK LEDGE**  
**RANCH**  
HISTORIC SITE

Living History Program: Wednesday—Saturday 10 a.m.—5 p.m.  
First Saturday in June—Third Saturday in August  
& Special Events throughout the year.  
Visit [www.rockledgeranch.com](http://www.rockledgeranch.com) or 719-578-6777

Restrooms and drinking fountains are located at the  
Carriage House and the Studio Building.



parks · recreation · cultural services

Garden of the Gods  
Visitor Center



## ROCK LEDGE RANCH HISTORIC SITE

Rock Ledge Ranch Historic Site is an educational, non-profit, living history farm and museum which depicts life in the Pikes Peak region from the time American Indians made this land their home to 1910. Several distinct periods of development took place on this property and 2 significant historic structures remain on site. The Ranch was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979. Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services department operates the site with assistance from the Rock Ledge Ranch Living History Association, a volunteer support group. Through hands-on demonstrations, tours and exhibits, the story of settlement and use of the land by American Indians and European settlers is brought to life.

### **AMERICAN INDIAN AREA 1775 – 1835**

For thousands of years American Indian people have made the Central Front Range of the Rocky Mountains their home. Ute oral tradition says that their people have always lived here. Other groups, including the Kiowa, Comanche, Apache, Arapaho and Cheyenne also traveled through and considered the land their home. These people established strong trading relationships with the Spanish, who claimed all the land north of their colonial headquarters in Mexico City. **Check the schedule at Admissions for any special demonstrations.**

### **GALLOWAY HOMESTEAD 1867 – 1874**

In 1867, Walter Galloway built a small cabin on this land in Camp Creek Valley. Officially, he claimed the 160-acre homestead on August 10, 1871. During Galloway's tenure here he struggled for survival; occasionally working as a day laborer in nearby Colorado City whose population at that time was about 81. The homestead area, with the reconstructed cabin, represents life on the pre-railroad frontier. During this early period in Colorado's history commodities were scarce and expensive, because goods were freighted overland from Kansas and Missouri. At the same time, American Indian people in the region experienced increased pressure from Anglo settlement and the decimation of their subsistence – buffalo – and encroachment on traditional wintering and summering areas. **Check the schedule at Admissions for any special demonstrations.**

### **CHAMBERS FARM AND ROCK LEDGE HOUSE 1874 – 1900**

Rock Ledge House, completed in 1875, is the heart of the Chambers Ranch. After searching for land with sufficient water for farming, Robert and Elsie Chambers purchased Walter Galloway's homestead in 1874. This fine stone house was not their only improvement. They increased irrigation by building a small reservoir behind the house, planted orchards of apples, cherries and pears developed a truck farm specializing in asparagus and dozens of raspberry, currant and gooseberry bushes. By 1900, when the Chambers sold the Ranch to General William J. Palmer, it was considered to be one of the most productive farms in El Paso County. The Chambers farm includes the Rock Ledge House, garden area, Old Rosy ( the 140<sup>th</sup> year old apple tree), and the apple and cherry trees as well as the livestock. Please visit them all. **Check the schedule at Admissions for any special demonstrations.**

### **BLACKSMITH SHOP**

Located south of the Rock Ledge House, this 19<sup>th</sup> century working blacksmith shop repairs the farm implements and fashions new tools and other items for use on site. In addition, hand-forged items made by the blacksmith are available for purchase in the General Store.

### **GENERAL STORE**

The General Store offers a wide variety of books, reproductions and theme-related items; many made by volunteers and staff, for sale. Also available are cold sodas, popcorn and "penny candy." The friendly clerks will answer any questions about the ranch.

### **ORCHARD HOUSE 1907 – 1910**

The Chambers era ended in 1900 when Colorado Springs' founder, General William Jackson Palmer, added Rock Ledge Ranch to his estate, Glen Erie. At first, Palmer used the land to increase his hay farming operations. He enlarged the Chamber's irrigation system and added six more reservoirs through the Camp Creek Valley. In 1907, William and Charlotte Schlater, Palmer's relatives, moved in the newly built Orchard House, which was designed by local architect, Thomas MacLaren. The house represented the most modern features of the time, Arts and Crafts furnishings, steam heat and electricity as well as indoor plumbing. It also contains many labor - saving devices; no doubt appreciated by the live-in domestic staff. Guided tours begin on the front porch about every 20 minutes. **Check the Orchard House daily schedule at Admissions.**