

Two bright, educated men from Philadelphia headed west in 1849 to discover their fortunes before there was such a thing as the Comstock Lode. Leaving behind letters that chronicled their victories and heartbreaks, Ethan and Hosea Grosh ventured into Nevada's Gold Canyon, finding silver and tragedy around the corner.

The Grosh brothers' thoughtful and eloquent writings, acquired by the Nevada Historical Society in 2007, are now available in "The Gold Rush Letters of E. Allen Grosh and Hosea B. Grosh," in a new book edited by Ronald M. James and Robert E. Stewart. James is the long-time Nevada state historic preservation officer and Stewart is a Nevada historian. Together they have published nearly a dozen books on the West. To commemorate the historic publication, the Nevada Historical Society has planned a day of celebration Saturday, Oct. 13 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Publication of the book was made possible with funds from Nevada Humanities in collaboration with the University of Nevada Press, which is also cosponsoring the Historical Society event.

James and Stewart will talk at 2 p.m. about the unique project that gives a first-hand view of life in both San Francisco and Nevada's Great Basin including the politics of slavery, the frustration of mining and the search for wealth that drew them deep into the mountains, eventually into what is now Nevada.

Though the letters show they were filled with optimism and enthusiasm, the pair would meet an early and tragic end in 1857, paying the price for exploration in the harsh terrain of the Great Basin. The book describes the region's history via the recovered letters, disintegrating and scorched by fire, nearly illegible but preserved as evidence for family lawsuits to share in the wealth.

"The letters are an important record of Nevada's early history," said NHS Director Shery Hayes Zorn. "We acquired these letters back in 2007, but now the book has made it possible for everyone to see and learn about the brothers' story. We had to have a big community celebration to mark the occasion."

Guests will be welcome to free guided tours of the Historical Society provided by docents. The event coincides with Nevada Heritage month. Admission will be free, museum store merchandise discounted 10 percent and books will be available for sale and signing by the

authors. Refreshments are provided until 4 p.m. For more information, contact the society at (775) 688-1191 or shayeszorn@nevadaculture.org , or go to www.nevadaculture.org and Facebook-Nevada Historical Society. The Nevada Historical Society is at 1650 N. Virginia St. in Reno, adjacent to the UNR campus. Parking passes are available.