



March 2007

# THE DREAM KEEPER

"He was direct about what he thought should happen.  
He was honest and just a good guy."

*Clark Miner, who served as project manager for the Rollins Pass reopening in 1987*

## Longmont loses 'The Colonel'

Straight was retired Air Force colonel who fought to reopen Rollins Pass

**By Trevor Hughes**  
*The Daily Times-Call*

LONGMONT — Dan E. Straight, a retired Air Force colonel and tireless advocate of reopening Rollins Pass

Road over the Continental Divide to Winstler Park, died suddenly Wednesday. He was 84.

A longtime local resident, Straight volunteered with groups ranging from the American Red Cross to the Boy Scouts. He helped launch the Twin Peaks Rotary.

Originally from Greeley, Straight and his family settled in Longmont around 1978 after he retired from the Air Force, for which he had flown

more than 29 types of aircraft. The front fuselage of one of them, a B-24B Marauder nicknamed "Black Hair," is displayed at the Smithsonian.

Straight, known locally to many as "The Colonel," was one of many pilots of the storied World War II bomber. He flew one mission in the bomber, on Valentine's Day 1945, carrying his young daughter's shoe in his pocket so

■ See COLONEL / A6



**Col. Dan E. Straight** settled in Longmont with his family around 1978, after he retired from the Air Force. Straight died Wednesday at the age of 84.

*Times Call file photo*

## Honoring Danley Elson Straight

It is with extreme sadness that I report the loss of our only President and tireless leader, Danley Elson Straight, October 8, 1922 to February 7, 2007. Jack Reed graciously posted his obituary on our website for our RPRAs friends across the nation: [www.muffatroad.org](http://www.muffatroad.org)

It has been a long time since our organization was formed in 1982, and I would like to thank all of you for your interest and undying support of the efforts to re-open the Needles Eye Tunnel and the pass to automobile traffic.

The RPRAs By-Laws state, "in the event of a vacancy in the office of the President ... duties of this office shall be exercised by the Vice President". Together with our current Vice President, Ron Cheyney, Treasurer, Randy Eckhardt, and my daughter, Su Eckhardt, it was recommended that since I have been closely connected with the communication, duties, and responsibilities of your President, I serve as the organization's

Interim-President until the election of officers at the annual meeting on May 21st, 2007. It will be an honor and a challenge to live up to Dan's expectations for his dream, however I will give it my best efforts. In the words of the railroaders and my darling husband, I will **NEVER GIVE UP!**

Our plans for the future of the organization include filling the Board vacancies (President and Secretary). There will be an election of officers at the Annual Meeting on May 21st, at the Meadows Branch of the Boulder Public Library, 4800 Baseline Road, at 6:30 pm, so please plan to attend. In addition to the Board vacancies, we have decided that it is time to add active members to the decision-making body in order to offer further opportunities for your involvement. *We need everyone's 'time' and 'talents' to move forward. Consider this your invitation to help us achieve the DREAM!*

The following people have graciously donated over \$1,400.00 in memory of Dan to the Rollins Pass Restoration Association. I am sure the entire membership would like to publicly thank you for your support and commitment.

- Dr. Kathy Andreson Albuquerque NM
- Virginia Arter Longmont CO
- Mary & Thomas Blue Longmont CO
- Ronald Cheyney Longmont CO
- Al Dworak Longmont
- Su & Randy Eckhardt Littleton CO
- Skip & Shirley Fankhauser Apache Junction AZ
- Fugere Family Foundation Boulder CO
- Mrs. James Henry Longmont CO
- Kenneth & Karen Kanemoto Longmont CO
- Ronald & Irene Long Platteville CO
- Lyons Historical Society Lyons CO
- Larry & Paulette McGimsey Mead CO
- Hubert & Kathy Nunn Longmont CO
- Charles & Melanie Nygren Niwot CO
- Lois Rayman Longmont CO
- Errol & Carole Salter Wheat Ridge CO
- Kenneth & Kathleen Shaver Westminster CO
- Van & Diane Stow Longmont CO
- Danley & Susan Straight Highlands Ranch CO
- Thom & Judie Straight Pulaski TN
- Dwight L Sullivan Longmont
- Judy Wilde Boulder CO
- Tom & Muriel Wood Longmont CO
- John & Evelyn Yoder Longmont CO

P.O. Box 1082  
Longmont, Colorado 80502-1082



Dan's last effort on behalf of the organization is the following letter, unfinished on his computer. He went to the hospital the following day for his pacemaker, returned home for three days, and then I checked him back in to the hospital on February 6, 2007, and he died the next morning of septic shock.

*Juanita M. Straight*

U.S. Forest Service  
Boulder Ranger District  
2140 Yarmouth Avenue  
Boulder, CO 80301-1615

January 30, 2007

Attn: Christine Walsh, District Ranger

Reference your letter File 7720-2-1 Dated January 25, 2007. It is quite evident that a neophyte without access cannot follow the many publications and laws that the Forest Service operates under. H.R. 1576 the James Peak Wilderness and Protection Area Act stated the Rollins Pass (Moffat Road) would be returned to two-wheeled drive capability. We do have three counties involved and each of them have expressed a desire to restore the road. Selecting the lead county seems to be the hold up. The Needles Eye Tunnel is in Boulder County.

The Forest service was directed to provide "technical assistance and otherwise cooperate with respect to repairing the Rollins Pass road." It is my interpretation that this would mean assistance in preparing documentation to comply with Forest Service directives. Your predecessor Lynn Young was available and involved throughout our efforts from 1983-1987. He represented the Forest Service, along with Josephine Heath, Boulder County Commissioner and, myself in receiving the prestigious Stephen H. Hart Award from the Colorado Historical Society. I should add that District Ranger Shelly Nolde was a big part of our "Eye Opening Ceremony" at the tunnel on July 3, 1988.

It is my understanding that county attorneys have met to discuss an inter-governmental-agreement. Now that the election is over maybe further progress can be made. As a not-for-profit organization we are ready to assist in any way we can. We have 350 annual members and 150 Lifetime members.

**Our motto is NEVER GIVE UP and we do not intend to. Will you help?**

*Dan Straight*

Dan Straight  
President

Our sympathy also goes to the family of  
**Brownlee Guyer,**  
friend and former presenter for  
RPRA Annual Meeting.  
Deceased, February 7, 2007  
at home, age 94.

**PLEASE ATTEND**  
**ANNUAL MEETING**

May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2007

at the Meadows Branch of the

Boulder Public Library

4800 Baseline Road

6:30 pm