

Central City Brothel Dig

Coming up very soon, CAS members are invited to participate in the **Brothel Excavation in Central City** from **May 20 to June 14**. Weather permitting, the dig will be **9-3, Monday through Friday**. **Saturday** dig days may be added if demand warrants. You are welcome for a day or the duration.

The excavation is being run by Dr. Jade Luiz at Metro State University. Here's her description:

This is going to be the second year of excavation – we are exploring the historical sex district that was established on (what's now) Spruce Street. We are targeting the 5 structures that appear to have been used exclusively as brothels. The excavation takes place on a pretty significant slope near the top of Gunnell Hill, below the Coeur d'Alene Mine. It is certainly commutable (the field crew commutes between MSUD and Central City daily), however there are several nice hotels in Central City and Black Hawk should members decide to make a trip of it. That being said, people are welcome to stay as long as they'd like. I'm happy to have volunteers whenever folks would like to come up! I think it would be great for the students as well.

If this sounds like an interesting and different archeology adventure, please email Dr. Luiz at jluiz@msudenver.edu for the details and to sign up.

Brothels? In Central City?

PROSTITUTION WAS NEVER LEGAL IN Central City but it was tolerated for a period, and in the end Louisa Bunch was the city's last madam, keeping her brothel's door open until 1914.

Madam Lou Bunch owned the most successful brothel (referred to as a "sporting house") in Central City, Colorado. Located on Pine Street, the city's red-light district at the time, the sporting house served the city's miners who worked nearby.

When a tuberculosis epidemic threatened to decimate the population of Central City, Madam Lou converted the sporting house into a makeshift hospital. Without healthy miners, Central City's economy would have been devastated. Now every second weekend of June citizens of Central City and visitors from all over the world commemorate the madam on Madam Lou Bunch Day. Lou Bunch Day is Saturday, June 22, 2024: this is the festival where people dressed in vintage Victorian race beds down Main Street and have lots of other raucous fun. [Madam Lou Bunch Day: A Celebration Like No Other — Central City \(visitcentralcity.com\)](https://www.visitcentralcity.com)



