

# WEST



# WORD

## Old Colorado City Historical Society

VOLUME 18 ISSUE 11

December 2003

# Christmas Past

As Christmas time in a fledgling century approaches with all the glitz, lawn decorations of animated deer, blow-up Santa's, twinkling lights and the stores bulging with artificial Christmas trees with hundreds of attached lights I thought it would be interesting to revisit how this phenomenon came to be, how and why we feel compelled to have our Christmas tree adorned with whatever it is we feel necessary to put on this symbol of the celebration, for the Christians, to honor the birth of Christ. It hasn't always been this way. For instance:

Christmas helped the American people -- both the North and South -- escape the realities of the war between the states.

The modest table top Christmas tree disappeared and the full-sized decorated tree became a status symbol. And as always, there was competition among friends and neighbors for the largest, most elaborate tree.

The ideal tree was described in Godey's Lady's Book in 1860. The best trees were to be decorated with strings of red holly berries, candles attached with wires, small bouquets of paper flowers, strings of beads, lace bags filled with colored candies, and presents.

By the mid 1860s, neighborhood tree trimming parties had become fashionable. "Public trees" were set up in private homes and owners charged an admission fee to anyone who wanted to view the tree. This tradition is still alive with the OCCHS's B&B tour.

The war did creep into some aspects of the Christmas celebrations during the 1860s. Famed cartoonist Thomas Nast sketched Santa Claus wearing stars and stripes. Nast was among the first to portray Santa visually as a plump and jolly man in a red suit with fur trim. Nast patterned his drawings of Santa Claus after the description of Santa in Clement C. Moore's *Twas the Night Before Christmas*.

Decorations began to change as technology allowed for the manufacture of cheaply made glass ornaments and better candle holders. By the end of the decade, thin glass figurals such as birds, pine cones, and icicles made their appearance. Candles were still and Christmas trees were

still fire hazards and a bucket of water and a person to keep watch over the possible fire was fashionable.

By 1870, rigid puritanical attitudes towards Christmas had softened. On June 26, 1870, for the first time in its history, the United States Congress declared Christmas a federal holiday.

During the 1870s the ornament business experienced rapid growth. These Euro made ornaments were even sold on street corners.

Tinsel was first used on trees in the 1870s. Tinsel was made in strips from a combination of wire and foil, which was then snipped to produce crinkled strands.

In 1871 the first American-made glass ornaments were produced by William DeMuth of New York. Even though glass ornaments were readily available, the average tree was still decorated with ornaments made of paper, metal, wax, and wood decorations; and of course were still fire hazards.

Tree stands had always been a dilemma until this decade. Before the 1870s, trees had been placed in crocks, wooden boxes and crates, and as a result, many trees fell over. In 1876, the first patented metal tree stand was manufactured in the United States and Christmas trees acquired a new found stability.

By the 1880s -- the so-called "gilded age" -- Americans had embellished their Christmas celebrations with additional customs and traditions. Tree decorating, gift giving, caroling, and baking became prominent activities for what had become an American national holiday.

And the invention of the electric light added a new dimension to the American Christmas during the decade. In 1882, an inventor working for Thomas Edison devised a way of wrapping small electric lights in colored crepe paper. These colored lights were strung on a Christmas tree giving us the earliest version of contemporary Christmas lights.

Tree lights were experimental throughout the 1880s. Even President Grover Cleveland used electric lights on the White House Christmas tree.

**Old Colorado City Historical Society**  
 1 South 24th Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80904-3319

**WEST WORD**

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LETTERS, PHOTOGRAPHS, ARTIFACTS AND STORIES CAN BE DELIVERED  
 TO THE OCCHS CENTER OR MAILED TO:

WEST WORD Editor c/o OCCHS  
 1 South 24th Street  
 Colorado Springs, CO 80904-3319

SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS THE 15th OF EACH MONTH

**MISSION**

*The Old Colorado City Historical Society was formed to maintain the memory of Colorado City (1859-1917), to encourage research, preserve pictures, and keep alive the unique culture and spirit of West Side Colorado Springs through education of children and the community and through the establishment of a History Center.*

**MEMBERSHIPS**

Memberships are welcome at any time. Membership renewals are due on the anniversary date of the initial membership. Members receive the West Word newsletter, discounts, local meetings and programs.

Annual membership classifications are:

|            |      |           |       |
|------------|------|-----------|-------|
| Individual | \$20 | Business  | \$ 50 |
| Family     | \$25 | Lifetime  | \$150 |
|            |      | Corporate | \$250 |

Funds from a Lifetime membership are placed into a Perpetuity/Endowment Fund to be used only for projects which have been approved by two-thirds of the membership. Only the interest will be used for current expenses. We welcome gifts to this fund, which will be credited to the donor or as a memorial.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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|                | Betty Magnine  | 719-633-8150 |
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**MEETINGS**

OCCHS Monthly Meeting & Program is held at 11 a.m. on the second Friday of each month, **except during June, July, and August**. The History Center opens at 10 a.m. on the day of the meeting for refreshments and visitation. The program begins at 11 a.m. This meeting is free and open to the public.

**Next Monthly Meeting**  
**January 9, 2004**  
**At the History Center**



*Explore the REAL History*  
 at the  
**OLD COLORADO CITY  
 HISTORY CENTER**

1 South 24th Street  
 (the corner of Pikes Peak & 24th Streets)  
 (719) 636-1225

**FREE ADMISSION**

Old Colorado City History Center encourages you to attend its events, meetings, and projects. Please call 636-1225 for information

Summer Hours  
 (June – September)

TUES – SUN 11 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

Closed Monday

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Dresden ornaments were popular on the trees in this decade. Produced in Germany, they were handmade, double sided, embossed and die cut ornaments, usually in gold or silver metallic paper.

The flocked tree became the rage in 1883. The method for "frosting a tree was as follows: "Sprinkle the tree all over with water, shake off the excess water, and then dredge the tree with flour. If there remains too much water on the branches, the flour will cake."

In previous decades, many American families had either a Christmas tree or Christmas stockings, but not both. By the 1880s, both customs were eagerly embraced. The custom of hanging a stocking can be traced to a Saint Nicholas legend. It was said that in order to help an impoverished nobleman provide dowries for his daughters, the generous Saint Nicholas threw gold coins down the chimney. The coins magically landed in stockings hung by the fire to dry; Hence, hanging of a stocking over the fireplace.

The 1890s were a decade full of excess. Ornaments on Christmas trees were oversized, lavish, and bright; gaudy was definitely in.

In 1890 F.W. Woolworth imported \$25 worth of glass ornaments and sold them for five and ten cents at his store in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The next year he placed a much larger order and again sold out in a short period of time. Store records indicate that over the next years Woolworth sold over 25 million dollars worth of these ornaments, all for nickels and dimes!

Other types of ornaments also were popular. Mail order companies produced unbreakable cardboard ornaments and sold them for 36 cents a dozen. This was very important to the Christmas business since it was difficult to order glass ornaments through the mail because of breakage.

Although electricity was now available in many homes, Christmas trees were mostly still lit with candles. Electrically lit trees had to be wired by hand. Crude and bare wire connections were apt to short out when coming in contact with the leaded icicles or roped tinsel, producing a fire. Candle light covers in the shapes of Father Christmas, Buster Brown and other popular period characters were available in this time period.

The Christmas tree was something of a national holiday symbol by the turn of the century. By 1900, one in five families had a decorated Christmas tree in their home. Affluent Americans still enjoyed lavishly, over-decorated Victorian trees, but even the American workingman and his family celebrated around a tastefully decorated evergreen.

President Theodore Roosevelt, a closet conservationist, led a battle against cutting down live trees for Christmas. Consequently thousands of farmers planted evergreens as a cash crop. By 1909, nearly 4 million trees were harvested for Christmas.

Beginning in 1900 there was a movement away from the excesses of Victorian decorations, the Victorian era pretty much ended in 1901 along with the Queen. Magazines recommended against overloading trees with ornaments and suggested using only glittering cotton, angel hair, tinsel, pine cones, and icicles. This was called the "White Tree," and was popular until World War I.

In 1909, Pasadena, California decorated an outdoor tree with lights, the beginning of a new tradition. Community trees served the entire community and was usually set up in a town hall or schoolhouse. Centered around this tree would be the Christmas entertainment program to be enjoyed by the community.

By the turn of the century, many of today's Christmas customs and traditions were firmly in place. In the South, the holiday began at midnight with firecrackers, sky-rockets, and noisemakers.

In New Hampshire community trees often served the whole town. Parents decorated the trees with gifts for their children.

By 1900, one in five families had a decorated Christmas tree in their home.

1910 saw the beginning of a decade of reflection. Many Americans came to believe that new efforts were needed to revive the nation's spirits. They decorated Christmas trees in public places to foster community spirit and family celebrations. On New Year's Eve, 1912, over 80,000 people gathered in Madison Square around the Christmas tree to sing out the old year and sing in the new.

Beginning in 1914 and for the next five years, the United States was cut off from Germany, the source of so many Christmas tree decorations, but by 1918 America was producing crude imitations. Many quiet, somber, Christmas celebrations were held during the war years. Americans reflected upon the "true" meaning of the Christmas celebration with so many loved ones away at war.

Although feather trees were popular in Europe as early as the middle 1800s, they did not gain in popularity in America until the early 1900s. The 1913 Sears, Roebuck and Company Catalog advertised the sale of the first artificial trees. They came in four different sizes, ranging from 17 inches to 55 inches and all of them came with berries and candle holders at the tips and a round white base. Turkey and goose feathers were used for the branches, hence the name feather tree.

Candles dripping wax onto the floor under the Christmas tree led to the invention and production of the Christmas tree carpet, and by 1913 elaborately painted Christmas tree carpets were available commercially.

Many Americans still distrusted the safety of electric lights in the early 1900s and candles were used extensively to decorate trees. In 1917 the first drip less candle was made.

## THE MUSEUM BOOKSTORE & GIFT SHOP

...a "best kept secret"?

This wonderful collection of books and historical information should not be a "best kept secret"! With the Christmas season starting, what better place to do some of your holiday shopping...and help support the History Center!

Come in and browse through old and new books. Topics include Colorado people, local history, Cripple Creek and mining, railroads, native American history, Colorado travel and outdoors, children's books, and cookbooks. You will also find T-shirts, videos, vintage linens, new notecards, Christmas ornaments, posters, "penny" candy for Xmas stockings, and a variety of items "for sale."

Remember to take advantage of your membership discount on purchases.

And tell others to stop in and shop!

Some of our frequently sold items are:

David Hughes, "Historic Old Colorado City" \$2

Cathleen Norman, "In & Around Old Colorado City: a walking tour" \$9.95

Leland Feitz, various topics on local and Cripple Creek history

Dorothy Aldridge, "Historic Colorado City" \$6.95

### CHEWY GINGER COOKIES

*This recipe is in memory of Kay Arnold and her faithful hours volunteering at the History Center bookstore. Kay was one of the early OCCHS members and traveled to many schools and service clubs to speak about our museum and impersonate "Aunt KayA", her story of an early settler. She also sat in her rocking chair while portraying a character at a gravesite during a Cemetery Crawl. Kay frequently brought these cookies to meetings as well as for bake ales. She said "these were a favorite cookie of Eli Whitney". But, we consider Kay as the source of these old-fashioned tasty cookies! Remember, cookies quickly dry out and "crisp" at our altitude so store them in an airtight container.*

Cream together 1 cup butter (or shortening) and 1 cup sugar.

Beat in  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup molasses,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup sour milk (or buttermilk), 1 egg, 1 tsp. cinnamon, 1 tsp. ginger, 1 tsp. salt.

Sift together and add to above ingredients: 4 cups all-purpose flour, 1 Tbsp. cocoa (optional), 1 tsp. baking soda. Mix well.

Roll dough into balls. Place 2 inches apart on ungreased baking sheets. Flatten with the bottom of a glass dipped in sugar.

Bake in a 375 oven no more than 8 to 8  $\frac{1}{2}$  minutes.

## HOLIDAY BED & BREAKFAST TOUR TO BENEFIT OLD COLORADO CITY HISTORY CENTER December 7th and 14th

In conjunction with *National Bed & Breakfast Open House*, Pikes Peak area Bed & Breakfast (B&B) Inns will participate in the *Ninth Annual Victorian Bed & Breakfast Holiday Tour* on two different dates: *Sunday, December 7th and Sunday, December 14, from 2-6 p.m.* The tour, sponsored by the *Old Colorado City Historical Society*, will benefit that non-profit organization and its history center with all proceeds donated to the society. This year's tour includes beautiful and historic homes lovingly converted to bed and breakfast inns and the Old Colorado City History Center museum. The participating properties are located in: Old Colorado City historic area, downtown Colorado Springs, historic Manitou Springs and Cascade.

For more information:

Website: [www.historytour.info](http://www.historytour.info)

Email: [inns@historytour.info](mailto:inns@historytour.info)

Call 471-3980 or 473-8684

*COST: Tickets \$10 per person (Advance-purchased before December 1st) \$12 (At the Door) \*Limited Quantities - Prices are for All Ages Purchase Tickets in Advance: OCCHS, 719-636-1225, 1 S. 24th Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80904*

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### FUTURE O.C.C.H.S. PROGRAMS

#### NO DECEMBER MEETING: BE SURE TO TAKE A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER TO THE ANNUAL BED & BREAKFAST TOUR

**January 9, 2004:** Cynthia Becker, author of a new book "Chipeta, Queen of the Utes" will talk about Chipeta. Mrs. Becker's book will be available for sale and she will sign them.

**February 13, 2004:** To Be Announced

**March 12, 2004:** Kathleen Norman will give a talk about historic Lake City, CO. Her book on Lake City is finished but not published at this time. Mrs. Norman is the author of our Old Colorado City Walking Tour book.

**April 9, 2004:** To Be Announced

The 1920s are remembered as the "Jazz Age." It was a decade of gangsters, big-time sports and religious revival. They were years when most Americans acquired their first radios and automobiles, and achieved the highest standard of living in the nation's history.

President Calvin Coolidge was the first President to have a National Christmas tree. This 60-foot balsam fir was lit in an gala ceremony in 1923.

Milwaukee, Wisconsin joined in this tradition in a big way. In 1926, the Milwaukee Telephone Company provided a 75-foot telephone pole studded with sockets for trees. Sunk into a cement hole the sockets at intervals in the pole were placed four hundred average sized trees. Each tree was arranged so that it became a branch on this community tree; I'll bet it was impressive.

Even Popular Mechanics got into the act!(as a kid I loved PM) The magazine encouraged local do-it-yourselfers to lightly spray their trees with varnish, and after the branches were sufficiently sprayed, they were to sprinkle them with cornstarch. If this process was repeated several times, the magazine noted, homeowners would have a beautiful flocked Christmas tree -- and a terrific fire hazard! To say nothing about sticky hands.

Cotton ornaments were at the peak of their popularity in the 1920s. These ornaments were much less costly and lasted longer because they were unbreakable. By the late 1920s, paper ornaments had decreased in popularity because of the spectacular glass ornaments imported from Germany.

The 1930s are remembered as hard times -- the era of the Great Depression. The one day of each year that was an exception to this generalization was Christmas day. In fact, Christmas was that one day each year during the 1930s when Americans tried to put these hard times behind them.

In 1934, *Fortune* magazine, predicted that Americans would spend about \$25 million on Christmas tree ornaments of all types -- including lights, tinsel, snow, and ornaments.

Christmas tree safety became a big issue in the 1930s and the use of candles on trees and in windows was discouraged as was the use of flammable paper ornaments.

Glass ornaments dominated Christmas trees in this time period. But wire-wrapped ornaments were still popular in the 1930s, and magazines continued to offer suggestions for tree decorations, and of course still do to this day. In 1932, *House Beautiful* suggested painting trees the same color as the scheme of the room where the tree was to stand!

The popularity of the feather trees declined in the 1930s. In order to try and revive the feather tree, they were sold in a variety of colors, including pink, blue, purple, and orange.

In 1936 Montgomery Ward offered an elaborate 16 piece village set which consisted of nine buildings and seven figures. These continue to be as popular today as they were in the 1930s. The village scenes from Japan had trees made from brushes; these trees resembled the brushes used to clean out bottles, so they were called "bottle brush trees." In 1937, "The Shiny Brite Company," was created in America by Max Eckardt who feared his supplies of ornaments would be cut off by the war. When his fears materialized with the British blockade in 1939, Max contacted the Corning Glass Company. Using the machine that made light bulbs, the Corning Company agreed to produce ornaments.

Just before the war, when the European ornaments were no longer available, the Japanese market enjoyed a boom in business. It was responsible for 93% of all ornaments shipped into America. This ended, of course, when Pearl Harbor was bombed.

The 1940s was a decade of war and recovery. Hundreds of thousands of young men and women were in the service, fighting in Europe or in the Pacific. Not surprisingly, the loneliness and the longing for their family members were greatest at Christmas time. "I'll Be Home for Christmas" was the title of a song popularized by Bing Crosby in 1942.

During the war there was a shortage of materials needed to manufacture ornaments and even a shortage of men to dress up as Santas - women were substituted as Santa in Saks Fifth Avenue in New York City!

But the traditions of Christmas continued for the benefit of children and those people who needed something positive to cling to in a time of National crisis.

Visca artificial trees appeared in the stores and were decorated with commercially made American manufactured ornaments that now came in boxed sets. An average American household would spend about \$10 decorating their first Christmas tree in the 1940s, and then about \$3 every year thereafter on the replacement of broken ornaments. In 1941 you could buy a 5 foot Christmas tree for 75 cents.

New ways of flocking a tree appeared in the 40s. It was now believed the best way to flock a tree was to mix a box of Lux soap with two cups of water and brush it on the tree. Allow this to dry and your tree would look as though it was lightly frosted with new fallen snow.

The Americans hostility towards Germany was manifested in the boycott of Christmas decorations, they were tossed into the trash. The first American glass ornaments were of clear glass and not silvered inside, due to war restrictions. The tinsel inside the ornaments was to give it a sparkly effect. By 1942, even the metal caps for the ornaments had disappeared because metal could not be wasted on something as frivolous as a Christmas ornament. Paper and cardboard tops were employed

The 1950s was a decade when America enjoyed the world's highest standard of living, and at the same time lived in fear

of nuclear annihilation. We were technically at peace, but we were deeply involved in a "police action" in Korea.

President Truman said a prayer in 1951 when he lit the National Christmas Tree. By 1954, the National Christmas Tree Ceremony had become the "Christmas Pageant of Peace," and included a life size nativity scene as well as eight reindeer from Alaska! In addition to the national tree, there were smaller lighted trees bearing the names of the states and foreign countries that had donated them.

It was during this decade that big department stores commissioned elaborate Christmas window displays. Macy's spent \$75,000 each year creating a lavish window display, and of course each had their own santa.

Glass ornaments from Germany became available again in the 1950s. But they were not as popular as before. Plastic decorations were the rage; people loved the fact that these ornaments were practically indestructible. By the end of the decade, a new American fad was emerging: decorating Styrofoam balls with sequins, rhinestones, ribbons, and miniature beads. They even came in kit form.

Live trees were again plentiful in the fifties and in 1954 alone, over 31 million hit the market. Artificial trees were popular for people with a limited amount of space. These came in green and white, and the branches, supposedly, would fold flat for storage. By 1959 American manufacturers produced a much more realistic artificial tree with removable branches.

Aerosol-dispensed snow came along in 1951. People were infatuated with flocked trees, and a lot of drive-ways ended up flocked. "Sensational Sno-Flock" was a sno-flock gun which fit onto your vacuum cleaner. This product was advertised to last 30 days without falling off and was fire retardant. You could color your tree white, pink, or blue for \$4.49. It was recommended that you flock your tree before decorating, but not everybody followed these directions which lead directly to a lot of snow covered ornaments, and clogged vacuum cleaners.

By the mid 50s we saw "aluminum" tree, the ultimate in artificial trees. These were created in response to the foil Christmas tree decorations that were so popular in the 1940s. Floodlights, or revolving color wheels, were recommended to light these trees because of the danger of putting electric lights on an aluminum tree. Silver trees were the rage, but some people thought it was sacrilegious to have a tree so contrary to what was once tradition.

"The times they are a'changin'," sang Bob Dylan in the 1960s, and so they were -- even at Christmas time. In the 1960s, the American people wanted everything

to be new and they purchased entire collections of ornaments and lights all at one time. This was different than in the past when collections were built upon year after year. I'm sure prompted by advertisers greed *Good Housekeeping* suggested that families should pick new themes each year, and then purchase new ornaments to carry out these themes.

Like the decades that proceeded the 60's -- everyone wanted the best tree possible. The new fad of the decade (aluminum was out) was to flock your tree and decorate it in a monochromatic color scheme, then floodlight the tree with a blue or clear spotlight instead of using lights.

In 1960, *Better Homes and Gardens* suggested a formula for the number of lights needed for your tree. Take the height of the tree (in feet) times the width of the tree at its widest part, most often the base I presume, times three. For example a 6 foot tree that is 4 feet wide would need 72 lights.

Outside decorations became very popular in the 1960s. Americans purchased huge sets of lighted, plastic figures, some as tall as 3 feet. Many a yard would have a nativity scene on the lawn, and Santa and his sleigh and reindeer on the roof. In more than a few neighborhoods, families would vie with each other to set up the most elaborate outdoor Christmas displays. It still happens here on the west side.

If the 1960s was a decade of change and revolution, the 1970s were years of nostalgia. This trend was most evident at Christmas time. Magazines promoted Christmas as a time to spend at home with family members preparing for the holiday season. Many patterns for recreating ornaments like those used almost a century ago appeared in magazines. Like they say everything old is new again.

Oil embargoes at both the beginning and the end of the decade made Americans more energy conscious. The desire to save energy extended even to Christmas. There was a major reduction in the sale of Christmas lights, for example, even though miniature lights used less electricity than ordinary light bulbs. Some Americans went so far as to turn off all other lights in their homes when they plugged in their Christmas tree lights.

In response to the dimly lit Christmas trees, new types of ornaments were created. One was called "Magi-Glo," red, white, blue, and green laminated plastic ornaments that glowed in the dark to offset the lack of lights on the trees. Plastic ornaments continued in popularity during the seventies.

The "country" look dominated many Christmas trees in the 1970s. Gingham bows, dried flowers, fabric dolls, corn-husk girls, wooden ornaments, and glazed sets of bread dough ornaments decorated the trees. The natural look was in style and the seventies saw the revival of the home-crafted decorations.

Limited edition ornament became popular in the 1970s and the fad continues today. In 1973, for example, the Hallmark Corporation introduced "Keepsake Ornaments," and they were an immediate hit with consumers. By 1979, there were commemorative ornaments for "Teacher," "Special Friend," and

## Treasurer's Report

October was a month of many Costs, but little Revenue. Book sales were only \$341, only 2 Family Memberships were received, and \$41 was donated in the cash box.

The usual costs for Utilities, Security, Insurance and the Copier Lease were there, but so was a \$715 bill for preparation and submission of the 2002 Federal and State Income Tax forms. Annual deposits for our Bulk Mailing Permit, and dues to the Pikes Peak Attractions Association consumed another \$300. And it cost \$468 in Furnace maintenance.

We also reconciled the cash we have received through the summer and fall and carried in the General Fund for Lifetime Memberships (\$450) and Memorials (\$160) since the last reconciliation in April. The \$610 is being deposited into the Endowment Fund account.

At the same time, we, at last were able properly to use the \$549 the Militia organization left us years ago in the Endowment - with the stipulation it should be used for 'military related' displays. Liz Geiss made the outstanding recommendation that we display a set of large flags in the main room in the center. We had at least one special flag - created by the Territorial Militia members in the 1970s when they were an active commemoration unit, representing the Colorado military volunteers which won the decisive 'Little Gettysburg of the West' battle with Confederates at La Glorieta Pass in 1862 while Colorado City was still the Territorial Capital. It was a large hand made 4 by 6 foot flag. There was a second flag, made then, but which did not represent anything particular, with just some icon extracts from Colorado's great seal, and a small red and white Guidon with numbers which did not correlate with any known Civil War Colorado unit. They also were left to the society by the Militia when it disbanded in 1992.

After some vigorous debate and research, the Board decided to buy three 4 by 6 flags, one an 1859-1861 American Flag with the 33 Stars on the flag that flew while Colorado City was the Capital, one a current Colorado State Flag, and one - a new special flag, representing Colorado Territory while Colorado City was the Capital. The flag displays the original Great Seal of Colorado "Territory" of 1861, which was designed by the first Governor, Gilpin, and which was changed 15 years later, to become the Great Seal of Colorado "State," with the year 1876 on it. These four flags which are large and impressive will fly above the crowd on a pair of wooden plates high above the floor on the east end of the main History Center hall. Charlie Patterson Construction has volunteered to do the woodwork necessary so the flags will be up before the B&B Tours starting on December 7th. Smaller explanatory signs will accompany the four flags. Not overlooked is the fact that the large flags will help dampen down the echo noise we get in the hall making presentations harder to hear.

So these are a permanent acquisition of symbols representing the historical period when Colorado City was the Capital of the new Territory and the Civil War influenced the course of Colorado history, and of the original Colorado City.

Together with the new hardware required - brass fitted 7 foot matched, stained wooden poles, gleaming brass arrowhead tips, and adjustable (horizontal to vertical) anchor bases - the total cost was \$1,369.77 for this new impressive permanent addition to our Museum's holdings. The \$549 from the Militia grant was applied to the cost, and the balance came from the earned Interest of the Endowment fund, which the Board may expend. The board decided this was a new 'acquisition' for the Museum, so expending the earned interest was appropriate, as well as the obligated \$549 Militia grant.

The total Endowment fund stood at \$66,056 on October 31st. With the transfer of \$610 to the Endowment fund from the General fund for the accumulated lifetime membership and memorial funds accumulating since May, the withdrawal of the \$549 in the Endowment fund for the dedicated Militia gift, and the \$820.77 balance from the accumulated Endowment interest, the Endowment fund will stand at \$64, 686.73 of which \$62,310 is now untouchable without a vote of the membership. It still earns interest at the low rates caused by the national recession. \$208 will be added to the fund by December 31st. By the end of the year after the 2004 Budget is decided

the Board can decide what portion of the estimated \$2,496 of earned interest remaining at year's end to make part of the permanent endowment and what to maintain as an operating reserve of the projected year. We still have to be cautious, as our income is still far below that of the 2000-2002 years. For example it is not likely that the Book Store will be able to transfer more than \$500 of its surplus to the General Fund at the end of 2003. In past years it ran as high as \$3,000.

The Cabin Restoration project, with the grants from both the State and City managed by your Society as a separate fund is pretty much on track. The State is taking its sweet time - up to 6 weeks - to pay when it is invoiced - very slow - but the contractors are used to working with governments that are slow to pay. And we have been through this before. Owen Knox and Rebecca Palmedo, who is doing the bookkeeping on this project are on top of it all. As we agreed to in advance, we face, if the last bills do not come in until January 15th or so, expending up to \$6,900 (10% of the State grant amount) of our Society funds to pay the last bills, as required by the State, and thus being tied up until reimbursement from the state which may take until May, 2004. The City has been timely with its payments, taking less than a week from invoice.

The engraved historical Log slices made into commemorative, numbered, pieces, by Gordon Gray, from the original logs from the 1859 Cabin which had to be replaced during the repairs, are beginning to sell. \$205 has been collected so far for 8 pieces of the 80 we have on hand. Gordon is numbering them all and lacquering them. Others have been ordered. The total cost for the 80 made so far has been \$640 to Performance Awards for the engraving. When all are sold, on this 'first edition' from original logs from the cabin we will realize \$1,360 over costs. (More logs had to be replaced more recently. We are storing them for future use). Get your one of a kind piece of History before they are all gone! At \$25 each (plus \$5.00 if shipped) they would make very special Christmas gifts!

In summary as of October 31st, the Society, including the Bookstore has \$16,962 in cash available. Expecting decent Christmas sales of books and items (from you the members) together with the B&B Tours, we should end the year with at least \$17,000 in operating funds in the bank. We still will be obligated to expend up to \$6,900 for the cabin final bills in early 2004, until reimbursed by the state. We will have at least \$10,000 to operate on until the reimbursement comes through from the State.

That projected \$17,000 together with our normal fund raising activities and memberships will be enough to carry us through 2004 without financial problems.

Dave Hughes  
Treasurer, Nov 15th, 2003



"Baby's First Christmas." Today, collectors eagerly await Hallmark's Christmas ornament catalog that comes out each summer.

During the 1980s, Americans became fascinated with collecting all manner of objects --sports cards, stamps, autographs, dolls, just about anything that was portable. Not surprisingly, ornaments became the number one Christmas collectible.

The Hallmark Corporation of Kansas City recognized this trend early on and began to manufacture special Christmas ornaments in limited editions. Hallmark continues to design and manufacture new and creative collectible ornaments every year.

In the 80's the emphasis on holiday decorating was nostalgic, family-centered Christmas ornaments. Ornaments were more than just decorative -- they also brought seasonal memories. Theme trees were the trend of the 80s Victorian, southwestern, or nautical designs were all popular.

The trend in previous decades had been to sell ornaments by the box. This would no longer work since many Americans already had complete sets of decorations. Ornaments were again sold individually and they were more expensive than ever. Electronic gadgets were the latest fad and Americans rushed out to buy the latest invention, a walking Santa ringing a bell.

Department stores created "Trim-a-Home" departments, catering to people who were spending more than ever to lavishly decorate their homes and trees. Stores began to set up their displays by the middle of October to cash in on Christmas sales. This trend created what is known as the "golden age" for Christmas retailers.

In the 90's, First Lady Hillary Clinton made popular the maxim: "it takes a village to raise a child." It seemed that Americans took this advice to heart, particularly in the celebration of Christmas.

Christmas in the 1990s is both a family and a community celebration. Homes are decorated inside and out for the holiday season.

Entire neighborhoods were decorated with magnificent Christmas lights and displays, and Americans have developed a new Christmas tradition -- slow drives through neighborhoods to marvel at the displays. Tree festivals and exhibits abound as people spend their spare hours looking at elaborately decorated Christmas trees.

Many families purchase an ornament for their child or grandchild every year, so when they are grown; they have their own collection of special ornaments.

The retail Christmas season in the 1990s began well before the holiday -- even before the Halloween merchandise was gone. People decorate their houses earlier than ever and leave the decorations up longer. No shopping day compares with the day after Christmas, when

every one rushes out to the stores before sun-up to get a bargain price on new ornaments for the next year.

The celebration of Christmas has not changed as friends and family still gather together for baking, caroling, and opening presents around a Christmas tree adorned with decorations, some old, some new, but all with special meaning to those who placed them there.

### **2000 and beyond**

I have lived through more than six decades of the changing Christmas. I remember going down to Hubbard's basement and seeing Santa and all the toys. I remember the Santa in the little house in the lobby of the Ute Theater and the thrill of going shopping at Giddings, Penny's, Woolworth and Barthels nostalgically. I remember my father fighting with an eight foot high tree that we had harvested on my grandparent's ranch. All are fond memories.

I hope my children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren will have as fond memories of this most special time of the year. I suspect they will but their memories will be different, they will remember going to Toys R Us, the mall and hopefully visiting Santa in the Cabin in the park, but I feel most certain we will continue to celebrate Christmas as we have in the past only it will change as change is inevitable.

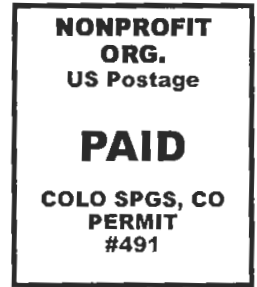
It will be interesting to see what new innovations will appear for tree ornaments, for outside decorations and what will adorn the floor beneath the trees. But the one thing I feel certain about is that we will always remember what the true meaning of Christmas is that it is a celebration of faith, good will toward our fellow man and a time of renewal of our spirit.

This article was researched using the following sites:  
The Herbert Hoover Presidential Library-Museum  
The National Archives and Records Administration.  
The Oshkosh Public Museum  
Texas Historical Library  
Colorado Historical Society  
Collectables and historic Christmas sites  
And of course my own memories

Merv Casey



**OLD COLORADO CITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
ONE SOUTH TWENTY-FOURTH STREET  
COLORADO SPRINGS, CO 80904-3319



### President's Report

This fall several board members and I went to the annual meeting of the Colorado Historical Society to receive an Honorable Mention for the Josephine H. Miles Award for the Preservation and Indexing Project of the archives for the Old Colorado City History Center. Dr. Michael I. Olsen nominated us for this award. A welcome check for \$300 went along with this award.

I also thanked the Society for the grant we received to restore Dr. Gavin's cabin in Bancroft Park. The restoration is under the supervision of Own Know and our contractor is Patterson Construction. This restoration is coming along well and should be finished by the end of this month.

We had a meeting with the Park and Rec people and we'll have craft fairs in Thorndale Park Saturdays in July and August. We will still have Founder's Day on a weekend in August as usual. Jan Knox does a wonderful job running and planning these fairs.

The memorial logs are a fundraiser for our Society. They would make a nice Christmas present. Also do visit our bookstore for gifts on your Christmas list. Our membership is down a little so bring your friends to see our exhibits and urge them to join us. A membership would make a thoughtful Christmas present.

Lastly our Ninth Annual Victorian Bed and Breakfast Tour will be held on two Sundays, December 7<sup>th</sup> and December 14<sup>th</sup>. Our volunteers will be asked to furnish their delicious cookies for the open house for the December 14<sup>th</sup> tour.

Our members always come through for this event and we are most grateful for their help. Truly our museum depends on all our many volunteers who keep us going.

Bev Disch  
OCCHS President