

WEST WORD

Old Colorado City Historical Society

May 2000

Walks With Grandfather

One of "Our Own" Stories

by: Agnes Johnson

It was a custom of my grandfather to take a walk every afternoon to the beaver ponds about a mile from our cabin on the north slope of Pikes Peak.

Each afternoon he would put on his cap, take up his walking stick while I, holding my breath, waited to be invited to accompany him. "Fetch the bucket" he said. I rushed to the kitchen to get the pail and meet him on the porch.

About a quarter of the way down the now abandoned logging road, we would leave the water bucket at the spring.

Usually the gray squirrel would start his chatter as we approached the spring, the stellar joys would fly from pine to pine squaking away, and occasionally we'd catch a glimpse of the rabbit who lived in rotting logs left long ago by the tree cutters.

We crossed a large bog before we reached the road that ran by the beaver ponds. Grasses were tall and feathery green and as the season progressed, Mariposa lily, Columbine, Black-eyed Susans and milk weed would grow in abundance. The ground was spongy and squishy, and soft under my feet.

A large rather flat rock jutted out over one of the ponds and there we would sit quietly awaiting the sun's disappearance. I had already been warned not to move or make any noise or the sentinel would not appear.

My grandfather would take out his pipe, his can of Prince Albert, fill his pipe and tamp the tobacco. In his pockets were large kitchen matches which he would strike on his pants and suck on his pipe 'til the flame lit the tobacco.

Sometimes the smoke from the pipe made rings, and in the stillness of the forest air, they floated upward 'til out of sight.

Suddenly there would be a ripple on the pond surface, making a small circle at first, then increasing in circumference as the sentinel of the

beaver clan made the first inspection for invaders.

We sat Indian fashion, this pioneer grandfather while I held my breath in fear of making a sound.

When we first began our vigil on the rock, the beaver on about the third or fourth circle would see us and we'd hear a big thump on the water and he would disappear. It took many times but grandfather said, "You must be patient - it takes a long time to gain the trust of any animal."

Finally the scout became accustomed to our presence, and as we made no movement to alarm him, the other members of his family emerged. Eventually, they would leave the pond and amble

off on their search for another aspen to cut.

They were replaced by the deer, ducks, chipmunks, rabbits, and squirrels who came for their evening drinks.

As twilight came my grandfather would tap his pipe, be sure there were no spaces in the tobacco, pick up his walking stick, take my hand and we would walk back to the spring.

"You may fill the bucket," my grandfa-

ther said. "Just remember the princess."

I was startled and looked at him questionably. I'd never been allowed before to fill it. I had watched grandfather many times; how he slipped the bucket on its side and very slowly let the water fill the pail and then left it so carefully and gently that not even one drop was allowed to fall on the surface.

He had told me, "At the bottom of the spring lives an Indian princess. The surface of the springs is her mirror to the Great Spirit in the sky. If you cause ripples or muddy the surface she cannot see the sky and the Great Spirit. That would make her very sad and you would not want to make her sad, would you?"

(Continued on page 4)



The Family Cabin on the North Slope of Pikes Peak
(from a water color painting by Agnes Johnson)

From the Board

The President's Message

This is my favorite time of the year. The winter months are behind us for another year, and spring is in full bloom. I am in awe at the beauty of the flowering trees all over Colorado Springs and especially along Colorado Avenue in the Old Colorado City Historic business district. This scene is truly an artist's setting.

A lot of things are going on around the History Center and I want to update you. First, the annual general meeting will be held on Friday, May 12th at the Center. Refreshments will be served at 10 a.m. and the general meeting begins at 11 a.m. There will be an election of new Board members, and the annual reports of the officers. The general meeting will be followed by a most interesting presentation by Anna-Leah Hathaway. I hope you will be present for the meeting and presentation. Following the morning sessions, we will have an afternoon of "spring house cleaning." We are focusing on working outside, so bring your rakes, trash bags, paint brushes, and sun tan lotion. The Center will look spotless and be shining when we get through.

We have kicked off our Membership Drive. Please read the announcement below. I hope you will take this challenge and bring in at least one new member this year. There is also a membership form at the bottom of the inserted page with the newsletter.

On page seven, you will see an announcement about the "Little Histories of Colorado City." We need your help in researching and writing the interesting vignettes of history about Colorado City. Additional information is also contained on the inserted page.

We will begin our summer hours at the History Center on May 23. We will be ready for the summer tourists thanks to all the volunteers who work hard to support the activities of the Center during this busy season.

Until next month,

Gordon

Treasurer's Report

Things began to look up toward Spring, in the March numbers. The bookstore did a brisk \$568 in sales, up from \$241 in February. We rented the Center for one event for \$350 during the month.

Costs were high, when we spent \$1,054 for archival supplies and \$563 for computer supplies, both were one time costs. Utilities - heat and electricity - were \$217, we will be starting a decline to more like \$160 per month through the summer.

We went \$2,090 over income in March, and further drew down our reserves. We are OK for cash, and look forward to a rising income from the bookstore with summer extended hours and from various summer events.

We are tracking to our predictions.

Dave Hughes, Treasurer

Thank You

Thank you from the Society to the following members who made donations or gifts to the Center in the past month:

Dave Hughes - Two - wheeled carts for moving heavy items around in the Center.

Betsy Evans - A new bookcase for the bookstore and venation blinds for the two west windows in the bookstore.

Becky Gray - Venation blinds for the two west windows in the library room.

Your Support is Appreciated!

The President's Membership Drive Challenge!!!

One of the signs of a healthy organization is that it is growing in membership and financial security. Overall, I believe that OCCHS doesn't have major health problems. We have come a long way in the past few years. We have a fine museum, an outstanding web site, a rare collection of artifacts, and a bookstore stocked with many historical items, including books of historical interest. However, our membership roles have not increased significantly in the past 2-3 years. We gain new members each month and for this I am most grateful. However, each month when the membership renewals are sent out, we end up with a few that are not renewed. We have a program in place to follow up with these members and encourage them to renew and support our outstanding historical organization. Additional memberships will help tremendously to strengthen our financial position.

Your Board has kicked off a Membership Drive focused on increasing the individual, family, business, and corporate memberships. Phase One of this program is a challenge to you, our members. It would be great to double our membership by the end of 2000. This can be done if each of you would solicit and obtain ONE new member this year. This could be a friend, a neighbor, or a family member. Betty Magninie, one of our members and the Society's volunteer bookkeeper, just purchased a two-year membership for her son who lives in Lubbock, Texas. He grew up in this area and has an interest in what is going on. Betty purchased the membership for him so he could read all about our activities in the West Word each month. This is a wonderful way to get new members and thank you, Betty, for making your son a new member. In whatever way you think is best to obtain new members, you have my 100% support. Please give this request and challenge some serious thought and help us increase our membership this year. Subsequent phases of the membership drive will be to obtain new individual members and business members, not only on the Westside, but throughout the Colorado Springs area.

Accept this challenge and when you get a new member, send the information and payment to me at the Center. You will be recognized in upcoming issues of West Word as a member of the President's Membership Drive Honor Roll for 2000. Thank you in advance for your support.

Gordon Gray
President, OCCHS Board of Directors

My Grandfather

continued from page 1)

Oh, how my stomach churned! I was afraid my hands would shake. I lowered the bucket, watched it fill, and holding my breath pulled it out of the water without a drop falling!

Grandfather took the bucket in his hand, took mine in the other, smiled at me and said, "You did very well, the princess is pleased."

Oh how proud I felt, and couldn't wait to tell grandmother.

She knew well before our walk what grandfather planned, and he said, "She did a good job," and handed her the pail. Grandmother hugged me and put the pail in the kitchen.

For supper she had made a hearty soup and buttermilk biscuits and a surprise! One of her heavenly apple pies in honor of the occasion.

After supper grandmother and grandfather sat in their rockers in front of the fireplace and holding hands rocked back and forth.

I had a warm, wonderful feeling, glad that I had been able to fill the bucket right; the smile and approval and praise from my grandfather and grandmother. All was right in my world so I sang:

"Shoo, shoo, schock a locka rue.
Shock a locka come a fosko failyo
Fitty fatty fagin,
Ginny come a fungun land."

These were words that my grandfather taught me. They smiled, and said, "Bedtime."

My grandparents were Frank and Myrtle Ayres. Their only surviving child was my mother, Ethel Sands.

Agnes Johnson is a Charter member of OCCHS and is a past president of the Society. She currently serves on the Board and is a volunteer in accessioning artifacts into the library collection. Agnes is a monthly contributor of articles in the West Word.

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



Frank Ayres and "Jocky Boy" c1932

Book Review



A charming book for children is a new arrival in the bookstore called "Pigs Over Colorado." It is written and illustrated by Kerry Lee MacLean of Boulder, Colorado.

The Sky-Piggies have their origin from the author's five children and their vacations over time, in Colorado.

There is Andrew, Sophie, Gregory, Tessa and little Piggy named Kelly. There is also a guardian piggy who makes sure the fivesome doesn't get lost.

Hidden in the pages are five different Colorado animals which makes it a challenge for children not only to find them but to identify them as well.

The group travels throughout Colorado all year round. Children will have great fun locating the hidden pictures and becoming familiar with the varied landscapes and activities in their state.

The cover of this book is very unusual and will attract the reader's attention.

Submitted by: Agnes Johnson



OCCHS HONORED

The Old Colorado City History Center was presented with the 1999 Open Door Award at the Goodwill Annual dinner on April 18th. This award goes to the organization that is worthy of recognition in working with Goodwill. Over the past year, OCCHS participated in a program where Goodwill workers come to the Center and volunteer their time. Richard Mowers, the volunteer from Goodwill was also recognized for the custodial work he does at the Center each week. The recognition plaque, shown above, is on display in the History Center.

Gordon Gray, President of OCCHS, accepted the award on behalf of the Society. Also attending this event were Bev Disch, Vice president of the Society and Becky Gray.

Congratulations OCCHS on this recognition!!

MEMBER PROFILE
Meet Jean Christopher

When Jean Christopher began listing all her interests and activities, I was overwhelmed. How could one lady be so involved in all her pursuits and still have time to volunteer in the History Center Bookstore?

To begin, Jean was born in Chicago. After schooling, she became a social worker there. After several years in this career she decided the profession was not to her liking. She moved to Colorado Springs in 1950. Her husband was discharged from Ft. Carson where he had been a painter. They have two sons and two daughters, who were born in Colorado Springs.

Jean enrolled at Colorado College to pursue an elementary teaching certificate. Upon the completion of her courses she accepted a third grade teaching assignments from District Eleven and taught at Buena Vista School for 32 years!

Several years ago, she worked with Dave Hughes and her classes became involved in Territory Days, an annual event in Old Colorado City.

Jean is a Legal Advocate for A.A.U.W., has volunteered at Rock Ledge Ranch for 13 years, has taught ballroom dancing at the YMCA and also at the Carriage Stop on the Westside.

She leads tours for OCCHC and the school district still uses her transparencies on her Pioneer Unit. She also gives programs for about 200 children each year. She is an Eucharistic Minister at Sacred Heart Church. In 1991, she retired from teaching.

Jean belongs to an RV single adult group and still teaches ballroom dancing at the YMCA.

After all this - guess what she does for relaxation? Aerobics three times a week at First Presbyterian Church!!

Wow! -- I'm tired. How about you?

Thank you Jean for all you do for OCCHS.

Submitted by: Agnes Johnson

Welcome New OCCHS Members

We welcome the following new members to the Society. Please update your membership directories.

Roger Magnini	2713 Country Road Lubbock, TX 79423	
Merv Casey Family	704 Columbia Road Colo. Spgs. 80904	(life)
Bettyann Henderson	2414 W. Pikes Peak Colo. Spgs, 80904	
Phyllis Briscoe	120 County Road Trinidad, CO 81082-3949	(life)

Thank You for Joining the Society

THE ORTHOGRAPHIC DUEL

Colorado Springs Gazette

April 17, 1875

abstracted by Jan Knox

The Spelling Bee that took place on Tuesday evening, last, at the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, was a really enjoyable entertainment. Major McAllister had charge of the exercises, acting as enunciator, while Mrs. F. L. Martin and Mr. Douglass Ely were the captains. Prior to the selection of spellers, Major McAllister explained the principles that would govern the exercises. All obsolete and technical words would be avoided, and only such as are used by the best writers and heard almost every day in conversation would be submitted. The first hundred were selected from two chapters of "Gibbon's Decline and Fall," the second hundred from "Mill's System of Logic," after which some fifty words that have been bringing down good spellers at other "bees" were given out.

Thirteen spellers on each side were then selected, the ladies being pitted against gentlemen, and the work of the evening began in earnest. The first miss was made by a gentleman who subsided with an "Obeycence." A second gentleman was buried in a "Sepulchur." Another went down with a "Sonus" sound, while our worthy postmaster and a lady looked upon the dark side of "Pesomist." "Soverign" ruled a lady out, and two good spellers allowed themselves to be blinded by "Jelousy." "Emmisary," "Paraleled," and "Democracy" routed two ladies and a gentlemen. Dr. A. was too candid a man to know anything of "Hypocrisy." A bright boy failed in "Buisness" and hadn't capital enough to re-instate himself. There was nothing "Ficticious" about our worthy friend W.W.A. A lady and gentleman were then buried beyond "Reserrection." The "Viscitudes" of fortune carried down a gentleman who had seen batter days, while "Consummit," "Synonim," and "Metallurgy" overcame two or three others. A lady, subsided on "Subsidery," and another called in help to get through "Auxiliary," "Aquious" brought tears to the eyes of a lady and gentleman, when Captain Ely flew off in an "Eliptic" orbit. The Governor's son didn't spell "Suitably," and the complete over-throw of a lady was "Tracible" to carelessness. "Conotation," "Rashcosination," "Spontenity," "Esential," "Wholley," "Pontif," and "Sanitery," each had one or more victims. A gentleman who had expended a small fortune in re-installing himself made himself the "Cinisure" of al eyes, and tow or three others didn't "Manuvre" very skillfully. At this juncture the "Town Crier" completely "Shriveled" up, much to the astonishment of all present, which so overcame his friend, the County Clerk, that he went into "Liquification," like the nymph Egeria when the great Numa Pompilius pegged out. One of the best spellers in the room, not being so good an artist, could "Lymb" skillfully, and a lady applied "Linniment" to the wrong place, as did also Judge Bane, and both went down with flying colors, leaving but four, all ladies, behind them. The "Irridescent" brilliancy of the situation of the latter proved too much for them, and blinded them all in a bunch.

The prize, as usual, was won by a lady; the second prize, a beautiful illustrated edition of Nast's Almanac, going to Captain Ely.

The spelling taking it all through, was good, the participants mastering with least a dozen words that slaughtered over fifty of the best spellers at the great "bee" held in the Academy of Music in Philadelphia some weeks ago.

(Editor's note: Words were spelled as written in the article!!)

West Side Memories

One Hundred & Twenty-five Years Ago
February 1875

At the regular meeting of the Town Trustees, an Ordinance presented by Judge McFerran, was adopted, imposing a penalty to the amount of three times the value of the trees destroyed, on the owners of animals which may destroy any of the shade-trees in town. Mr. J. M. Dorr petitioned that the Fountain might be bridged where it is crossed by the road running through his property to Cheyenne Canon. A committee was appointed to report as to the necessity for such Bridge. The Fire-Warden was instructed to examine all flues and chimneys, and require those found to be unsafe to be immediately put into proper order. The result is to be reported at the next meeting of the Board. (2/6 CS Gazette)

The "Chicago Shanty" on Pike's Peak Avenue in which Mr. Robinson has his Museum, came near being destroyed by fire on Sunday afternoon. It was saved by Mr. H. T. Blake, of the Colorado Springs Hotel, with the aid of a small "Babcock," and a number of our citizens. Little damage was done. (*Anyone know what a Babcock was? - Jan*) (2/6 CS. Gazette)

John Chinaman was on a glorious "bust" on Thursday night and Friday - these being the Chinese New Year's Eve and day. About half a score of the Celestials assembled at Yung Lee's, on Tejon Street, on Thursday night, and had a big feast, eating messes of various kinds, smoking opium, singing, and have "a good time" generally. The "festive board" was decked with evergreens and wax candles, and the wash-house looked quite brilliant. Several of our citizens accepted invitations to be present, and tried some of the dishes, but - tastes differ! Friday morning was devoted to the letting-off of firecrackers, and lots of noise and smoke were made. In the afternoon, Jon - speaking collectively - went out horseback riding. The number of the New Year, we believe, is 4081. (2/6 CS Gazette)

March 1875

A meeting of the Board of Trustees was held on Saturday evening last, when, among other business, a petition was received from a large number of citizens, praying for the grading and repairing of the road leading from Pike's Peak Avenue, around the south side of the Experimental Garden. The petition was referred to the Street Commissioner. The Clerk was authorized to receive proposals for the office of Town Scavenger; and the President was authorized to have a cart made for

the use of the officer. The resignation of Mr. Harrison, as Town Attorney, was received, and Judge Bane appointed to the vacant office. (3/6 CS Gazette)

Base-Ball and Quoit-Pitching form the regular Saturday afternoon amusements for the men of Monument and vicinity, while the ladies amuse themselves with Croquet. Those men who are too intellectual to be interested in games take in a cargo of benzine, and perched on dry-goods boxes, make the Town "ring" with laughter at their own foolishness. (3/6 CS Gazette)

Runaways seem to be now in order. Yesterday afternoon, a wagon loaded with potatoes, belonging to an Englishman, came tearing along Tejon Street, then into Huerfano Street and round to the back of Walker's Lumber Yard, and to the Stone-yard, where fortunately, it was stopped before any serious damage was done. As the team turned into Huerfano Street, it frightened another team, which started at a lively rate, but that also was brought to a stand before any injury had been sustained.. (3/6 CS Gazette)

April 1875

The south-west part of town has been so thickly built up during the past year that it would make a very respectable appearance as a village by itself. This is one of the localities that was not considered desirable two years ago, but at the present time it is building up more rapidly than any other part of the town. (4/10 CS Gazette)

The friends of Temperance should be grateful to the score of noble men who stood around the polls all day on Monday last contending for a principle - The day was cold and stormy, but they never forsook the post of duty, and when the sun went down the broken ranks of their demoralized foes bore evidence of the completeness of the victory, and the triumph of the right. (4/10 CS Gazette)

The Experimental Garden is being ploughed. (4/17 CS Gazette)

Our Babcock Hook and Ladder Truck is about ready for shipment from St. Louis. It will probably be here within a fortnight. A room in the Emma House has been rented temporarily for the storage of the truck and engine. (4/17 CS Gazette)

Many fences in town have been improved by being whitewashed. (4/17 CS Gazette)

West Side Memories are compiled by: Jan Knox

INTRODUCING
"THE LITTLE HISTORIES
OF COLORADO CITY" SERIES

The history of Colorado City is rich in many areas. Some of the topics have been researched and published in books and pamphlets. However, there are many topics that are of historic value that have not been researched and documented in written form. There are probably many reasons this has never been done. One is the fact that each individual topic is probably only 8-10 pages and too small for mass production. Another fact is the cost of publication.

The OCCHS Board of Directors feel it is vital to capture these vignettes of history on Colorado City and has initiated the following project.

We encourage our members to take a historical topic, do the research and write a narrative. The narratives will be reviewed by a History Review Committee. This committee will be responsible for the content, format, and historical accuracy of the manuscript. When finalized, the manuscript will be reproduced on the OCCHS in-house copy equipment and then made available for sale.

A subsequent phase of this project will be invite all area college and high school history teachers to participate. We will encourage them to develop the narratives as a class project. The details of this phase will be finalized in the near future.

Enclosed on the single sheet in this newsletter is an overview of this exciting project and the suggested topics to be researched. This is by no means all inclusive and the Board encourages the OCCHS membership to come up with additional historical topics.

The Board feels this is a very worthy project in many ways:

- . Historical events that are going unwritten will be preserved for future generations.
- . It will provide the opportunity for many of our members to get involved and especially those who do not live in the Pikes Peak area.
- . It will be a renewed commitment to work with the school and college students on a very important project.
- . And, it has the real potential of generating additional income for the History Center.

This project was just conceived in the past two weeks, so there are many details to be worked out and finalized. We hope to announce the members of the History Review Committee in the next West Word. The production committee, who will assemble the final product, is yet to be identified. If you would like to help in this area or any related area on this project, please give Gordon Gray a call at the Center or e-mail him at: ggray01@aol.com

BECOME A PART OF RECORDING HISTORY

April Meeting Presentation

The presentation at the OCCHS monthly meeting on April 14th was given by Don Ellis. His talk presented a local "travelogue" of the Hogbacks area south and west of Old Colorado City in which he showed remnants of historic activity in the Hogbacks area.

Don began his presentation with a brief overview of the geologic history of the ridges. This included a description of how the ridges were formed by erosion of strata which had been upturned by the rising mountains. The presentation included slides of leaf fossils from the Dakota sandstone and dinosaur bones in the Morrison formation.

The period of human history was introduced with slides showing the Ute fortifications along the Dakota hogback, a metate site of unknown age which may have been used in association with the fortifications, and artifacts from the Hogbacks area. Don noted a stone circle and fire pit site near the Dakota sandstone quarries.

Slides of the sandstone quarries which were operated by John Langmeyer and Anthony Bott on the Dakota Hogback above Bear Creek illustrated how the stone was quarried with basic tools by cleaving the stone along bedding planes. Work areas and wagon roads associated with these quarries were shown. Use of the stone from these quarries was illustrated in several local buildings, including the Midland round-house which now houses Van Briggles Pottery.

Limestone pits west of 31st. Street where Anthony Bott presumably mined limestone for the manufacture of cement were mentioned.

The Red Rock Canyon quarries which were opened in the 1880's were shown along with local architectural use of the stone. Don noted that quarrying the red Lyons sandstone involved considerably more expensive technology that quarrying Dakota sandstone.

After discussing the quarries, Don discussed the roads, railroads and mills near the Hogbacks. He introduced this topic with the Bear Creek toll road to Jones Park and the toll house which still stands near Bear Creek. The presentation included pictures of civil stonework along South 26th. Street (which was once called the Palmer Road), the railroad bed south of Fairview Cemetery, the CS&CCD railroad cut through the Dakota hogback, and foundation remnants from the Standard Mill and the CS&CCD trestle No. 1.

Moving to more recent history, Don showed gravel pits which had been operated in the mid-twentieth century near the intersection of South 26th. Street and Gold Camp Road and the recent gravel pit west of the Dakota hogback.

The last historic site presented was the 26th. Street landfill which was opened in 1970 and closed in 1987.

Don noted that decisions during the next few months would determine whether the Hogbacks area was preserved with future public access.

Don Ellis is a longtime member of OCCHS. He was born and raised on the Westside of Colorado Springs. He currently is on the Board of Directors of OCCHS and serves as the Recording Secretary.