

August, 1986

Joyce Johns Talks About the Women

"The Women" is the topic for our first meeting of the new season, presented by **Joyce Johns**, guide at the Pioneers' museum and an active member of the Historical Society of the Pikes Peak Region.

Her topic was inspired by the neglect of the early women settlers of the region, particularly those who were not social or community leaders. She found several Westsiders among those most fascinating.

As usual, our meeting is at 11—Friday, September 12th, at Trinity United Methodist Church, 1920 Henderson—just west of Utah Gardens. Local members will be called so they may make a reservation for the luncheon following the meeting, served by ladies of the church for \$4.00.

McKnight Bequest Benefits Society with Memorabilia and Finances

The vitality of the Old Colorado City Historical Society in the closing months of Luther McKnight's life gave him faith enough in our plan for a future museum that he arranged to make the Society his major heir.

The Society benefited in two important ways. First, we are acquiring a major collection of priceless items from Colorado City's and the Westside's past. Secondly, Mr. McKnight assigned several certificates of deposit to the Society which give us considerable financial security.

Leslie Atkins and his wife Christine, of Wauahachie, Texas, have been living in Colorado Springs off and on for several months, while Mr. Atkins, Luther's cousin, disposes of the accumulations of a lifetime from the McKnight house at 11 West Pikes Peak. Every item with potential historic interest has been turned over to the Historical Society.

Mr. McKnight was an instinctive historian and saved countless documents and items that came his way. Although many are of little intrinsic value, they are historically priceless: a receipt signed by Anthony Bott, programs from band concerts, church presentations and school graduation ceremonies. He preserved his own toys, and premiums given away by early Colorado City merchants. He has remarkable collections of popular sheet music and of church hymns and quartets. While most people throw away a map when a later map is issued, Mr. McKnight kept the old ones, giving us useful souvenirs from the region's past, and documenting the rising importance of the automobile. He saved license plates from the time a motorist made his own plate.

This legacy preserves materials simply unavail-

Visitors and Guests:

Though our last meeting (May 9) was a "business" meeting, we had three visitors or guests. There was a preview of "Museum Day" by member **Kay Arnold**, but little else of "program."

We hope **Susan Coult**, **Eleanor McGrady** and **Marion Stamm** will come again when they'll find the meeting of more general interest.

It's unusual to single out life members as "visitors," but **Stan** and **Elsie DeGeer** deserve special mention, since they came all the way from Albuquerque, and timed their trip to be sure to be here on a meeting day. Mr. DeGeer suggested the O. C. C. H. S. might supply leadership in making tourist guides available, and offered a sample which he believes would be useful to visitors.

His Enthusiasm for Westside Leads to Generous Grant Towards Our Museum

McKnight accumulated a sizeable estate and the Old Colorado City Historical Society is the principle beneficiary. While final settlement occurs in October, several certificates of deposit became the property of O.C.C.H.S. at his death. Eleven savings certificates with World Savings, averaging 8.63% and maturing in 1988, now amount to \$14,787.22. A certificate with American Federal Savings, drawing 10% and maturing in October, totals \$76,640.05.

We obviously have reason to be grateful to Mr. McKnight, and to Mr. Atkins and other surviving relatives, for the generosity behind these rich bequests. Interest alone, conservatively figured, will be \$4,000 a year. The board and membership will need to decide on the use of this interest—how much should be put to work on current projects, and how much reinvested in savings.

Even with volunteer help, some money needs to be spent in processing and preserving Mr. McKnight's memorabilia. The same resources could improve facilities for accepting other historical donations and caring for them. We have the talent to establish a computer center to receive and make available historic information.

Officers of the Society investigated a building available this summer. We might have been able to buy it, but there would have been no money left for remodeling, insurance and utilities. But future fund-raising will be easier thanks to Mr. McKnight's contribution, and prospects for a respectable Westside museum have improved infinitely.

New Officers Selected; Board Holds Meetings

Two Board meetings have been held since the last membership meeting, at which officers were elected; and a possible new meeting day, and plans for Founder's Day were discussed.

Officers elected for the 1986-1987 year are:

President:	Agnes Johnson
Vice President:	Janis Knox
Secretary:	Ralph Conner
Treasurer:	Orville Kenelly

Three new board members were elected at the membership meeting: **Orville Kenelly**, **Janis Knox**, and **Aldine Lipe**.

The board discussed another possible meeting day, since Friday is inconvenient for some members, but concluded that any
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able elsewhere, and is a useful asset for any future museum.

Despite (or perhaps, because of) his modest living style, Mr.

NEW OFFICERS SELECTED; BOARD HOLDS MEETING (Continued from page 1)

other day created as many problems as Friday. Besides, John Keller says, the 13th won't fall on Friday any more this year! The board kept our meetings on the second Friday of the month.

Also at the June 13th meeting, plans were discussed for Founder's Day and recognition of those who improved Colorado Avenue property. Agnes Johnson was to confirm a date and arrange for the cabin, Kay Arnold was to prepare cookies and lemonade, Ralph Conner was to arrange historic displays, and John Keller was to set up his woodworking demonstration. We planned to offer honorary citizenships in Colorado City, and Ralph Conner was to find a suitable way to record them.

Those present concluded it was outside the scope of O.C.C.H.S. to enforce decoration standards on Colorado Avenue buildings, even if garish paint-jobs cause the area to lose its historic-district designation.

Ralph Conner reported he has a shop with space to store items from Luther McKnight and display cases offered to us by the Pioneers' Museum. There was discussion of O.C.C.H.S. sharing the rent and paying for insurance on the Society's property. (Subsequent investigation shows that insurance would be almost impossible; since the other half is a woodworking shop, which isn't popular with insurers.)

There was discussion of a budget, and of "Priorities".

A meeting May 9th elected officers, and there was consideration of ways to recognize members who make outstanding contributions to the Society.

The board considered the proper response of the Society to the death of Luther McKnight, and on Janet Knox's motion, sec-

onded by Ralph Conner, voted for Agnes Johnson to arrange for a floral display from the Society to be sent to the mortuary.

Board members present May 9th were Ralph Conner, Betsy Evans, Agnes Johnson, Orville Kenelly, Janis Knox and Aldine Lipe. Present June 13th were Vera Chambon, Ralph Conner, Agnes Johnson, John Keller, Orville Kenelly and Aldine Lipe; and member Kay Arnold.

O. C. C. H. S. Board Meets

Agnes Johnson has called a O.C.C.H.S. Board meeting for Sept. 12, immediately following the membership meeting.

Society members are always welcome to attend and participate in Board meetings.

Priorities Fall Into 3 Clear Categories

Members responded well to the request at our May meeting for a priorities list. Results show the opinions of 26 members, including several out-of-town or absent members who mailed their list.

Adding points assigned on the ballots led to three distinct categories of high, medium and low priority. Members marked activities they considered worthy of a major project with two, those of lesser importance with one, and those not worthwhile for O.C.C.H.S. with a zero.

Following discussion at the meeting, several wrote in as an additional high-priority item the continuation of the news letter. One member commented, "All items are necessary for a successful historical society," and another said that some he gave low priority to might be ranked higher if he knew more about the project and why it was included on the list.

Listing is from highest to lowest, preceded by total points.

Highest Priority

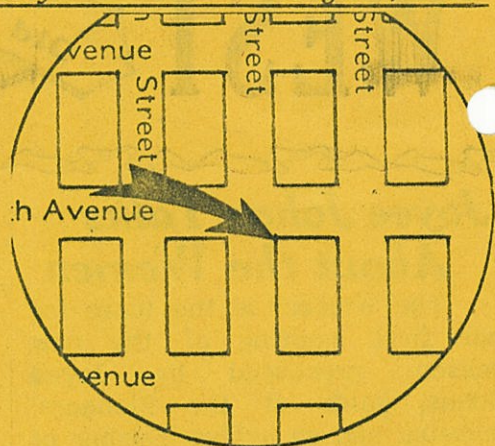
- 43 Campaigning to increase membership.
- 42 Establishing Old Colo. City museum with Westside displays.
- 40 Conducting and transcribing oral interviews.
- 40 Conducting social meetings and luncheons with programs.
- 38 Supporting work of Colorado Avenue Commission.
- 37 Booth to attract members and money on special occasions.

Medium Priority

- 31 Directing members into research about the Westside.
- 29 Launching fund-raising campaign to pay for preservation.

Low Priority

- 25 Creating and selling publications and/or postcards.
- 24 Arranging night meetings so working people can attend.
- 22 Arranging bus trips to historical sites.
- 19 Establishing traveling exhibits and/or program presentations.



HISTORIC SITE: The above detail from a map of Westside Colorado Springs shows the exact spot where Anthony Good was standing on July 9, 1869, when he saw a shed consumed by flames. Although certain crucial records are missing, it is believed this makes Mr. Good the first Black man to shout "Fire!" in Colorado City. Firemen were unable to save the shed. —From *Little Known Milestones in Colorado History*, 1937.

WEST WORD

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The Old Colorado City Historical Society was formed to maintain the memory of Colorado City (1859-1917), to encourage research, to preserve historic buildings, mementos and pictures, and to keep alive the unique culture and spirit of Westside Colorado Springs.

MEETINGS

Meetings are held the second Friday of each month (except, perhaps, in the summer) at 11 a. m., at Trinity United Methodist Church, 1920 Henderson Avenue—across 19th Street west of Uintah Gardens Shopping Center. The public is welcome at all meetings, and no reservation is needed for the program.

The program is followed by a luncheon, served by ladies of the church. Cost is \$4 per person. Reservations are required, and can be made by phoning O. C. C. H. S. secretary Ralph Conner, 634-0895. Deadline is normally the Wednesday before the meeting, although last-minute changes may be made up to 5 p. m. the Thursday before the meeting. Since we're responsible for all reservations made, please call the secretary to cancel if you find you can't attend.

MEMBERSHIPS

Individual membership is \$5 a year; family membership is \$10. Renewal falls in April. Members receive our newsletter, and local members will usually be phoned before each meeting.

Also available is a Lifetime membership, for \$100. This amount is placed in our Perpetuity-Endowment fund, to be used for long-term projects which have been approved by two-thirds of the membership. Only the interest will be used for current expenses. We welcome gifts to this fund, which will be credited to the donor or as a memorial.

OFFICERS

President: Agnes Johnson 633-8040
Vice President: Janis Knox 495-3359
Secretary: Ralph Conner 634-0895
Treasurer: Orville Kenelly (home) 473-5551
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ADDITIONAL BOARD MEMBERS

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Dave Clark(home) 473-3941; (office) 473-3430
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