

WEST WORD

Old Colorado City Historical Society

June 2000

The First Territory Days

One of "Our Own" Stories

by: Dave Hughes

History is not only old! The revitalization of Old Colorado City was started 25 years ago, which is before a lot of the residents of Colorado Springs were born!

Here is the story of the real, first Territory Days. Not the one in 1977 but the one in 1976, Colorado's 100th Anniversary, which launched the annual spring public celebrations of "Old Town" when everything was new-old again.

It started when the Commercial Club was trying to get owners of the 98 buildings in Old Town, which were 45% vacant at the time, to fix them up historically like the new buyer-owners were beginning to do. But success in Colorado City was still far from being assured because investors were cautious.

Dave Hughes approached Bill Henderson, who owned the old Fox Photo building at 2506 West Colorado Avenue and said, "Bill, will you fix up your old building?" Bill said, "If I fix up that old building my taxes will go up!" Dave said, "Well, if I make it so your taxes won't go up, will you do it?" And Bill, who had once been the Mayor of Colorado Springs, said, "I don't think you can do it! That's tax law!"

So Dave and the Commercial Club cooked up a plan. Out against the east wall of the old Bancroft Park Cabin, they put on an act. Gene Brent, the gun store owner, stood out there as an early cowboy and raised his Colt into the air and fired it. A cluster of men and women dressed in old time clothes gathered round. They made sure the press was there with their cameras. Standing by on a big horse was Michael Garman, owner of Garman Galleries in Old Colorado City today.

Gene began to read: "The hard workin', vote

castin' citizens of this here Colorado City, which once was the Capital - instead of that overgrown cow town called Denver City - want you legislators to come back down here and set up, if only for one day, the gummit of Colorado."

He handed the invitation to Michael Garman who clattered down the Avenue on his horse in the direction of Denver and the cameras were rolling.

Next day Garman, rode up the steps of the Capital in Denver, and called out for the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate to come out. He handed them the invitation and they agreed to come! Denver television was there and followed them down later.

The Pikes Peak or Bust by '76 Centennial Committee paid for the busses to bring the lawmakers down, and on an early, chilly, April day, a whole bunch of lawmakers showed up!

Now politicians love a parade, so down Colorado Avenue, the

first parade marched on the Westside in perhaps 100 years. All the lawmakers were in it, beaming and waving to the crowd! Westsiders were agog!

Everyone gathered in Bancroft Park, and sat down to watch an hilarious melodrama, "Doubtful Denver Days" in which westside actors portrayed the first meeting of Colorado's first legislature in Colorado City, the first Capital, with the first lawmakers. Jokes were played on all the current hot political topics in Denver going on now. Everybody roared! there were Indian dancers, corny music, and whoop de do.

(continued on page 4)



The First Territory Day Parade down Colorado Avenue - 1976

(Photo courtesy of Dave Hughes)

From the Board

Recap of the Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Old Colorado City Historical Society was held on Friday, May 12, at the Center. There were approximately 30 members present. The following were elected to the Board of Directors for a two year term:

Beverley Disch
LaRue Ebersole
Gordon Gray
Agnes Johnson
Jack Patterson

The following reports recap two of the annual reports that were given by the President and Treasurer of the Society.

President's Report (Gordon Gray)

This report will cover the period from May 1999 through May 2000 during which time I served as President of the Board of Directors, Old Colorado City Historical Society. This period of time was one of challenge, opportunity, anxiety, organization, expansion, and planning. I am very pleased with the support and commitment that I have received from the Board. They are a group of committed and dedicated members who focus on the success and perpetuity of the Society.

The following points will recap the major accomplishments during the past year.

- Membership directory issued to members in June 1999.
- The West Word published and distributed to the membership each month.
- A \$16,000 grant received from the State Historical Society to produce a Walking Tour Guide book of Old Colorado City. OCCHS had to match \$4,200 of this. The guidebook is underway and publication is expected late in 2000.
- The most successful Bed & Breakfast Tour in December 1999. Thanks to the Westside Innkeepers we were able to provide the matching funds (\$4,200) for the above grant.
- Reviewed and approved the Strategic Plan for OCCHC. A consultant was retained who is a specialist in working with nonprofit organizations. A team of OCCHS members made up the project team and the end result was a proposed plan to the Board. The Board reviewed and approved this plan, which is the master blue print for the History Center.
- Held a first-time Murder Mystery event at the Center. It was well attended and plans are in progress to have another fund raising event of this type in the fall of 2000.
- Retained the services of an event planning organization (the principals are members of OCCHS) to assist OCCHS in the planning, creation, and execution of fund raising events.
- Reviewed the cost of producing the monthly news letter and evaluated bringing the production of this publication in-house. A digital copy machine was leased and the news letter is produced each month by a group of OCCHS volunteers. The cost of producing this monthly publication was reduced by 50%. Our current cost of providing a newsletter to our membership each month is \$5.00 annually per member.
- Through the efforts of Don Ellis, we were able to gain permission from John Bock to reproduce his book on Red Rock Canyon. This book is being reproduced in-house on our copy equipment and sold in our bookstore. The cost is minimal for producing his book, which sells for \$4.50.
- A grant was submitted to the Institute of Museums & Library Services for operating funds. A part of the documentation submitted with this grant was a statement of the dollar value to the organization of volunteer support. This figure is in excess of \$50,000.
- Made an appeal to the membership for additional volunteers, which was highly successful. We have many committed volunteers working in every area of the Museum. One

big effort has been to focus on the lower level and to come up with a better way to utilize this space. This space has been cleaned and organized and is now being used for storing archives, audio/video studio, and photo laboratory.

- The Board created a business opportunity for the photo collection. We have received many requests for photo copies and we have established a price list for photo copies. We have dedicated volunteers who are responsible for developing the photos. (Bob Heinich)
- Through the generosity and volunteer help of Richard Rhodes, an audio/video studio has been set up in the lower level. We will use this facility for many productive events.
- A follow up on two contacts to the Society created opportunity for OCCHS to record history of Colorado City that was unknown or known but not recorded. This involved the Devlin and McLaughlin story and the "first" female in Colorado City. This valuable history has now been captured and recorded for future generations to learn and enjoy.
- The Board created a project to research and publish "Little Histories of Colorado City." This will be short publications of important events/history that occurred in Colorado City. Here again, this will be capturing undocumented history for future generations to enjoy.
- OCCHC held a training session for our volunteers who work with our archives. Personnel from the Pioneer Museum, Colorado Springs provided this training. We obtained valuable information on the proper preservation of our archives.
- OCCHS received the "first choice" award from the GO Magazine's Best of the Best for our web site.
- OCCHC held sessions with the children of the Colorado School. Their interest was in understanding history and conducting interviews with our members. They also assisted with yard work in the fall.
- A solid financial management system was put in place for the Society. This is thanks to Dave Hughes.
- Made the first annual appeal to the membership for financial support. This resulted in \$2,100, which was used for critical financial operating needs.
- The Board made the decision to rent our museum for special events that would complement the historic environment of our facility. To date, we have rented the museum for special birthday parties and wedding receptions. This has provided additional revenue to the Society.
- Acquired a new display case with exhibit thanks to the Colorado Mineralogist Society.
- The generous gifts individuals and companies have made to the Society are properly acknowledged by plaques in the museum. This was done through the efforts of Bev Disch and her committee.
- Thanks to Bev Disch, the volunteers were obtained and scheduled for the many needs of the Society. These include bookstore, bake sales, treasure sales, etc.
- Expanded the services of LaDonna Gunn to assist the Society in managing and care of our archives.
- OCCHC was recipient of the Goodwill's 1999 Open Door Award. This award was in recognition of the volunteer work program that was established by OCCHS for Goodwill client personnel.

I am very proud of the accomplishments during the past year. We could not have accomplished the above items without the commitment of our Board members and the overwhelming dedication of our many volunteers.

Treasurer's Report (David Hughes)

Our Society operates fiscally on a calendar year basis. This report is broken into two parts - the results of our operations in 1999, and our financial status as of May 1, 2000.

As the Board elected Treasurer since the last annual meeting, I reported in January, the results of 1999 operations, and our projected fiscal health for the year 2000. That report was mailed as an insert to the February newsletter. (continued on page 5)

First Territory Days

continued from page 1)

Now if you look at the picture below, you will see that the entire power structure of Colorado and Colorado Springs were crowded into that small park! The President of the Senate, Republican Fred Anderson, the owner of the Broadmoor Hotel and



The Power Structure of Colorado!

Can you name all those in the front three rows? We would like to identify everyone in the picture. Hint: Thayer Tutt is the 3rd from the center aisle on the left, in the front row.

(photo courtesy of Dave Hughes)

El Pomar, Thayer Tutt, the Chairman and several County Commissioners, Colorado Springs City Council members, and many State Senators and House members, from southern Colorado and across the state.

It was such a stellar collection that it made the next morning's national TV news!

When the play was over, the Commercial Club officers escorted the lawmakers up and down Colorado Avenue showing them struggling Colorado City. They stopped in front of a pool hall

and said, "We need a law stating if the owner of a commercial building anywhere in Colorado which is over 30 years old fixes it up, he doesn't have to pay increased property taxes for a period of at least 5 years!"

Till Bishop, House member from the Western Slope said, "That would work in Grand Junction!" And Fred Anderson, President of the Senate said, "Yep, that would help Loveland, too!" An so it went, the

lawmakers all but talked themselves into passing the law right then, on the Avenue, because it would help towns all over Colorado.

Democrat Bill Comer, State Senator from Colorado Springs, introduced the bill in the Senate. Republican Steve Durham carried it in the House of Representatives, and soon it was law.

Dave Hughes went back to Bill Henderson and said, "Well, Bill?" Bill smiled, and soon sold his building to a man who fixed it up pretty as you please. The law worked.

The old Pool Hall became the Territory Restaurant, then Bambinos, and now houses the upscale Cafe' Latte'.

And Territory Days, with a parade down Colorado Avenue, followed by entertainment in Bancroft Park - from melodramas to politician gold pan offs, and fiddler's contests - was born.

Dave Hughes is a Charter member of OCCHS and is a Past President of the Society. He currently serves on the Board as Treasurer of the Society and is the Chairman of the Technology Committee.

This article is another in the series of "Our Stories", articles written by our members about events in their lives in the Pikes Peak area. Members who have articles of interest are encouraged to submit them for publication in future issues of West Word. The transcript should be submitted to: Editor, West Word, 1 South 24th Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80904

* * * * * Book Review * * * * *

Remember the coyote with the neckerchief few years ago? He has been replaced by is depicted on jewelry, pottery, kachinas, the shops of Old Colorado City. His name is Kokopelli. A booklet in the book store explores the background, the many legends and varied likeness of Kokopelli.



around his neck that was all the rage a a hunch back figure blowing a flute. He yard art and T-shirts. You can see him in the book store written by John V. Young

- . Do you know the difference between a pictography and a petroglyph? Who is Kokopelli?
- . What is his mission? What is his wife's name? What did the missionaries ask the Hopis to do?
- . Why did primitive people welcome him around corn-planting time? Why does Newspaper Rock have drawings of six-toed people?

Read this fascinating booklet to find some of the answers and suppositions. Discover how the Navajo tribe owns and guards one of the largest amount of Kokopelli figures yet discovered.

The KoKopelli bicycle trail will eventually run between the Grand Canyon and Aspen, Colorado. A segment that runs between Grand Junction, Colorado and Moab, Utah has already been completed. The signs on the trail depicts Kokopelli riding a bicycle while blowing on his flute. He is one of the few figures with a name. He has been found in ruins as early as 200 A.D. and as late as the 16th century. The illustrations add much to the allure of the pamphlet and it is a real bargain at \$4.00.

Submitted by: Agnes Johnson

West Side Memories

One Hundred & Twenty-five Years Ago
February 1875

Mr. Joseph Sharratt, of the County Clerk's Office, who has the County Abstracts in charge, has them in capital shape, and they are probably as complete a set of Abstracts as can be found in the Territory. The books are posted daily, so that information about any property in the County can be obtained without delay. Those who are about to purchase property should keep this fact in mind.

(2/6 CS Gazette)

The California fever does not rage quite so high among our people as it did a while ago. Nearly every person who has gone from here to the Pacific Slope, with the view of settling there, has either returned or signified an intention of doing so. The report is that work is very scarce and wages very low.

(2/13 CS Gazette)

Cent-pieces are getting into circulation in the Town. We can remember the day -- not over three years ago -- when "quarters" were the lowest medium of exchange, and nickels only curiosities; but the youngsters can now buy a cent's worth of pea-nuts or molasses candy, and both buyer and seller are happy.

(2/13 CS Gazette)

March 1875

We are in receipt, from Messrs. Rand, McNally & Co., of Chicago, of a copy of their new Map and Guide Book to the Black Hills. The map, which is 18x20 inches size, colored, shows the entire Territory of Dakota, Eastern Montana, and Wyoming, North-eastern Colorado as far south as Denver, the whole of Nebraska by counties, North-western Iowa and Western Minnesota by counties, and the southern portion of the British Possessions. General Custer's outward and return routes are traced, with all the geographical points of interest mentioned in his report located. Accompanying the map is a neatly bound book of 32 pages, illustrated, containing a recapitulation of all that has been said within the past six months concerning gold in the Black Hills, descriptions of the various routes thereto, distances, estimated cost of transportation, with General Custer's preliminary report of his last expedition in full, and other information.

(3/13 CS Gazette)

About fifty tons of ice have just been stored at the Manitou House for the summer's use. It has been brought down from the mountains by General Sickles, and is said to be of remarkably good quality.

(3/13 CS Gazette)

The Cliff House had a narrow escape from destruction on Monday last. A fire broke out, from unknown cause, in the porter's room, and had made considerable headway before it was discovered. For a time, it seemed as if the flames would get beyond control, and furniture and other goods were hastily removed from the building, but by the hearty work of a large body of helpers, the fire was at length got under control and extinguished. The damage done was comparatively slight.

(3/13 CS Gazette)

April 1875

The building known as the Fountain Restaurant, which was one of the first erected in town, has been moved from the east side of Tejon Street to the west side, to give place to the brick block of Mr. S.C. Foote.

(4/17 CS Gazette)

Dr. N. D. Poindexter, Prescription Clerk at Mr. Reynold's Drug Store, received by express a handsome gold-headed cane, a present from the faculty of the Medical College which he has been attending in Louisville, Kentucky.

(4/17 CS Gazette)

Thursday afternoon, a fire broke out in a frame building in Colorado City, from a defective flue. Three buildings were burned before the fire could be checked, causing a damage of about \$1,500. The property was owned by Mr. W.J. Baird and the Masonic Lodge.

(4/17 CS Gazette)

All persons who have wooden side-walks in front of their premises would drive down the nails and spikes therein, so that ladies can walk our streets without danger of tearing their dresses, they would confer a great favor upon some hundreds of the representative of "the porcelain clay of human kind."

(4/24 CS Gazette)

Farmers have suspended operations for now, preferring to let the season pass without raising a crop to raising food for grasshoppers.

(4/24 CS Gazette)

Dr. John Ermerins, an old settler in the Territory, has established an office at Manitou, in connection with which he has a Health Lift, one of the best gymnastic exercises that can be indulged in.

(4/24 CS Gazette)

Mr. Rogers, who is engaged in the Freighting Business between Colorado Springs and Manitou, is now making two trips a day. He has just received a handsome transfer wagon, and is expecting another in a few days. His head-quarters are at Wilson & Wood's Hardware Store.

(4/24 CS Gazette)

West Side Memories are compiled by: Jan Knox

HERBAL RENEWAL GARDEN PROJECT 2000

As we enter the new millennium, we are seeing more evidence in the stores of herbs being used for all that ails us. Even the major food chains and discount stores have expanded their natural nutrient sections to include quite a selection of medicinal products. Many of these plant based items are becoming household commodities, such as St. John's Wort, Vitex, and Evening Primrose. Most folks have very little knowledge as to where these plants originated from historically, and what they might look like. At OCCHS, over the past three years, a small and persistent group of volunteers, under the leadership of Judith Yarrow, have nurtured and planted over 50 varieties of herbs. Their uses are varied, to include culinary, medicinal, homeopathic and ornamental uses. Ms. Yarrow has studied and used herbs professionally for over 20 years and hopes that the garden will provide a living and educational link from the past to the future. She and her husband, Larry Lawn are working with a team at a local Hospice, implementing a complimentary therapy program using Aromatherapy. They also teach Aromatherapy through Pikes Peak Community College, PILLAR program.

"Herbalism is an art that has been on the planet since the beginning of time. Our ancestors from this area depended heavily on the indigenous plants for their very survival. Today an expanding body of scientific knowledge is validating what our ancestors knew. Indeed these plants hold some missing links to our future well being," responds Judith with enthusiasm.

Come visit our garden of learning. It has won the Society's beautification award the past two years. We need your help to grow! If you wish to donate plants, offer your time in the garden, or assist in computer documentation, please contact Judith at 386-7140.

Thanks also to Rick's Nursery/Landscaping, and Alice Mayfield for their plant donations this year. The Society Board extends their appreciation to Larry Fontana, Judith Yarrow, and Larry Lawn for several days well spend in the Garden! If you have not seen these beautiful gardens, please drop by the Center and look at the many varieties of plants. Each of the plants are labeled for easy identification.

(Editor's note: Next month in the West Word we will start a regular feature "Herbal Renewal" column on the plants in our garden.)

BONES

Membership of any organization is made-up of bones.

wishbones: Those who spend all their time wishing that someone else would do the work.

jawbones: Those who do all the talking about the work and very little else.

knucklebones: Those who knock everything anybody tries to do.

The Saving Graces are the **backbones** who get under the load and actually do the work.

From *Footprints* - Northamptonshire, England, Feb. 2000

Breakfast with General Palmer

The Rock Ledge Ranch Historic Site is co-sponsoring an event in conjunction with the Springs 2000 Commission to celebrate the millennium.

The public is invited to the Rock Ledge Ranch to join Colorado Springs founder General William Jackson Palmer on Thursday, July 27 at 10:00 a.m. for a light breakfast as he returns from the past to re-live his first visit to Colorado City and the Garden of the Gods in 1869. This momentous event began the General's infatuation with the area and was the antecedent to his vision for a future city in the Pikes Peak region. After arriving at the Ranch by stagecoach, General Palmer will share original letters, which reveal his early dreams for this place as a future home. Palmer will be accompanied by his cook and traveling companion, George Motley, the first African American in El Paso County. With a moderator, they will answer questions giving their perspective from the late 1800s. This event is free, but reservations are requested. Entrance to the Ranch is just inside the east entrance to the Garden of the Gods off of Gateway Road. Parking will be limited.

If you have questions regarding this event or want to make reservations, please call the Ranch at 578-6777.

What is a Babcock?

In last month's West Side Memories, a news article mentioned a "Babcock." Jan Knox added a note asking if anyone knew what a Babcock was. Well, we came across a copy of the 1983 Colorado Springs Fire Department Report and on the cover was the picture shown below.

Looks like a "Babcock" was a horse-drawn fire engine.



Thank You

Annual Appeal Monetary Gifts:

Sallie & Welling Clark

Patricia Stark Jacobs

