



Coal Creek Miners Museum

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rocky Top, TN-The Coal Creek Miners Museum celebrated their Grand Opening on March 11, 2016 at their new museum building located at 201 South Main Street, Rocky Top, TN.

The museum not only tells the story of the miners that lived, worked and died in Coal Creek, Fraterville and Briceville Tennessee, it also tells about the historically significant events that changed the mining industry.

The story starts in the late 1800s when the “free” miners fought against the convict lease system, a struggle that ultimately ended the system in the southern states. The story goes on to depict how these communities not only survived one mining disaster, but two that killed almost every man in the community along with many young boys.

“The story of this tenacious mining community reveals the courageous spirit of our forefathers,” said Tim Isbel, chairperson of the Coal Creek Miners Museum Board of Directors. “It was very important to the board and the volunteers involved in constructing this museum that it tell the unique and distinguishing story of these miners and this mining community.”

The museum was originally founded as part of the Tennessee Homecoming ‘86 Celebration, a year-long recognition of Tennessee’s history that encouraged local communities to celebrate their history. The museum has been

moved to several different locations throughout the years. Its artifacts were most recently housed in a room in the city's community center.

In August 2013, the Anderson County Commission voted to donate funds to the City of Lake City, TN, now known as Rocky Top, TN to purchase a former bank building and transform it into a museum.

While seeking grant money to remodel the entire building, the Coal Creek Miners Museum Board of Directors and volunteers from the community started a grass roots effort to remodel the first floor and open phase one of the museum.

“All of the labor and funds to purchase supplies have been donated from the board members and the community,” said Isbel. “It has been wonderful to see how the community has supported this project.”

The plans for the second phase of the museum include installing an elevator to meet ADA requirements and remodeling the second floor for additional exhibit space.

“The museum will be an economic driver for our town because there will also be visitor information on the area available and the interest in the history will attract people to the downtown through heritage tourism,” continued Isbel.

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