

May 9, 1986

TRANSITION

M. Luther McKnight died Wednesday night at his home, 2811 West Pikes Peak. He would have been 92 next month.

He came to Colorado City with his parents May 8, 1899. He was the oldest surviving employee of the Standard Mill, and worked in many departments of the Golden Cycle. He was associated many years with Stewart Brothers, photographing hundreds of tourists on the Cog train and at Glen Cove. He used the opportunity to explore flowers and rock formations of the Peak and was often called on to guide visiting scientists. He was a fifty-year Mason, a life member of the Old Colorado City Historical Society, and had been organist at Colorado City's Methodist Church.

He modestly called himself a "handyman," which takes in many abilities; any other label would have been too restrictive. If he was called "musician," he wouldn't be a chemist; if he was a "photographer," there wasn't room for him to make inventor's models; if he was a "botanist" there wasn't time for experimenting with tape recorders.

Educated in Colorado City Schools and Colorado College, he was naturally proficient as a scientist, engineer, experimenter, composer and historian.

It's as a historian that he leaves his most tangible legacy. He faithfully saved items from Colorado City's past as a frontier village, industrial city, arch-going community, and typical small town. Thanks to the cooperation of his family, represented through his cousin Leslie Atkins, Luther leaves his memorabilia and generous financial help for a future Colorado City museum.

"Handyman" really means "Renaissance Man"—one who wants to know as much as possible about everything. Mr. McKnight's natural curiosity and enthusiasm for life was gloriously alive until the very end.

Graveside services will be Monday, May 12, 10 am, at Fairview Cemetery.

Quote submitted by Kay Arnold: "History is not necessarily the truth; it's only what man chooses to remember and record."

Members Enrich Endowment Fund

Our Endowment fund received a substantial boost from several new life memberships this month.

The Kellers become the first "family" life members, with Barbara Keller's donation of \$100. John Keller took out a life membership last year.

Agnes Johnson also supported the Society with a life membership this year.

We're pleased to welcome William C. Henderson, as a new member and as life member. As a long-time resident and banker, and as former councilman and mayor, he's long been part of the Westside and its history.

NEW MEMBERS

We may have lost track of some new members among the renewals, but among those joining this month are:

Peggy and Karl Beinschroth of Manitou Springs.

Annette Joy Bennet

Genevieve Campbell

Roseayrah Chilcott of Woodland Park.

Our thanks for this support, and for the loyalty of present members who are renewing.

Visitors and Guests:

Rarely have we had a visitor with such a distinguished address: Peggy Beinschroth, Director, Main Street Project of Manitou Springs, lives at "Miramont Castle", and came in April as guest of Joanne Garrison.

We were also pleased to welcome Morris and Faye Baker.

Treasurer's Report:

The "correction" below transfers \$100 from our current fund to the endowment fund, to take care of a life membership for which the fund transfer was overlooked.

	Currrnt Endow	
Apr 11 bal	511.27	815.00
PO Box rent	-11.00	
Bank int (-chgs)	+2.36	
Fr membs	127.00	300.00
Correction	-100.00	100.00
Postage, guest	-13.02	
May 9 bal	516.61	1215.00

Election of Directors, Officers Is Our Major Business Today

Important business today includes election of board members, a discussion of the Society's priorities, and news of Museum Day.

Flora Belle Hull has asked to be relieved of Board duties, and Elva Dusten and Adele Galvan say they would prefer not to serve if someone else is willing, so we probably will elect three members. The 11-member board chooses the president, vice president, secretary and treasurer.

Carry-over members for the two-year term are:

Vera Chambon
Dave Clark
Ralph Conner
Betsy Evans
Dave Hughes
Agnes Johnson
John Keller
Leon Young.

In addition, members will be asked to give priorities to a list of possible Society activities, to serve as a guide for the new board. Out-of-town members, or those who miss today's meeting, are invited to return their own priority list which will be enclosed with this copy of the newsletter.

Society Accepts Responsibility For Colorado Avenue Awards

Members voted in April to sponsor recognition of owners along Colorado Avenue who beautify their property. The commitment is for five years.

The program is organized by the Colorado Avenue Commission to encourage improvement. Agnes Johnson and Kay Arnold are our representatives on the Commission. The Society will be responsible for choosing winners and presenting them a plaque.

Meetings Will Be Suspended For Three Summer Months?

Unless members decide otherwise today, the Society will suspend meetings for three months, except for officers and board members.

Next meeting and luncheon will be in September, possibly on a different day of the week. Members will be notified later of the date and topic.

Highlights and Sidelights

from our last meeting:

Member **John Keller** who represents us on the "Spirit of Palmer" committee, invited members to tell him of Westside structures representative of the Palmer era. They'll be considered, with photos from other sections of town, for later publication.

Thanks to Westside librarian and OCCHS member **Betsy Evans**, members sported "Launch into inner space with Maggie's Place" buttons and other souvenirs, celebrating Library Week and "Maggie," the Pikes Peak Library District's computer and information system.

Generous members donated an additional \$10 to cover luncheon costs for Whittier School students who presented our March program.

Thirty-two attended our April meeting; twenty-seven stayed for the luncheon.

Colleges Continue Historic Programs

Events in the continuing series of "Spirit of Palmer" festivities sponsored by the University of Colorado in Colorado Springs are listed below.

PPCC (Pikes Peak Community College) programs are Wednesdays at noon and 7 p.m. at the Downtown Studio, 19 N. Tejon. Reservation can be made at 576-7711, ex. 316 or 320.

UCCS (University of Colorado at Colorado Springs) programs are Monday nights at Penrose library's Davis Auditorium at 7:30.

May 12. UCCS. Alexander Blackburn, English instructor at UCCS, talks on "The Tragedy of the West."

May 16. PPCC. Debbie Abele, "Architecture: Imported Eclecticism, Part II."

May 19. UCCS. Roundtable with moderator Tom Huber and participants from the entire eight-meeting series. Topics will be determined May 12th.

May 21. PPCC. Jo Knutson, "Cripple Creek: Fallout from 'The Boom!'"

May 28. PPCC. Myron Wood, "Photography: Chronicle or Commentary?"

June 4. PPCC. Panel discussion on "Colorado Springs: Palmer's Vision and the Foreseeable Future."

Earliest 'Visitors' Sought the Red River Here

Zebulon Pike and Stephen Long spent a confused and futile time searching for the headwaters of the Red River, according to Bob Smith, speaker at our April meeting.

The Coronado history teacher says both men came to find the south border of the United States' recently acquired Louisiana Purchase—thought to be the Red River. Our government assumed that river must be just south of the Arkansas, rising in the Rocky Mountains.

Dr. Smith gave details of Pikes' expedition in November, 1806, which first brought him into sight of the "Grand" or "Blue" mountain at about Las Animas' present location. Pike and his men built a shelter at the site of Pueblo, and hiked north to explore the Grand Peak. Pike was ill-equipped to climb mountains in mid-winter, and he got no farther than the lower reaches of Cheyenne Mountain. Smith surmises he wasn't high enough to notice the basin in which Colorado Springs sits, and the peak he observed as his goal may have been Baldy or Amalgre. Pike did get an impressive view over the clouds stretching to the horizon beneath him.

Pike returned to the site of Pueblo and moved on to the Royal Gorge, where his frightened men hiked around the Gorge into South Park. They exited through Trout Creek and "discovered" the Arkansas river, which Pike assumed was the Red. They re-discovered the Royal Gorge in January confident there couldn't be TWO places like it.

Lieutenant Pike headed southwest into Spanish territory. Dr. Smith says history believes Pike was "lost," although one historian says he was a spy who wanted to be captured and taken into Spanish territory. In either case, he was fortunate to escape with his life.

Because Pike failed to locate the headwaters, Stephen Long came with the same goal in 1820, following the Platte toward the continental divide, avoiding the mountains which caused Pike so much trouble. Long also avoided an error of Pikes' by exploring in summer.

Long thus approached this area from the north, and it was not until he rounded the Peak that he realized this was Pikes' "Grand" Peak.

Indications are that Long identified Palmer Lake as "Castle Rock," because of the fortress-like appearance of the Rampart wall—rather than the town which bears the name Castle Rock today.

Long and his men "did" the region more thoroughly. They climbed the Peak, at least as far as timberline, and found the springs of Manitou. (They weren't fans of the mineral waters, although they conceded they tasted better than a soup which had been saturated with buffalo chips!)

Long's nominee for the Red was the Canadian, but the error was apparent when he found this river flowed into the Arkansas.

Dr. Smith says it was 1852 before the source of the Red was finally located. A party began at its mouth and followed it until they discovered it bubbling from the ground near the Texas-New Mexico border—a route of discovery not available until the nation could spare troops to protect her people from the fierce Comanches.

WEST WORD

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The Old Colorado City Historical Society
P. O. Box 6702, Colorado Springs, CO. 80934

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 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: David Hughes 636-2040
Secretary-Treasurer: Ralph Conner 634-0895

BOARD MEMBERS

Dave Clark	Flora Belle Hull
Vera Chambon	Agnes Johnson
Elva Dusten	John Keller
Betsy Evans	Adele Galvan
	Leon Young