



## OLD COLORADO CITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME 20 ISSUE 1

January 2005

# OUR DIGITAL FUTURE

### A DIGITAL FUTURE FOR REMEMBERING THE PAST

Dave Hughes

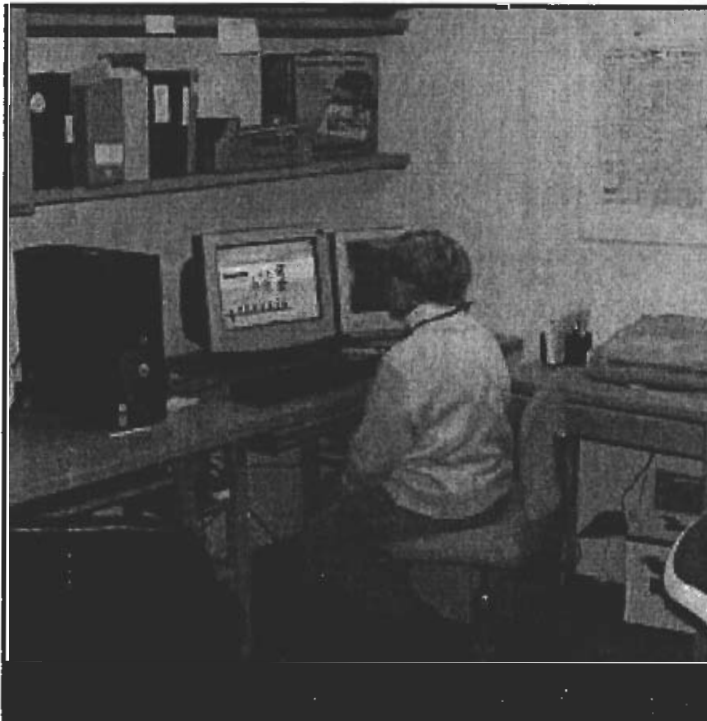
It was 10 years ago when I wandered into our newly purchased, but still barren, History Center. Lucille Cunningham, President, was putting everything together to turn a series of grants – State Historical Funds, El Pomar, Gates Foundation, Boettcher Foundation – into transforming the aging 1888 original Baptist Church building which we had been able to buy with Luther McKnight’s legacy to us, into an Historically Restored – on the outside, and Modernly Renovated – on the inside, History Center.

Lucille showed me the blueprints for the building and suddenly I noticed, in the upper right hand corner a section called ‘Computer Room.’ Surprised, I asked “What’s that, Lucille?” And she answered “We don’t know exactly Dave, but we know YOU will do something with it!”

That was the beginning of Old Colorado City Historical Society’s early but progressive use of personal computer technology from when few museums, and no small ones, were adapting to computers other than for office use. Those efforts were capped by our popular Web Site in 1997 that has been up and operating for 8 years now, virtually unchanged for the past 4 years as we have had nobody to work on it.

### Genesis of the Web Site

Lucille was right. I knew going back to my creating a locally, then nationally, famous one-line computer Bulletin Board called ‘Roger’s Bar’ in 1980 just as our Society’s founders were meeting regularly, that one way to spread the wonderful history of Old Town across the country was to use communicating small computers. And that those same low cost computers could be used for Society general administration, financial management, producing documents and flyers, storing in data base form our accumulating history,



Computer room

Continued page 3

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

**WEST WORD**

PUBLISHED EVERY MONTH BY  
 THE OLD COLORADO CITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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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  
 Or Merv Casey—thequill@adelphia.net

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**

President	Beverley Disch	719-634-5023
Vice President	LaRue Ebersole	719-685-3265
Secretary	Joanne Karlson	719-475-2574
Treasurer	David Hughes	719-636-2040
	Kay Atteberry	719-599-3187
	Arlene Casey	719-634-2356
	Bob Heinich	719-448-9001
	Tom Hendrix	719-633-7392

**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**  
**February 14, 2005**  
**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

Winter Hours  
 (June – September)

TUES – SUN 11 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

Closed Monday

*Visit our web site for even more history!*

<http://history.oldcolo.com>

stories documents  
 manuscript photographs  
 interviews biographies  
 Book & Gift Shop online

e-mail us at: [history@oldcolo.com](mailto:history@oldcolo.com)

and help volunteers search, online, for even more history about the original Colorado City and early El Paso County.

All these things have been done with the four computers, three of them quite old, and one fairly new in our Computer Room, and by members who increasingly own their own computers at home, and can communicate over the Internet.

But always there is the issue of 'Who is

combination of volunteers and part time staff, paid for in part by a grant from the National Science Foundation, and another by El Pomar.

So what has national science got to do with local history? Funny story. As a technologist I already had been awarded two substantial grants though my small company from the NSF for my pioneering work in extending advanced forms of wireless to rural schools and into remote Mongolia. I got a call from a Project Officer of the NSF in Washington saying

"Dave, we have a problem. We have a small \$20,000 grant for schools, libraries, and museums but no museums have applied! Can you help us?" They did not know I was involved with this Society, or was an historian of Old Colorado City but they knew I was always pushing the technological envelope with computers and advanced, forms of wireless to connect up the most remote people on this planet.

So with a sigh I said yes, that the information science argument can be made that small libraries have a

problem 'distributing' their local history.

People have to go to them, they cannot reach remote people easily. A Web site is a perfect way to offer local history to the rest of the world. BUT a web site has to be connected by a then costly broadband wired connections. A T-1 digital line from US West in 1997 would cost up to \$1,200 a month. They can't afford it. But using the new advanced, unlicensed wireless technologies, originally invented by Hedy Lamarr for military use, only recently could be legally used by the general public. For the price of a pair of advanced radios we can 'pioneer' connecting up a Web Server in the History Center, through the trees and buildings to one of my Old Colorado City Communications Company server, which high speed



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**Watch for the 1861 Civil War History of Colorado City and the Battle of La Glorieta Pass!!**

**Old COLORADO CITY Historical Society**

One South 24th Street  
Colorado Springs, CO  
(719) 636-1225

Come visit our History Center in the heart of Old Colorado City!

Old Town History People Stories Bookstore OCCHS Tech Town

> Important technical note for users of this Web Site <

### OCCHS INTERNET SITE

going to do

the work?' While computers are wonderful tools, somebody has to put information into them, and keep them up to date, while yet others have to have the technical skills to configure, maintain and update or upgrade them. So progress was slow in the Computer Room between 1995 and 1997, and again between 1998 and now.

#### National Science and History?

Then in late 1996 we had an unexpected windfall, which led to a great two years in which our nationally recognized Web site was launched by a

## OWN and OCCHS

The Organization of Westside Neighbors and the Old Colorado City Historical Society have been working together on several projects of mutual interest. OWN was formed about the same time – 1976 - the City of Colorado Springs started supporting the renovation and rehabilitation of the 92 Victorian buildings in the Commercial District and a corresponding effort to upgrade the 6,000 home neighborhood on the 'Westside' between downtown Colorado Springs and Manitou.

The City has supported OWN with enough funds to print and mail a periodic newsletter to every single mailbox of the 8,000 addresses on the Westside. That is so that OWN can canvas the opinions of Westsiders on many public issues, better representing them to the City, and in turn can inform westsiders about events, hearings, issues not covered by media or the press.

A small event was the fund raising Telling of Ghost Stories by OWN's actors, at Halloween inside our Center.

Active members of OWN are members of our Historical Society and some have served on their respective Boards.

One potentially important – to OCCHS – project is the effort by OWN to assemble the documentation needed to create an Historic Overlay Zone over the 4,000 residences on the Westside to help preserve the character of westside historic homes, however humble, through a combination of architectural advisory services, and state tax credits for homeowners who upgrade their properties using the architectural guidelines.

One thing required is digital photographs of the front of every one of the 4,000 homes, from which architectural guidelines can be created, and the case made about just how historic the residential parts of the Westside are today. Those photos have to be submitted with OWN's application to the City's Historic Preservation Board. OWN has a bid from a qualified photographer for \$4,000 to make the digital photos. So long as the Historical Society is given ultimate ownership of the 4,000 pictures, to add to its permanent col-

lection after they are no longer needed for the application phase, the OCCHS Board has agreed to put up \$2,000 to match what OWN has to put up.

It's a very good deal. We get a pictorial snapshot in 2005 of all Westside Colorado City residences as they are today, yet reflecting how they have looked over the past 100 or more years. OWN gets the use of the pictures they need to make the Historic Preservation application which may or may not be approved. We could not afford to do that ourselves. And when completed we will have a unique and extensive addition to our online Digital data base and web site as well as archives. Historians 100 years from now will thank us.

OWN is trying to raise their part of the funds now.

### President's Report

Our tenth annual Bed and Breakfast Christmas tour was one of our best, it's a major fund raiser for us. The weather was wonderfully warm and balmy, and the eleven participating inns were beautifully decorated for the holiday season. Ten of our members were hosts at the inns that requested our help. Six of the inns contributed colorful cookies to our Christmas table at our decorated History Center for the day. Of course, our own members contributed many of the goodies, helped serve the food, and took tickets for the drawing for prizes that was held at the end of the day, thank you all.

We had so many good remarks from people who came by and said they were looking forward to the tour next year. Red Craigs Inn was looking forward to participating in our next annual B&B Christmas tour.

Looking back at the past year, we have had a very successful one. We are in good shape financially. A very welcome early Christmas present came with our unexpected, unrestricted grant of \$1,000 from the Vanguard Charitable Foundation. We can now look forward to another year with good expectations. A Happy, Prosperous New Year to you all.

Bev Disch, President

## AT THE HISTORY CENTER

Friday, January 14

10 a.m. Social Hour & Museum Visitation

11 a.m. General Meeting & Program

Don Ellis, OCCHS member, will present

"History of the 'Short Line' Railroad".

secure digital 'connection' will cost nothing. I will do the work pro-bono, and can let the Society just 'ride' on top of my own company connection to the world Internet. And I will 'report' to the world our 'findings' which all NSF Researchers have to do.

So the Society was awarded a 2 year \$20,000 NSF grant which ALSO paid a stipend to an 'undergraduate' for real world NSF work. I recruited Ladonna Gunn just finishing up her degree work at UCCS, who would learn the technology but already was an outstanding student in Western History.

With the donation of an NT Computer from my company, and later a \$10,000 grant from El Pomar, we were able to form a volunteer 'Technology Committee,' design the web site, connect it up wirelessly to the Templeton building half a mile away, and we were off and running. At Zero monthly cost for connectivity for the Society. A model for other small museums.

That wireless link still lives.

Over the next two years Ladonna populated the web site with our Old Town history, writing many short pieces and introductions. Paul Idleman, Mid Kolstad, Clark Curtis, made additions to it, as did others who scanned in hundreds of our photographs. We were able to take the 'oral history' taped by myself and daughter Rebecca, 20 years before and port it into the Web Site where you can 'hear' the tales of many now dead pioneers from the Westside, like Luther McKnight or Louis Unser. A graphic professional Dave Wolverton was able to put a 3 dimensional photographic rendition of a Jacob Schmidt Beer Mug in our collection online, which you can rotate in 'virtual space' with your cursor, looking at it like you would handle the piece itself. Very advanced for the time. Showing our potential.

For at least one year while we had some paid staff from the grants, the system was used to support even 'interactive' online chats between remote people interested in our history, asking live questions of historians like Jan Petit, Dr. Bender, and Ed and Nancy Bathke.

We also, as part of the ambitious work in designing the web site, retained a programmer who knew how to build a museum Data Base, using powerful but fairly low cost FileMaker Pro software to start the process of putting all the holdings of the Society, starting in Index form, online. That work was done but with the loss of the programmer and few volunteers in the Society except Tom Hendrix and his wife Doris who could spend the time to enter the mass of data that aspect of our project languished. It is a

many year project unless we can automate it more.  
Payoff

Few Society members know just how valuable that Web Site has been over the 8 years. Not only have thousand of people accessed it over the Internet and learned our local history, but others have used it to begin their own historical research. And, as more and more people look into their genealogy and use computers over the net to find it, we have been contacted, by email, by scores of American searching for their ancestors whom they learn came at some time "Pikes Peak or Bust." Just entering the words 'Colorado City' in Google will bring up our site.

Consequently we have had important new acquisitions for our Archives about hitherto unknown people, manuscripts, and photographs. All because people found us online. These now include a 25 page original manuscript written by Mary Wade in 1934, which details her crossing the plains as an 11 year old girl, and living in Colorado City in 1861; photographs and manuscripts from a descendent of Harvey Anway who operated a log hotel as 'The Fort' as protection from the Indians in 1864; finding out what happened to Jim McLaughlin who shot it out with Pat Devlin on the streets of Colorado City in 1860; meeting a descendent of the very man who drove the first stake in Colorado City in 1859, Melanthon Beach (and finding out where he got that tongue twister of a name). The Web site has been gathering history, not just disseminating it!

Another major value has come from the 1,500 digitized photographs on our site, all but a few of which we own or have the rights to. People have been willing to pay us for the use of some of our pictures they find on our site, or discover we have 20,000 others, either for their research, for publications, or for framing on business building walls.

Some people from outside Colorado Springs have found us online and have come to offer us old Colorado City publications or artifacts – such as a very rare 1915 Colorado City High School Year Book we were given by a man in Greeley who found us online.

Then of course anyone online on our site can send us an e-mail. Many do so, looking for our history or leads to other Colorado history. We answer lots of questions by return email.

New Problems

## A Grant for Digitization

Shirley Bonds, a lifelong Colorado Springs resident and long time Old Colorado City printer – who owned Peerless Printing, has given the Old Colorado City Historical Society a check for \$5,000 to add to the \$1,000 already donated. It is to support the Digitization of the Society's holdings. It's a start on a process that may take 10 years and \$50,000 to complete.

Now some people mistrust computers, and hang on to their books, pictures and papers believing they will outlast computer stored information for thousands of years. Yes, some, very carefully preserved have. But almost always protected in such a way that only a handful of people have access to originals – by coming right to the Library or Museum where they are being stored.

Now it's an open question whether digital forms – disks, CDs, memories on silicon will last as long as some paper, or engraved stone tablets. Thousands of years? Maybe. But there is no question that, once a manuscript, or photograph, film clip, sound tape, or entire movie is copied with high fidelity onto a digital form, it can be copied again rapidly and cheaply from one form to another ad infinitum, and distributed around the world even if the media on which the 1s and 0s reside changes.

Partly for that reason your Society has had a Web site up on one kind of computer for over 8 years now, which has been accessed by thousands of people. And contains over 2,800 pages of information and 1,500 digital pictures, together with voice clips. Even if it crashed, all the information is still in the Center's archives. And if the museum ever burned, all that information is in 12 megabytes of one disk.

Some of us have had a vision since 1976 when the History Society first met, when the revitalization of Old Colorado City started and the first personal computers came out and I painfully hunt and peck typed out with a 'text editor' and stored the first separate history of Old Town. I knew that it would be possible to store the entire known history of Colorado City from its origins on computers.

Shirley Bonds retired from Old Colorado City over 20 years ago from a life of printing on paper starting with Linotypes and lead slugs, inks and presses, and donated to the society through me a marble printer's slab that came out on a wagon to

Colorado in the 1870s which now is displayed out on our patio. She visited our History Center several months ago, and was very impressed by or use of technology, and the Web site. And after hearing my vision, gave us that Digitization seed money grant.

In one way our Digitization is only an extension of what she was doing on paper in the past, into the future of computers and the Internet. For Shirley actually printed that first booklet about the History of Colorado City I wrote in 1977 that the Society still sells in its bookstore. And now it is stored on a disk.

We thank Shirley, who is also a Lifetime Member for her generous act of faith in the future of our Society's ability to keep Old Town's history alive forever.

## 2004 Year End Treasurer's Report

The end of 2004 is looking good. In fact 2004 has worked out financially better than we feared at the end of last year when our reserves declined by over \$3000 during the bad economy of 2003.

Two pleasant surprises have put us in the black for the year. We received out of the blue an unsolicited \$1,000 grant from the Vanguard Charitable Endowment fund, recommended by an Illinois person unknown to us. Maybe Old Colorado City just lives right!

Our December Bed and Breakfast Tour was very successful. The weather was good, the publicity plentiful. We netted \$1,898, \$800 more than last year.

The Sunday Book Sales and Signings on December 19<sup>th</sup> brought in over \$600 in 3 hours, of which \$240 (40% of price) is income to us which will permit Betsy our Bookstore manager to transfer \$600 to our general account.

An outpouring of memorial gifts in the name of our beloved Jean Christopher who slipped away from us in November, totaled nearly \$1,900. A smaller amount was left in the memory of Leon Young also, who was a founding member of our Society had been a long time loyal Board member. Those contributions have been deposited into our fixed endowment fund which reached \$64,501 with \$3,809 in accumulated interest, or a total of \$68,310 by December. Your Board has decided to add the \$1,000 Vanguard grant, plus \$690 from its general fund to bring the Endowment to \$70,000 for the first time.

Because it is beginning to look like CD interest  
*continued page 8*

Our web site has worked well at no cost for connectivity to the Internet, for 8 years. Two years ago our original NT Computer began to show its age after 6 years of running 24 hours a day. Computers actually DO wear out eventually. So the Board authorized \$3,000 to buy a new Windows 2000 computer, and retain the services of an expert to port over from the NT all our files, data base, and Web Server to it. Paul Fong, a highly skilled technical guru, worth three times what we paid him did the advanced work. Its all there and running, and still connected to two other computers in the office. And with its Data Base software it is useful for a variety of office purposes, and will be useful for years to come – 5 more at the very least. The computer is in fine shape.

However we – and that just means ‘me’ now that all the ‘Technical Committee’ members are long dispersed and LaDonna works professionally in Canon City - have run into an increasingly frustrating problem affecting Web services everywhere – from AOL to Ebay. We have gotten a high volume of computer viruses, denial-of-services attacks, and hacker attempts on our Society’s Windows Web Server. Which even constantly updated and ever more costly anti-virus protection can’t completely handle. And, because the machine sits inside the computer room at the center, it cannot be worked on remotely. Everything has to be done at the center, nights and weekends. That gets real old after a while. Bill Gates’ ‘Window’ computers are the most vulnerable and costly to repair of any software.

Fortunately I operate, in our communications business, Web Servers running on Unix, which, even though we get tens of thousands of attacks daily, can handle it. And we, and I can deal with it remotely.

For that and a range of other future issues, I had to move the entire Colorado City web site onto one of my unix servers at our office. Because of the patchwork way the original Web was put together, by committee (like the proverbial camel – a horse designed by committee) it has taken me and one of my talented sons over two months to make ‘the move.’ Technically very challenging. While doing it I have pruned duplicate pictures, lots of outdated information, and generally ‘cleaned up’ the system.

And seen what needs to be done to improve it greatly for the future. Especially if we start really Digitizing everything according to national standards.

A separate article in this issue reports on the generous \$5,000 grant by lifetime member Shirley Bonds earmarked for our ‘Digital History’ project. That will give us a great start, and can be used as a match for larger grants to carry out an ambitious project eventually to record all the known history of Colorado City – every person who ever lived here, every lot on every block, every building, every event from the beginning. In the form of text, still pictures, sound and video clips, animations, interviews, real-time video cams, broadcasting programs from our meeting rooms. And store it in such a multimedia data base form that anyone with a casual interest, or a serious researcher can find historical information and correlate it – such as names, residences and businesses, and time periods.

All this is now possible with current computer and Internet technology and the emerging Library and Archive data standards national organizations are beginning to use.

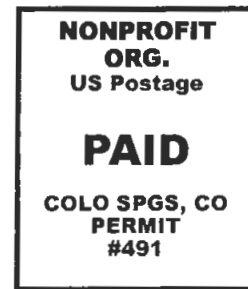
And one thing also saves us. Colorado City, from its beginnings on August 12<sup>th</sup>, 1859 was never large in either population or address locations or geographical size. My notes tell me there were only 6,700 residents at the height of the separate City. Even taking in the entire culturally and historically ‘different’ – from Colorado Springs or Manitou – Westside, which has existed since 1917, the numbers are not large – for a computer. So this project is entirely feasible.

The move of the Web site to a Unix system – in this case a Linux box - has several advantages as we look to the future. Starting that is will be less vulnerable.

First of all the entire web site – all its content and pages – are now ‘portable’ and can be installed easily on another standard unix computer, whether owned by the Society or by a ‘Web Hosting Service’ that can, for as little as \$100 a year keep it online somewhere else in the US. Since I won’t live forever, and may close down my company sometime - which has supported the Web Site and its Internet link at no cost to the society for 8 years, it can be easily moved to other systems. Volunteers can continue to tend it, and expand on it to the end of time. And can do so without coming near the computer it resides on. Such is the magic of the Internet!

Whither the Digital Vision?

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



rates will be climbing over 4% the Board is interested in investing the endowment funds again, but in staggered year/rate CD blocks. So if we average at least 4% over 3 years, (up from the miserable less than 1.5% we have received from our plain old savings account) that would gain us \$3,000 interest income a year.

Our income from membership has done well this year. We took in \$2,210 in Individual memberships, \$1,365 in family memberships, and \$250 in company memberships. A total of \$3,825 in membership income. It costs us about \$6 a member a year to print and mail our newsletter.

Your Board met with financial specialists in December to review alternatives we can use to increase the size of our Endowment. As your Treasurer, I have always advised the Board that if we can increase our endowment fund to \$400,000 over the next 5-7 years, from either bequests, wills, or insurance benefits, and if we can just get a safe 5% interest – or \$20,000 a year, we will be able to pay all our operating and maintenance costs, which is inching towards costing us \$10,000 a year in utilities, security, insurance, copier, postage, and maintenance costs. And still be

able to afford at least a part time employee to help manage our Center and museum and keep it open. While our other income can help expand our collections and historical programs.

So your Board is really looking into the financial future of your Society and not just resting on our current laurels!

Together with all our other incomes and costs, to include paying \$550 this year for Kasten company to do our tax-exempt tax return, and a stinging \$374 November Utilities bill – as the city raised its rates - we should end this year with a paper 'profit' of \$2,231. Instead of the paltry \$800 we predicted in our budget way back in January. That means, even with the carryover into 2005 of the generous \$5,000 grant Shirley Bonds gave us earmarked to fund the progressive digitization of our collection, we should end the year with at least \$20,000 in the bank in our unrestricted general fund account to see use through the next year.

So I can say with some confidence as your Treasurer with his trusty little computerized Spread Sheets the Society will continue fiscally sound next year.

Dave Hughes  
Treasurer