**Skinner Cabin, Colorado**  
September 11 - 30, 2016

**Project Partner:** McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area Located in Mesa County, Colorado

**History:**

Skinner Cabin is located halfway between Dinosaur Ridge and the town of Fruita, just outside Colorado National Monument. Dinosaur fossils have been found right past the cabin! Also known as the Skinner Stone House, the cabin was built by master stonemason John Skinner in the early 1900s. A stone mason named John or Billy Skinner also worked on the catholic church in Fruita, Colorado around 1920, and is likely the same mason. The house was made of shaped sandstone blocks with an earth-covered gable roof.
and coursed masonry chimney. The cabin is one of the earliest stone houses still remaining in the Fruita region.

The history of the house has been passed on through the years by oral history and the conservation area is still working on putting that history on paper. Over the years, the building was home to a number of hard-working individuals, including gold prospector John Kodel and prospector and rock collector John Condon. John Condon’s stay is perhaps the most documented in the house, during the 1940s and 50s. Condon ran a lapidary company and also took special interest in his natural surroundings, also helping ranching neighbors the Beards. Having never owned a car, Condon was known for walking everywhere, including the 8-mile roundtrip walk from home to the town for food and supplies.

After the 1970s, the vacated building fell into disrepair and the roof collapsed.

**Scope of Work:**

HistoriCorps volunteers worked with field staff members to restore Skinner Cabin. Work included:

- Sessions 1 and 2: Stabilization and masonry rehabilitation: stabilized stonework, rebuilt collapsed wall, removed sod roofing
- Session 3: Rebuilt roof system: reassembled wood elements per original design, replicated historic boxed roof vent

HistoriCorps is also proud to announce that the Skinner Cabin project was awarded a Museums of Western Colorado (MWC) Heritage Preservation Prize in March 2017! Thank you to our crew leaders, field staff, volunteers, and everyone else who worked hard to earn this distinction.

**Nearest town:**

Fruita, 3.5 miles

**Location of campground:**

Saddlehorn Campground is located within the Colorado National Monument, close to the Visitor’s Center, four miles from the west entrance (near Fruita, Colorado). It is the only established campground within the Monument. Volunteers loved the views of the red rocks formations just steps away from the campground – what a treat!

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