

SEPTEMBER 1999

## Historic Manuscript Found!

### THE STORY OF A. B. WADE IN COLORADO CITY HAS BEEN FOUND



Achillis Bedford Wade

Nancy Davidson Wade

It is rare that any genuinely new history about the earliest days of Colorado City is discovered. None of the pioneers who settled Colorado City or passed through it are still alive. They told their stories long ago. We have all read and studied them.

So, it is a rare find indeed when a twenty-five page account turns up, written by a woman who was an eleven year old girl when she lived with her family for about a year in Colorado City. The years were 1861 and 1862 and the family had come from Kansas in a wagon train. They saw the great herds of buffalo, found gold in the hills

to the west, dealt with Indians, oxen, bushwhackers, and the "boiling springs" of Manitou. They returned to Kansas safe and sound in 1863 and lived happily there after.

The OCCHS web site helped us acquire this priceless piece of Colorado City history. It is only one of very few known written eye-witness accounts of what life was like in the earliest days of Colorado City's existence, 1861 to 1862, when only rude log structures existed. This is the only account from memories of a girl and her spirited and determined frontier mother.

Robert and Cindy Griswold of Sacramento, California arrived at the OCCHS History Center on Saturday, August 7th and gave the Society a copy of the manuscript written by Bob's grandmother, Mary Wade. In it Mary recounts the two years her parents, Nancy and A. B. Wade, her younger sister Dora, and herself as a girl, travelled by wagon train from Lawrence, Kansas and back during the height of the Pikes Peak or Bust Gold Rush. They spent a year in Denver City and mountains to the west and had invested in lots in Colorado City. They lived here for a year, shooting elk for food and eating Mexican beans. They moved on to find gold in California Gulch before travelling back to their homestead in Lawrence, Kansas in 1863. They travelled right into the border raids of the Civil War.

The reminiscences were written by Mary Wade in 1934, when she was 85, and used the

(continued on page 7)

# MAILBOX

Dear Mr. Gray,

Thank you and OCCHS for honoring the Current family on August 13. The stone is a rustic and beautiful commemoration of our parents and family as well. We all have a special place in our hearts for Old Colorado City and are pleased that OCCHS is becoming better known all the time.....Thank you for honoring me for volunteer work.

Maloa Current Read  
Colorado Springs, CO

Dear OCCHS,

As a proud member of the Current family, my whole-hearted thanks goes out to the Society for honoring the Currents at the second annual First Families of Colorado City event. The unveiling of the monument of our parents at the old home-site was a touching ceremony and it was great having a family reunion with the program and dinner. After all these years, the tour of Red Rock Canyon was a delightful touch. A special thanks to the volunteers for driving and guiding the tour.

Irma Current Hilfers

Dear Gordon Gray,

Please extend my sincere thanks to all of the members of the ....Society for choosing the family of Park and

Anna Current.....to be First Families of Colorado City. The whole program was definitely done in a first class manner. Mama and Daddy would have been so pleased.....Old Colorado City has always been and is still very close to my heart. Thanks to all.

Grace Current Ball  
Colorado Springs, CO

Dear Mr. Gray,

.....We want to take this opportunity to thank (the Society) for carrying out the program which we all considered to be one to remember. There will never be such a large representation again. We only wish that our father and mother, Park and Anna, could have been on hand.

Ira Current  
Rochester, NY

=====  
*My thanks to each of you for your e-mail and letters concerning the Current Family event. It is our objective to honor families of Colorado City who were instrumental in the success and history of this area. It was with great pride that the Society honored the Current Family this year.*

Gordon Gray, President  
OCCHS Board

## Bits & Pieces

### OCCHS Expresses Sympathy

The Officers and Board of Directors express their sympathy to Beverly Disch, a member of our Board, on the death of her Mother, Rozell Bergsbaken, who died in Colorado Springs on August 31st. Mrs. Bergsbaken would have been 95 years young in September.

### Technology Treasure Sale??????

A Technology Treasure Sale.....sound interesting? Want to know more? What is it? How can you help?

Details will be in future issues of West Word. But for now, don't get rid of any of your 'out dated' computers, office equipment and software. They can be "treasures" waiting to be found and purchased!!!

*Remember: One man's junk is another man's treasure!!!*

### Member Updates

We have learned that Lucille Cunningham has been "under the weather" this past month. However, she is feeling much better now and we hope is on the road to recovery. Lucille, your friends at OCCHS wish you a speedy and full recovery.

### Membership Directory Updates

Please update your directory with the following new members (N) and member changes (C):

Jim Ciletti - Aamstar Books (C)  
1215 N. Union Blvd.  
COS 80909

Richard and Sue Current (N)  
5116 Blackwater Rd.  
Virginia Beach, VA 23457

Connie Cummiskey (N)  
3260 Honey Buryl  
COS 10918  
(719) 592-9124

Brian Current (N)  
4536 Narragansett Avenue  
San Diego, CA 92107-8396  
(619) 222-8396

Henry Nickel (C)  
31257 Outer Hwy. Rd.  
Redlands, CA 82373

Verda Spitz (C)  
226-E Rockrimmon  
COS 80919  
(719) 536-0941

Robert Houder (N)  
2524 N. Weber St.  
COS 80907  
(719) 633-5927

**A Warm  
WELCOME  
to Our  
NEW Members!**

# From the Board

Do any of you recall the autograph albums one took to school for teachers and friends to sign? This was long before school year books or albums. My grandmother wrote in mine, "Count that day lost when yon descending sun views from your hand no worthy deed done"

Mildred Hibbard who was in the fifth grade wrote the following sayings for her language class. They're still viable in today's living.

1. Care and diligence bring luck.
2. Victory belongs to the persevering.
3. Kind words do not wear out the tongue.
4. One today is worth two tomorrow.
5. The blue bird carries the sky on his back.
6. Silks and satins put out the kitchen fire.

There is a little oil cloth cover on a Buena Vista school recipe book dated Christmas 1924. Do you remember rationing days? The following recipe is for an egg less, milk less, butter less cake.

- 2 cups cold water
- 2 cups sugar
- ½ teaspoon each kind of spices
- 2 tablespoons lard
- 1 package raisins

Boil all together for five minutes then before removing from fire add one cup boiling water with two level teaspoons soda: when cold add for cups of flour and one teaspoons of baking powder. You can add nuts or any kind of peeling. No directions were given for temperature for oven or for the amount of time.

Other recipes include Fairy Loaf Cake by Mrs. Rozelia Masterson and a TipTop Cake by Mrs. Wm. H. Smith.

If you need to know or are just curious about a county, town, name, or if your grand child needs information about Colorado, you can answer all the questions if you have the informative book called Colorado Place Names by William Bright. You can purchase the book in our bookstore. It should be in every person's reference library.

If you have as hard a time as I do finding appropriate gifts for your grand children, the bookstore has a charming 1999 book on traveling in Colorado. Margaret and her brother Zack, their mother and father fly to Denver and spend 13 days exploring the state. Margaret keeps a diary and her explanations and photographs are delightful. It is written by Julie Danneberg and illustrated by Ian Paton. It's called Margaret's Magnificent Colorado Adventure.

When you hear about *Anna-Leah Hathaway's* travels you wonder how she manages to sit behind the desk at the OCCHC bookstore. She has GO written on both feet.

She has visited all fifty states, Panama, Switzerland, Russia, Siberia, England and Ireland to mention a few. Her favorite trip in 1975 was to the Holy Land, when she went with a group from the First Presbyterian Church on a "Walk Through the Bible."

She was born in Monte Vista, Colorado, graduated from

Greeley, and received her M.A at Colorado College. She has resided in Colorado Springs since 1947. She taught for 32 ½ years at Columbia School. She taught third grade.

Old Towns and areas tied in with social studies were some of her favorite subjects.

Humor plays a part as she likes jokes- but not dirty ones. She asks, "What was the fly doing in that soup?" Answer- A back stroke and "What's a synonym?" It's what you put in cinnamon rolls.

Not only does she volunteer at OCCHC but also is a volunteer at Memorial Hospital, McDonald house and Pioneer museum. She also belongs to DAR, Women's Club, A and O, a quilting group, and Social Ministries.

She has two brothers, one sister and fifteen great nieces.

As busy as she is she still finds time to help OCCHC. She gives a speech on "Bandanas: One Hundred and One Uses." Think we could persuade her to tell us at one of our meetings?

*(contributed by: Agnes Johnson, Board Member)*

## The President's Corner

Our 1999 fall meeting schedule began on September 10th with a good program by Cheyenne Mountain Zoo personnel and the proposed capital improvement plan at the zoo. Make your plans now to attend the program on October 8th when representatives from the Florissant Fossil Beds will be making the presentation. This program was originally scheduled for the June meeting but was postponed due to the Society election program (see the article on page 5).

You are probably aware, there are many ways to remember and honor friends and loved ones after their death. One way is a monetary contribution to the Society in their memory. We hope that you will consider this type of a memorial when appropriate and when making this kind of a contribution to the society, please include a note or mark your check that money is to go to the endowment fund in the name of the person that you specify.

The Society has dedicated the east courtyard behind the Museum building to our members and other supporters of the Society. The centerpiece of this patio is a design of bricks that have been engraved with the inscriptions specified by each donor. We already have several engraved bricks in place and we would like to continue receiving donations to complete this memorial.

As we enter the new decade, the year 2000, what a great opportunity to become a part of the history of our Center. You can have your name and/or the names of your family engraved on a brick(s) and permanently put into place in the patio. Enclosed with this newsletter is a form that can be used to order bricks. I hope each of you will consider buying a brick and become a permanent part of our history.

*Until next month.*

*Gordon*

*(From the Board continued on page 5)*

## October 8<sup>th</sup> OCCHS Monthly Program

### The Florissant Fossil Beds

The October program will be at the Center and will be a presentation on the Florissant Fossil Beds. The fossil beds are of great scientific importance. The area was first surveyed by F. V. Hayden's Survey team in 1874. From this survey, it was determined that the fossils were attributed to the Oligocene Epoch, which occurred approximately 40 million years ago. At Florissant, a lake formed when flows of lava dammed a mountain valley. Curved like a crescent, the lake was 12 miles long and two miles wide. Over time, the volcanoes filled the air with volcanic ash. Carried by the wind, some of the ash fell on Lake Florissant, bringing down thousands of insects, killing fish, and burying leaves and wood. All of this became fossilized under nearly ideal conditions, with even the delicate tracery of wings and leaves preserved.

In 1887, geologists spent the entire summer assembling a large collection of fossil insects. This activity attracted world-wide attention due to the discovery of these new insect fossils. The Denver Post published an article about this event and called it the most remarkable fossil collection in the entire world.

In 1915, there was a movement that urged action by the Federal Government to protect this area for research and future generations to enjoy. It was not until 1969 that safeguards were put into place and at that time it was designated as a National Monument.

Unfortunately, over the past 50 years, a significant number of commercial ventures had occurred on the property and many of them did not focus on the importance of preservation. This "damage" has been contained and the Fossil Beds are now protected for present and future generations to enjoy.

Plan now to be present at the October meeting and learn more about this world renowned park. Park Rangers from Florissant and volunteers will present this program.

by Jan Knox

## From the Board (continued from page 4)

### Treasurer's Report

August saw the Society add \$2,513 over costs to its cash assets. The Founder's Day dinner was very successful, with 81 paying attendees plus 11 contributions without attending. The well attended craft sales in Bancroft park, a \$500 donation by the Pikes Peak Bank, and \$1,365 that was collected in overdue and new memberships, all added to our bottom line.

The bookstore has been able to contribute to our general fund every month this summer. The Board's decision to lease, rather than buy, a digital copier already is beginning to prove its worth. Our lease cost is \$150 each month. We can now print and mail our newsletters for less than half what we formerly paid to a commercial printer. This eight-page newsletter and last month's sixteen-page newsletter were printed on our new copier. In addition to flyers, tickets, and handouts, we can now publish and print (or re-print) historical booklets. We can do them in small quantities and make them available for resale by local book and gift stores. This is also a good way to generate revenue.

(Dave Hughes, Treasurer)

### History Center JOBS Bulletin Board

Have you wondered how you can help your Society but are not sure what the Center needs? Well, we have an answer for you. In the office at the Center is a new bulletin board entitled "OCCHS Jobs." There are categories such as maintenance, research, and exhibits. Under each category are index cards which list the jobs that are needed. The next time you wonder how you can help or when you are in the Center, please look at this new bulletin board and select a job that is suited for you. When you complete the task, please write your name on the card and drop it in the 'completed job' box. This will give us the information that we need to reply and thank you.

by Paul Idleman

# WEST WORD MEMORIES

## *From the Past*

We continue to share with you articles from previous West Words. For some members it will be a fond reminder of events that have happened in the history of our Society. For those who are new to the organization, we hope it will be new and informative information. Here are some selected articles from 1988.

### **Society Takes Stand on Road; Meeting Planned....**

OCCHS members want the Forest Service to preserve the Gold Camp Road between Colorado Springs and Cripple Creek. Concern about the highway grew after collapse of two tunnels.

While instructing the secretary to express the organization's support for preserving the historic way, those present made two recommendations.

A motion by Thomas Van Camp, ..... urged that the Forest Service conduct an environmental assessment as part of any plan to preserve the road and keep it open to the public.

The motion urging preservation, made by Sally Brawner .., suggested it again be a toll road, with income used for maintenance and preservation. This would burden only those who use the road.

*(from the December 8, 1988 WEST WORD)*

### **Board Seeks Negotiation For Church as Museum**

The OCCHS board held two meetings in September to handle financial matters and to plan a move toward purchase of a building for our future museum.

September 12, it discussed options but no specific decisions were made. President at that meeting were Ralph Conner, Virginia Cox, Dave Hughes, John Keller, Orville Kenelly, and Leon Young.

On Sept.16, on a motion by Orville Kenelly....., a bookkeeping change was approved, which will put Endowment funds in certificates of deposit and leave "current" amounts in Pikes Peak National. Treasurer, Orville Kenelly said our Endowments total about \$106,000, and "current" about \$12,000. Endowment funds can be spent only after approval by two-thirds of the membership.

A motion by Dave Hughes, directed the treasurer to use funds from a maturing certificate of deposit in Bank Western, and the rest (about \$42,000) in World Savings and Loan.

The board feels the best prospect for a museum building is the church at the southeast corner of 24th and Pikes Peak.

On a motion by Jan Knox, a committee was appointed to discuss our offer with the church officials. The committee is Dave Hughes, Orville Kenelly, and Ralph Conner.

The plan consists of:

1. Offer to purchase the property for \$75,000 subject to the following,
2. Payment of \$1,500 for an option of six months, with the privilege of extending the option for another six months for an additional \$1,500.
3. OCCHS would buy temporary insurance for the building.
4. During the option time, we would have access to the building to determine what rehabilitation would be needed.
5. If we buy the building, amounts paid for the options and insurance would apply to the purchase price. If we don't buy, the church retains the option money.

*(from the October 14, 1988 WEST WORD)*

### **Interest in Trolleys Is Praised; Plans Advance**

Current discussions on revitalizing downtown Colorado Springs are good news for fans of the streetcar. They see prospects brightening for trolley service between Colorado City and downtown Colorado Springs.

*(from the February 12, 1988 WEST WORD)*

### **Westsider Salvages Lost Historic Plaque**

Lifetime Westsider Bob Speer, owner of the Templeton Building, exercised awareness and public spirit to rescue a stolen historical markers and to arrange to have them mounted in a safer place.....

*(from the March 11, 1988 WEST WORD)*

writings of her mother, Nancy, as well as her own vivid memory as a 11-13 year old girl crossing and recrossing the 675 miles of plains in ox-drawn wagons. This was discovered by the Griswolds in 1984 in an old family trunk.

The Griswolds have been tracking down and visiting in Colorado and Kansas the places and events Bob's great grandfather, "A.B." and his family experienced. When they found our Colorado City web site, after confusing Colorado Springs with Colorado City, they exchanged e-mail with Paul Idleman. When they arrived, Dave Hughes, spent all day interviewing them, studying the manuscript, finding A.B. Wade's name in other confirming documents as one of the town company investor-founders. Dave helped clarify to the Griswolds why the bill of sale of the lot was dated before the Wades arrived in Colorado City and what the illegal "Jefferson Territory" was all about!

The manuscript relates the early life of Mary's father and mother, homesteading in Lawrence, Kansas, and raising two young girls. About "A.B." first going to California in the '49 gold rush and coming back empty handed, but with valuable experience that permitted him to make sound decisions when he went West again in 1860. Mary tells of her parents making the decision to seek gold in Pikes Peak country while she lay there in her bed in the tiny cabin, listening to three returnees trying to organize a party to go back in the Spring of 1860. Mary tells of seeing vast herds of buffalo on the trip, encounters with may friendly Indians and only a few scary incidents. Then she described passing through Denver City to Russell Gulch to the West, where after A.B. found small amounts of gold, they wintered in Denver City, while Mary went to a one room school for 4 months. Then Mary described arriving in Colorado City, a town with 'one store' where A.B. had already

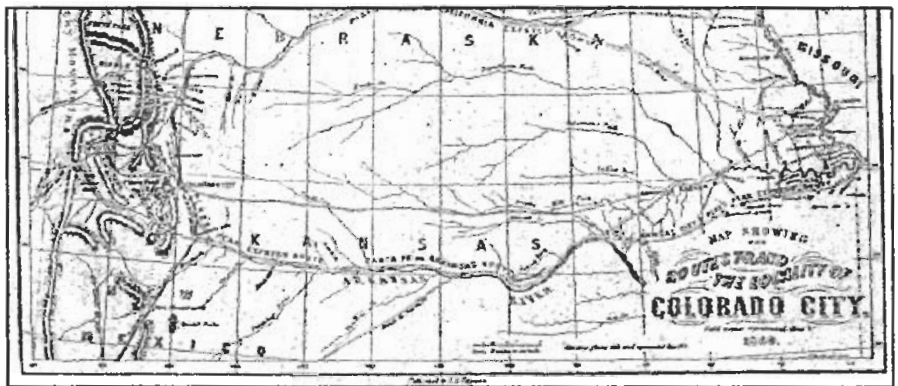
purchased an interest in the new town from T.H. Warren. Nancy Wade, Mary's mother, was greeted as 'the first white woman to live there' – and given a lot by the happy menfolk. "A. B." built a two-story cabin near what is now 28th and West Pikes Peak - then called West Central Street.

We have a copy of the registered transfer for \$100 to A.B. Wade of an interest in Colorado City, and Dave Hughes has confirmed from Ormes 1933 Book of Colorado Springs that A.B. Wade was one of the original listed investors in Colorado City. This 'new' information thrilled the Griswolds.

The account covers her father digging out \$18,000 in gold dust in California Gulch in 1863, which her mother sewed into her bustle to thwart robbers before they wisely returned to Kansas. It is a rare story of a successful but level headed gold seeking family. And of a little girl's incredible true story of adventure "going West".

OCCHS has permission from the Griswold's to publish their manuscript online and copies will be available for Society members to read in the library at the History Center.

*(article & photos by: Dave Hughes)*



1859 Town Company map to lure gold seekers to Colorado City

*Ask a Friend  
to Join  
OCCHS*