

On the road . . .

to Hugo



Where is Hugo, Colorado? And why would we go there?

First, I love an adventure. In addition, I was inspired after talking with a Shaman, drum maker, jeweler about his book project. So, after receiving a message from this interesting gentleman about some sites to see while I was there, if I were to go there, it didn't take long ... I awoke early and having trouble going back to sleep I decided to just start my day, hop in the car with my sweet Bichon, Kobi, and head East. I'd been warned that it would be a bland tan and not very interesting this time of year.

The clouds hung so low in the sky it felt as though I could touch them. As my mind began to wander, I saw grain silos and rock formations pulling my attention back to that spot where my tires met the road. "Oooow, look Kobi ... there's some red! Didn't expect to see that way out here!" Up on the hill by the rock formations was a shock of red like a little red-head child.



Meandering up Main Street, turn after turn, we discovered some deteriorating buildings, closed businesses, and some amusing and interesting signs—remnants of better times.

The Western Silhouettes sign, branded so well by the cutouts of cowboys and windmills, hung against the cloudy sky.

For Rent AND For Sale signs shared the window of the main door at Kelly's Welding, an indication of desperation or looking for options. But the Hours sign really brought a lightness I hadn't ever seen and a glimpse of life in Hugo.

Now, I'm not even going to begin to guess what that bottle of yellow fluid is doing at the doorstep!





Dilapidated buildings. Expansive vistas. Quite a contrast. A simple beauty, each their own. The clouds played in the sky—some puffy and white, some thin long lines, some dark and hovering. Reminders of the moods people run.

There was a sense of safety I hadn't felt in a while as I wandered around a town so unfamiliar to me. And a quaintness I hadn't grown up knowing.



The Hugo Rail Station seemed in remarkably good condition. It still gave indication of its time in history and included wheel chair ramps to accommodate current times. The cart with rusted wheels in front of the main door only seemed to be missing some floral color.

In 1870, the Kansas-Pacific Railroad fostered the growth of small towns like this agricultural town of Hugo.

As fall crawls in on cooler temperatures, the flowers wane, but still shine with springtime color as I stopped to stretch my legs.





The gravestone:
Alfred H. Coulson
c. 1841 - September 28, 1882



We walked a portion of the Coulson Exercise and Nature Trail. It was built in 1918 as a city improvement project to honor Dr. Alfred H. Coulson who saved lives of the townspeople in the fall of 1882 during a smallpox epidemic. Unfortunately, Dr. Coulson did not survive the disease, dying at the age of 41.



I stopped into Main Street Mama's Antiques and spoke with the owner, Linda Orrell, to see if there was something special I should see while I was there and to ask directions to some of the sites my friend had mentioned. Linda was born and raised in Hugo, but had left for 30 years to travel with her Air Force husband, then came back. It was home.

I made a comment, not meant to be derogatory, that they were out in the middle of nowhere. She made me smile when she expressed that she felt the same about the city as I felt about her small town. Actually, I loved her small town.

It was amazing what peacefulness I experienced there. I couldn't help but wonder what it might be like for a creature of city comforts like me to live in a place like that. I love taking Kobi along to discover bits of unexpected color and friendly people who were more than happy to share a bit about their town. Linda gave me a "picture" map and pointed out the water tower and cemetery.

I mentioned that I noticed the Museum was closed. Well, similar to the abandoned welding business, the Museum had call-us-and-we'll-come-down hours. Unfortunately, I'm a bit too much of a don't-want-to-both-kind of person, so I passed on the suggestion to make the phone call.





We'd stayed a while and Kobi had had his exercise and a break from the car, so we piled back in for the trek home. Of course, I couldn't resist stopping for a few more scenic views.

All worth the trip! Some suggestions are just made to follow.

