

Twenty three years in the making, a fort is finally finished



A new version of an old fort is an original-sized replica built by volunteers in Fort Lupton, Colorado



Buffalo Soldiers using the fort for training exercises



Over 5,000 logs from the mountains and some local backyards were peeled by hand for vigas and latias.

Lt. Lancaster Lupton and his crew planned and built a Colorado fur trading post called Fort Lancaster in less than two years.

Recreating his 1836 adobe fort has taken 23.

Rebuilding the fort was the motivation for the formation of the South Platte Valley Historical Society in 1988. Its members raised funds to purchase the original fort site, but were seven years too late to save the final wall from demolition by workers erecting gas and oil drilling rigs on the site. Only a wagonload of the original adobe bricks was salvaged, stored under a tarp in the public works shop in Fort Lupton, the city of 7,500 that bears the name of the original fort builder.

Restoration of two mid-1800's buildings, a one room school and a farmhouse, diverted the group's focus until Arnie Hubert, a retiree transplanted to Fort Lupton, said he would lead the endeavor. Without money to complete the work, but aware that belief the project would ever come to fruition was fading, the SPVHS broke ground for the new fort, a few yards south of the original, on October 23, 2004.

Hubert and the SPVHS members decided the new fort was to have walls of stucco, not adobe, erected on building-code sanctioned foundations. Its configuration, 40 X 60 paces (128 X 150 feet) would mirror the original, and it was to be a living history fort, as authentic possible, and built without government funds.

Six years, 23,000 volunteer hours and \$220,000 later, the fort is nearly done. Supplier's donations kept the cost to half of what the structure would have cost without their help, and as promised, the fort was privately funded.