

# WEST WORD

Old Colorado City Historical Society

September 2000

## ..... REMEMBERING THE WEST SIDE .....

An Article in the

"OUR STORIES" Series

by Leland Feitz

When I moved to Colorado Springs in 1942, I first lived in the east part of town. Then, there was a move to the north end. Some 15 years ago, I finally became a west-sider.

Even during those years I lived in other parts of the city, I was always drawn to the west side. Somehow, I felt "connected" and I did spend quite a bit of my time there. It was where I did much of my shopping.

Back in the 1940's and even into the 1950's, I found the west side to be a great place to grocery shop. There was a Safeway in the 400 block of West Colorado and another in the 2300 block. I remember Allen's Market at 522. It was one of the city's better grocery stores and had a fine reputation for selling quality meat. Later its name was changed to Ralph's Market. The Whiteway Market was in the same block.

There was a scattering of grocery stores between this area and Colorado City proper. I especially remember John's Market at the corner of Colorado and Seventh Street. I think people went there to be entertained as much as to shop. John was a very funny fellow.

The Thrifty Market and one called Hamilton's were in Colorado City proper. And, my friend, Marvlyn Muskowski, a west side native, reminded me of the Piggly Wiggly that was there. The market at Adams Crossing had big displays of melons, peaches and all the good things Colorado produces every summer piled high at their

front door under canvas.

I recall a little self-service drug store in the 500 block of West Colorado. There was another drug store a couple of blocks west next door to John's Market. Superior Cleaners was somewhere between these two drug stores.

I remember two good-sized drug stores in Colorado City. Osborn's was located where the Chocolate Factory is today. The other, Cooper-Lidke, was in the next block west and on the north side of the street right next door to the post office.

While the west side had several places to eat, people simply did not go out for meals as they do today. For one thing, money was a bit more scarce.

However, there was one place where one could get a good meal for little more than a dollar. I wonder how many readers will remember Joe's Dining Room. This one-man operation was up a couple of steps at 1014 West Colorado Avenue.

There were only a few tables with unmatched chairs. The place was



Once Upon A Time.....

Colorado City had a "main street" looking as if it were the business center of a town of 4,000 or 5,000. It was lined with grocery and drug stores, cafes, bakeries and hotels. That is where the Post Office was located. The banks were there. These were even a theatre and, maybe, a saloon or two. Until 1932, one could jump on a streetcar on Colorado Avenue for a quick ride to the big city to the east.

(OCCHS photograph -  
McKnight Collection)

Both these stores had soda fountains up front. It was at one of these I was introduced to Pepsi-Cola. For a few years, Pepsi was bottled on the west side. Ross Lane who started bottling Pepsi in Colorado Springs was a west-sider and his first plant was at 1132 West Kiowa Street.

There were several bakeries in the west part of town. The Buttercup was located in the same block as the Whiteway and Allen's. One called the Colonial was in the 1000 block. All old-timers are sure to remember The Dawn Donut Company, for the store at 815 West Colorado and for their trucks seen around town every day making deliveries.

"decorated" with old calendars and soft drink signs. The china looked like it came from a second-rate second hand store.

Merle Crocker's Merri Lane at 2411 West Colorado was quite a different thing. A big restaurant, with a banquet room on the second floor for civic club meetings, the place was beautifully decorated. During the dinner hour, Jessie Atkinson entertained the diners with lively organ music. The food itself was delicious and beautifully presented. Crocker was always all over the place seeing that things were done right, often assisted by his pretty wife, Lorraine.

(continued on page 4)

# From the Board

## The President's Report.....

Again this month, there has been a lot of activity around the Center. The Founder's Day activities kept many of our members busy over that weekend. Jan Knox planned and conducted two days of Crafts in the Park. I want to thank her for the many hours of work that Jan put in during the summer to make the Craft events successful. We also had a bake sale in the Cabin and again I want to thank Bev Disch and her team of "Betty Crocker" bakin' volunteers. We had many goodies for sale and they went quickly. Dave Hughes was in the Park telling historical stories about Colorado City. He had a "panning for gold" tub set up and the young people enjoyed panning for gold. (Yes, there were actually small nuggets of gold in the sand.)

For our local members, I encourage you to visit the Museum and see the new exhibit on the Knights of Pythias Lodge. Thanks to our new exhibit committee for this fine exhibit. This thanks goes to Liz Geiss, Tommie Bishop, and Dianne Hartshorn. They are busy working on the next new exhibit, which will be completed and in place in the next month.

The Board is always interesting in getting input from our membership on how we can continue to improve the Society in all areas. Enclosed in this newsletter is a member questionnaire and I would appreciate you completing it and returning it to me. All ideas and suggestions will be most welcome and will be carefully reviewed and evaluated. Please take a moment to give us your thoughts, concerns, compliments, and ideas on how can change and/or improve. Please return the completed questionnaire in an envelope addressed to me. It can be brought to the Center or mailed.

I want to let you know that Kay Arnold, one of our charter members, is in St. Francis Hospice. I visited with her recently and we had a nice visit. She would enjoy your cards and letters. They can be addressed to her at Pikes Peak Hospice, 825 East Pikes Peak Avenue, Room 431, Colorado Springs, CO. 80903. She also welcomes your visit anytime other than at meal times, which are 8 a.m.; 12 noon, and 5 p.m.

My President's Challenge to every member of the Society to obtain at least ONE new member this year is still active. Our members obtained three new members this past month. Keep up the good work and I again ask each of you to help us "grow" the membership.

The First Families of Colorado City event has been canceled for this year. It was decided by the Board to concentrate our efforts on increasing the membership of the Society. This program will concentrate on obtaining additional individual and family memberships, as well as, business and corporate memberships. Board members, Betty Baker, LaRue Ebersole, and Dave Hughes are working on the programs for various membership types.

The Third Annual Fairview Cemetery Crawl is planned and advertising and promotional materials are being distributed. Details of the Crawl are shown on page 4. Please join us for this unique event and "relive" the interesting times in early Colorado City, as told by the "residents" of the cemetery.

The Old Colorado City Walking Tour Guide book is in the final stages of approval. As previously noted, this

guide book is being funded in part by a grant from the Colorado Historical Society and matching funds from OCCHS that were provided by the Westside Innkeepers as a result of the 1999 Christmas B&B Tour. The book is going to be excellent and I encourage you to reserve copies now for those special holiday gifts. The book will be available in the bookstore before the December Holiday season. It will sell for \$9.95. In upcoming West Words we will be giving you a preview of this fine book and information on placing a republication order.

Please note in the Calendar of events, our fall program schedule will begin in October.

Until next month.

*Gordon*

## **ANNOUNCING** *the* **Adopt-a-Book Program**

In the August West Word, we announced the Adopt-a-Book Program. OCCHS has a fine collection of historical books in the library at the Center about the rich history of Old Colorado City and the Pikes Peak Area.

Many of these rare books are in excellent condition. But, others have show the test of time and are in poor condition. Continued use by our members and researchers will soon make them unusable.

We are pleased to announce the Adopt-a-Book Program. Members and other supporters of the Society can donate money to have a damaged book rebound. A face plate will be placed in the book identifying your gift. For \$35, a book will be rebound with a new cover and spine. It will be re-sown or glued, as necessary and the spine will be embossed with the title of the book. This will give a "new life" to the book.

Please consider "adopting" a book. This can be done by individuals or by an entire family in memory of a loved one. What better way to help the Society preserve the history of Colorado City.

Donations can be sent to the President, OCCHS, 1 South 24th Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80904.

**- - - FROM THE BOOKSTORE - - -**

There are some amazing stories in the large selection of booklets in the History Center's bookstore.

I found one called "Our Trip to Mesa Verde 1922".

The booklet was compiled from three papers written by three of the participants and given to members of the Desphians at Western State College in Gunnison, Colorado, as part of a class project.

Four women, three who were teaching in the Delta County area; a sister of one; and a daughter of a Dolores Postmaster made up the ensemble for their trek to Mesa Verde.

Since two of the women had scarcely walked a block during the winter, they planned a preliminary excursion with a coach from the college to hone their skills and endurance before attempting a walk to Mesa Verde.

Ten people showed up to begin a walk to Waunita Hot Springs. The coach sent one back immediately for she was wearing high heels, silk stockings, and a light dress!

This is a far cry from the hiking clothes and footwear shown in the pictures taken during their walk to Mesa Verde.

They all gathered together in Ouray, where one of the members lived and spent several days at her family's ranch preparing for the trip.

A hilarious part of the story is what they finally decided to take in their rolled packs and kits.

You members who hike might be interested in what they thought was necessary. Does anyone know why the product "Easum" was so important? Would you take along nail polish, manicure scissors, an AXE?

After all the decisions had been made, the packing accomplished, and for one a two egg breakfast, the five-some left on their journey on a Sunday morning. They lacked a trail to follow for the best trail was in high country covered with heavy snow.

Their comment after the first day was "All of that day when we weren't going straight down, we were going straight up." Their direction was headed for Dallas Divide.

With some interesting incidents along the way and various people they met, they finally arrived at Mesa Verde.

There are wonderful descriptions and many photos of Kivas and the first and only permanent building in 1922.

They mentioned Dr. Fenke's lecture and their trip to the Tree House by moonlight. The description of the "Cliff Palace" is a detailed assessment of the physical properties. You will find the name of the "most recent" and wonderful ruin according to their opinion.

On their way back home they stopped in Ignacio, where they watched the Utes build a fence of cut aspen to shield their activities from prying eyes.

A month had passed since they left Ouray. It would appear that the trip had been worthwhile for all.

An epilogue, written in 1988, is fit for Dear Abby's newspaper column.

All in all an enjoyable tale of olden times.

With the great fires at Mesa Verde this summer bringing forth many concerns for the ruins, it would appear that none were destroyed and new ones were discovered. New adventures await those who plan a trip to Mesa Verde.

Is anyone up for a **MONTH of HIKING?**

Review by: Agnes Johnson

**Colorado City Fire Department  
Plaque Found**

As President of OCCHS, I am representing the Society on the committee that is establishing a fire museum in Colorado Springs. This museum will be named the Dr. Lester L. Williams Fire Museum. Dr. Williams was the honorary fire department physician for many years and was an avid fire buff. He had an extensive collection of fire artifacts and memorabilia which he donated to the Colorado Springs Fire Department. The CS Fire Department has an extensive collection of fire memorabilia.

I have been working on a committee to identify and catalog all the artifacts of the museum. About three weeks ago, I came across a plaque that was presented to the Fire Department of Colorado City by the City of Colorado Springs in appreciation of their efforts in fighting the disastrous Antler's Hotel Fire in 1898. It is wooden with a brass engraved plate on the front. The plaque was loaned to me so that I could try and scan it and reproduce it in the West Word. I have attempted to scan this artifact and it is shown below. Under the picture of the plaque is the text of what is engraved on it. Also, on the back of the plaque, the Fire Chief of Colorado City and all the firemen, signed a sheet and it is preserved under Plexiglas.

I have offered the Fire Museum Committee a display case in our Museum so they can display items of interest to the community. It is my hope that we will be able to obtain this plaque on an loan so it will be available for our visitors to see.

Gordon Gray, President, OCCHS



To  
The Fire Department  
of Colorado City

This plate is presented to your Department by the citizens of Colorado Springs as a token of their deep-felt appreciation of your neighborly and heroic cooperation during the memorable fire on October First 1898.

The City of Colorado Springs  
by M.B. Irvine  
Mayor

J.S. Harris  
City Clerk

..... REMEMBERING THE WEST SIDE .....

(continued from the front page)

There were big Sunday dinner crowds. Coming right from church, the Sunday diners were smartly dressed. During the week, KVOR radio station came to the restaurant and broadcast the popular Breakfast Bingo parties. These events were especially popular with the ladies who came dressed to the nines.

There were games, prizes, interviews and music. Any lady with a birthday was fussed over considerably.

And, then there was Henri's! This ever popular Mexican food restaurant was opened in 1946 by Henri Ruiz. After 54 years, it is still at the same location and still managed by the same family. I have been eating there off and on all that time along with other Colorado Springs people who enjoy good Mexican food.

Cunningham's Cafe was in the next block west. It was popular with west side folks. There was a little place called the B&W in the same block. That is where Roger's was, too. I can't remember at thing about their food. I do remember they sold good cold beer!

When, early in the 1950's, I bought a five room house on Bennett Avenue in Cripple Creek for \$500, I set out to fix it up for a weekend retreat. Every Saturday for I don't know how many months, I started the day with a visit to John Croff's for paint, varnish, stain and wallpaper. It was a fine, modern store and John, himself, was a delight to deal with. These were the days when a merchant really tried to help a customer. Remember?

In order to do a decent job of restoration on the old house, I needed a few hardware items. Someone suggested Schoch's. What a store that was! I found



Birds-eye view of the west side a little before the middle of the last Century. The arrow points to the 400 & 500 blocks of West Colorado Avenue. Some old timers called that section "The Hollow". LOOK at all that open space! (OCCHS photograph - Bates collection)

everything I needed in that jumble of whatever. I remember well how one day I asked Mrs. Schoch for a feather duster. Well, she got down on her knees and pulled one out from between two cases after moving boxes and buckets of nuts, bolts and assorted stuff.

Once the Cripple Creek house had been restored, I needed a few pieces of furniture for it. Those pieces came from the West End Furniture Co. where Meadow Muffins is now located. If I remember right, there were two, maybe three, floors of furniture to choose from - new and used. There were no pretty room displays, just a hodgepodge of pieces scattered at random. I remember being surprised when I was told the building

once housed an opera house and movie theatre.

These were the days when Colorado Springs had a population of under 50,000 and the phone book had 32 pages with numbers like Main 62. By then, of course, the west side had been a part of Colorado Springs for quite a few years, but it was still a community very much its own with a closely knit population and a business district typical of a town of 4,000 or 5,000. But, the old place had become a bit tacky in places.

Were these "the good old days" we hear about? Would we want Colorado City back as it was then? As much fun as it is to look back, it is also nice to walk down West Colorado Avenue today and see the beautiful and unique district it has become.

Leland Feitz and his wife, Evelyn, are long time members of OCCHS. Leland is a well-known author of historical books about the Pikes Peak Area. The OCCHS bookstore has a complete supply of his books. Leland is a frequent contributor to the West Word and volunteers weekly in the bookstore. Thank you Leland for this article about the history of West Colorado Avenue.

Mail Bag.....

August, 2000

Dear OCCHS,

My daughter and son-in-law, Carolyn & Bill Bauder of Springfield, OR, visited the museum in June and told me how much they enjoyed it. We lived about two blocks from the museum when she was born.

I have seen your Web sight and enjoyed it very much. I just wish I could see it in person.

I enjoy the West Word.

Sincerely,  
Lola Stone, Cottage Grove, OR

Dear Lola, Thank you for your note and we are glad that your family enjoyed their visit to the museum. We hope you will be able to visit personally in the near future. Editor

Third Annual Fairview Cemetery Crawl

Sponsored by the Old Colorado City Historical Society

Saturday - Sunday, September 30 & October 1

3:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Fairview Cemetery

1000 South 26th Street

Colorado Springs, CO 80904

Come see and hear OCCHS members and volunteers portray famous "residents" of the cemetery. Hear their interesting stories of their lives in Colorado City.

\$5 adults - \$2 (children under 12)

(\$7 adults - \$3 children at the Cemetery on the days of the event)

Tickets can be obtained at the Old Colorado City History Center

1 South 24th Street

Colorado Springs, CO 80904

(719) 636-1225

Proceeds benefit the Old Colorado City History Center

# West Side Memories

## TURNING BACK THE CLOCK ON LOCAL EVENTS

### One Hundred and Twenty-five Years Ago—1875

The third of a series of hops, which have been inaugurated for the express purpose of dancing the German, took place at the Manitou Mansions on Wednesday evening, July 28th, causing much pleasure and amusement, both to the ladies and gentlemen who participated and also to the goodly number of guests who were present as spectators. The latter were by far the most numerous, filling all the available space left, after the centre of Mr. Wilkins' dining room had been reserved for the dancers. The dance consisted of a variety of figures, interspersed with caps, flags, maypoles, ribbons, handkerchiefs, aprons, etc., rendering the scene novel as well as interesting. One figure was especially amusing -- a lady having a fan in her hand was led to the centre of the room and seated -- on either side was an empty chair -- to fill which, two gentlemen were brought forward, and they, during a debate in the lady's mind, were allowed to occupy the chairs. This debate, was to whom she should give the fan, the idea of the figure being that the lady would waltz with the gentleman who did *not* receive the fan, while he who *did* receive it must, alone, follow the happy couple, and fan them during their waltz -- this occasioned much merriment. As far as we have learned everything passed off pleasantly with naught to mar the perfect harmony of the occasion. Much credit is due to the ladies who have worked so industrially in preparing the favors necessary for the dance -- and especially to the persistent efforts of a few, who have succeeded in thus establishing a pleasing variety to the ordinary routine of dancing, which is appreciated, and fully enjoyed by all. Mr. Wilkins, the genial host, may also congratulate himself upon having contributed much to the comfort and happiness of his guests, during the most successful affair, so far, of the present season. 8/4 C.S. Gazette

Mr. Dickly has ten carpenters hard at work upon Richerson's old flour mill at Colorado City, which he intends to open very shortly. 8/21 C.S. Gazette

Our cottonwoods, besides beautifying the town are becoming very valuable in furnishing shelter for numberless small birds. 8/21 C.S. Gazette

### Seventy-five Years Ago—1925

The new power plant of the Golden Cycle mill is proving very satisfactory according to reports. It is capable of producing power much in excess of the requirements of the mill. The equipment and machinery are up to date, automatic stokes being used to fire the furnaces. The spray pond has just been completed. The building of the new power plant, together with other economies about the mill, have enabled the company to reduce the treatment charges on Cripple Creek ore and has led to a revival of interest in the mining district. Freight charges on low grade ore have been reduced by the Midland Terminal railway and as a result many leases are being let in the mining camp. The treatment of the low grade ore has been attended with very satisfactory results. The average valuation and tonnage have held u well, valuation running from \$11 to \$14 per ton which the tonnage has been constantly on the increase. A good tonnage of good ore is also being uncovered. 7/23 C.S. Independent

Conditions in the Garden of the Gods are a disgrace to all decency. Though city property, gambling, drunkenness and prostitution runs wide open there. Friday night between 12 and 2 a.m., over twenty cars were parked in secluded spots in the Garden, the performances in which can well be guessed. Local prohibition agents will continue to labor toward ridding this region of the rotten conditions existing here. They work without pay. Sheriff Berkley has ordered his deputies to lock up no prisoners brought to the county jail by state prohibition agents without warrants. This move is exactly what the bootleggers, bums, pimps and prostitutes wanted. No warrant is needed to lock up parties possessing liquor. H. H. Huddleston, one of the booze party arrested Friday night, was fined one hundred dollars and costs in Justice Highsmith's court Monday on the charge of the illegal possession of liquor, but he has not paid his fine and has not been locked up. He was furnishing the music for the dizzy party. He had a violin and was doing the "Bootlegger's Reel" with variations when the dry agents raided the party. 7/30 C.S. Independent

Dale Fassett of 1710 West Vermijo, has the unique distinction of having assisted William Jennings Bryan in the printing of the first issue of the *Commoner*, which came into existence January 23, 1901. Mr. Fassett has a copy of the first issue of twenty copies. It contains Mr. Bryan's signature written in ink at the top of the page. Mr. Bryan fed the press for the first twenty copies, according to Mr. Fassett. A photograph shows Mr. Bryan at the press with Mr. Fassett standing on the floor by his side. Mr. Fassett is an old newspaper man, having been on the staff of the Omaha World-herald for several years. He was also editor of a newspaper in Mexico City, Mexico, for a number of years. he is at present employed as shift foreman in the new electric power plant of the Golden Cycle Mill. 7/30 C.S. Independent

Lightening for the second time within three weeks struck and put out of commission the fire alarm system at police headquarters in the city hall about 2 o'clock Saturday afternoon. The system was disabled for about five hours and a portion of a newly laid cable was burned away, according to Joseph L. Caldwell, city electrician. A brief heavy rain storm accompanied the electrical display of the afternoon. The system was disabled during the record storm of the season about three weeks ago by the same cause, lightening striking down through the board and jumping between switches after having apparently communicated to the system by striking a line on the street. 8/13 C.S. Independent

The Ladies Auxiliary No. 4 of the Nights of the Ku Klux Klan of Colorado, met in regular session at Twenty-fifth and Colorado Avenue Tuesday evening. There was a good attendance, and the ladies were all enthusiastic in the work. This organization was incorporated under the laws of the state of Colorado last year, and has had a phenomenal growth ever since its inception. The local has, and is, doing a splendid work. 8/13 C.S. Independent

At the present time, there is no eating house on the West Side which remains open later than 7 p.m. This is an unusual condition for this section, and many would like to see a place open until 10 p.m. All-night restaurants used to be common in Colorado City. 8/13 C.S. Independent

---

West Side Memories are compiled by: Jan Knox



## A Thank you for the Walking Tour of Old Colorado City

The following letter was received from the Historic Preservation Alliance of Colorado Springs as a result of a history briefing and walking tour of Old Colorado City. Board members, Betty Baker, Bev Disch and Dave Hughes hosted this group.

To: Gordon Gray, President  
Old Colorado City Historical Society

Dear Gordon,

The Board of Directors and the members of the Historic Preservation Alliance of Colorado Springs extend sincere thanks to Ms. Beverley Disch and Mr. Dave Hughes of the Old Colorado City Historical Society for their participation in the August meeting of the HPA. Mr. Hughes' introduction to the history of Old Colorado City was interesting and entertaining. Despite the inclement weather, Ms. Disch lead our group on an exciting and informative walking tour of the historic "main street" of Old Colorado City. The overwhelming response was one of sincere appreciation for such an informative and delightfully presented introduction to Old Colorado City history. This evening has introduced members and friends to a perspective of their city that they had not previously known.

We appreciate the commitment of the Old Colorado City Historical Society to historic preservation and Colorado Springs. We are very fortunate to have Old Colorado City Historical Society in our community of friends and look forward to our continued association with your organization through preservation and educational activities.

Sincerely,

/s/ Joyce N. Stivers, President  
Historic Preservation Alliance of Colorado Springs

## Welcome NEW Members

Please welcome the following as a new members to OCCHS.

We are pleased you have joined our Society.

Dorothy Vidmar  
2924 W. Platte Avenue  
Colorado Springs, CO 80904  
(719) 632-2055

Mary Stark-Smith  
109 N. 33rd Street  
Colorado Springs, CO 80904  
*(President's Challenge New Member  
by Patricia Jacobs)*

Dee Breitenfeld  
P.O. Box 86  
Woodland Park, CO 80866  
(719) 687-9653  
*(President's Challenge New Member  
by LaDonna Gunn & LaRue Ebersole)*

Nadine & William Gast  
3723 Wildflower Circle  
Colorado Springs, CO 80918  
*(President's Challenge New Member  
by LaRue and Patricia Ebersole)*

**Welcome to the Society**



**The Pikes Peak Chapter** of the  
Society of Decorative Painters  
invites you to join us

**24th Annual**

Friday, October 20, 2000 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Saturday, October 21, 2000 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**Old Colorado City History Center**

1 South 24th Street  
Colorado Springs, CO 80904

On South 24th and Pikes Peak Ave. just East of Bancroft Park  
FREE parking adjacent to the building!

◆ Hand painted items of every sort for home decor, gifts, or fun and fancy! ◆

**Decorative  
Painters'  
Bazaar**



**Thank You.....**

to Barbara Campbell for her gift of office supplies and equipment given in memory of her husband, Raymond.

Ray was a faithful volunteer at OCCHS for many years and his cheerful smile and witty humor are greatly missed by all of us. His friendship will continue in our memories. The office equipment included a fax machine which the Center needed. Our old one was almost beyond repair.

The Board of Directors thanks Barbara for her most generous gift.

**Interesting Stories?**

*Historical Tales?*

*Family Stories & Tales?*

**Tid-bits of History?**

Etc. Etc. Etc.

If you have any information that you think would be of interest to our readers, please send it to the Editor, West Word c/o the History Center, 1 S. 24th Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80904.