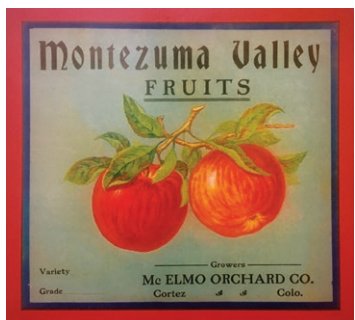


# SAVED

## GOLD MEDAL ORCHARD MONTEZUMA COUNTY



The historic Gold Medal Orchard, located in McElmo Canyon, represents one of hundreds of remnant historic orchards located in Montezuma County and Colorado. First planted in 1890 by James Giles, the orchard soon earned its name by winning a gold medal for the quality of its apples and peaches at the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904. Time passed, the trees grew into their grandeur, and then slowly faded into the landscape. Over 100 years later, only

a few historic trees remain, hardy remnants of the orchard's former glory. Heritage fruit varieties were lost, and the story of the Gold Medal Orchard and its prize-winning fruits was nearly forgotten.

Today, the story of the Gold Medal Orchard is remembered by the Montezuma Orchard Restoration Project (MORP) through its work to preserve Colorado's fruit-growing heritage. In 2015, the orchard was listed as one of Colorado's Most Endangered Places by Colorado Preservation, Inc. (CPI). In 2019, the project was awarded the EPP Progress Award by CPI at the Dana Crawford & State Honor Awards, and with the leadership of Jude and Addie Schuenemeyer and the Kenyon family, is now saved.

To save the Gold Medal Orchard, MORP first had to find and save the many rare cultivars that were



historically grown there. This required searches not just from repositories and nurseries for living plant material, scion, but actually finding many of these rare and lost varieties in Colorado's historic orchards. Specialty Crop Block Grants from the USDA

and Colorado Department of Agriculture helped to fund the propagation work in the MORP nursery and the DNA testing of historic apple trees. This analysis confirmed the many rare cultivars growing in historic orchards and provided documentation to the historic context for the site.

A History Colorado, State Historical Fund grant provided funds for interpretive signs at the Gold Medal Orchard, development of classes on Colorado's orchard history, and a written historic context of orchards in Colorado. The restoration work to replant 400 trees to the site was completed by MORP volunteers and AmeriCorps NCCC service crews. We are grateful to CPI for recognition in 2015 of the Gold Medal Orchard as the first cultural landscape on the Endangered Places list. We are especially thankful for the relationship that MORP has cultivated with Philip and Vivienne Kenyon, who remain the great inspiration through their ability to value the past but look toward the future.



Philip and Vivienne Kenyon

