

WEST WORD

OLD COLORADO CITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME 21 ISSUE 8

October 2006

A COLORADO ORIGINAL

Ross Lane

By Leland Feitz

Nebraska Farm Boy succeeds as Colorado Business Man.

A small stone in Fairview Cemetery marks the grave of Ross Lane the man who introduced Colorado Springs to Pepsi-Cola 70 years ago.

Lane died in 1980, one of the city's most respected business men, one of the nation's most successful soft drink bottlers and a member of the board of the Pepsi-Cola Bottlers Association. His climb to the top had not been fast or easy.

Ross, at age 27, arrived in Colorado Springs in 1932 during the Great Depression with little more than

youthful ambition and faith in himself. His first two jobs did not work out. The third one headed him toward success.

It was a job with Frank Vorhies who had a small business wholesaling nationally advertised candy. With a 1929 Essex automobile, Lane went to

If we don't take care of our customers – somebody else will:

A sign in the conference room of the Colorado Springs plant

work for Vorhies establishing routes throughout El Paso and Teller Counties, some even further west.

Times were tough. On overnight trips, Lane sometimes slept in his car. Sometimes there was a dollar for a room at some little hotel in Breckenridge, or another town on the route. When there was no money for restaurants, he ate candy!



Pepsi-Cola's first Colorado Springs home was at 1132 West Kiowa Street

Then Vorhies went broke. With an

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
 A NONPROFIT CORPORATION
 ©2005 OCCHS

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
 Revised April 2004

The Old Colorado City Historical Society was founded as a volunteer organization to recognize the historical significance and unique culture of original Old Colorado City and early El Paso County. This spirit is perpetuated through the preservation of artifacts and archival materials, encouragement of research, education of the children and the community, through the membership and the operation of the History Center at 1 South 24th Street, Colorado Springs, Colorado.

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	Beverly Disch	719-634-5023
Vice President	Tom Hendrix	719-633-7392
Secretary	Arlene Casey	719-634-2356
Treasurer	David Hughes	719-636-2040
	Kay Atteberry	719-599-3187
	Eloise Wynn	719-633-9137
	Mel McFarland	719-533-1311
	Leland Feitz	719-229-8066
	Joanne Karlson	719-475-2574

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
October 13, 2006
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 - SAT 11 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

Closed Sunday & 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

established following, Lane convinced two Colorado Springs wholesalers to supply him with an inventory of candy so he could carry on the Vorhies business. It was agreed, but they insisted on payment at the end of every sales trip the young man made.



As the business grew and prospered a new bottling plant was established at 115 W Colorado Avenue

Very soon, sales were such that a larger location had to be found. It was then the operation moved to 115 West Colorado Avenue. The candy and tobacco business, also growing, moved too, to the lower level of the new building. New delivery trucks were added to the fleet.

After WWII, Colorado Springs began to grow and Pepsi-Cola sales began to grow

Lane's first business was off to a fragile start. But, when the Colorado Springs branch of Flakes, a Denver wholesaler went out of business, Lane was able to buy out their candy and tobacco inventory. His number of customers grew some. Sales increased. In a few months, major suppliers began to sell to Lane direct. The one man operation began to grow.

rapidly. Lane bought property in the 3600 block of North Stone Avenue and build an all new plant. Al Steel, Pepsi-Cola President and his glamorous movie start wife, Joan Crawford, were there for the grand opening.

In 1934, Lane traveled back to Hitchcock, South Dakota, to marry Elsie Marshall. For a while, they lived in the 1600 block of West Colorado Avenue. Two years later, there was another turning point in the life of Ross Lane.

At about the same time, the wholesale candy and tobacco business was sold.

That was the year a Denver bottler began producing Pepsi-Cola. He made a deal with them and bought 100 cases at a time and hauled them to Colorado Springs where it was sold along with his candy and tobacco products. It was at this time his father-in-law put some money into the business and became a working partner.

Lane Sales, a family business, continued to produce Pepsi-Cola at the Stone Avenue location, but that 1953 building has been expanded a number of times. The plant now occupies over 6 acres of space.

Pepsi-Cola officials were impressed with hard-working Lane and awarded him the rights to bottle and sell the drink in El Paso and Teller counties. A plant was established at 1132 West Kiowa in 1936.

Lane sales have also expanded into Arizona with plants in Tucson and Yuma. There is another in Las Cruces, New Mexico. The company now employees some 450 people, 130 in Colorado Springs.

Pepsi-Cola hits the spot

12 ounce bottle that's a lot

Twice as much for a nickel, too!

Pepsi-Cola is the drink for you.

A long running Pepsi jingle

After he began to

THE OLD CABOODLE - CHAPTER 2

Now, if you had a chance to read about the contents of the downstairs collection, this is what happens before they are accepted.

The item has arrived with the donor or agent or as anonymous, (we have many of them). When it arrives, the Book Store volunteer hands the giver a "DEED OF GIFT" sheet. This is the preliminary paper before acceptance. The giver is asked to describe and write the history of the item. It also indicates whether this is an outright gift or a loan and if on loan for how long. The giver now understands that the item may not be accepted due to the following; 1. Not in our historic time frame; 2. Collection is already filled on this item; 3. Lack of space for oversized items; 4. Not in condition to exhibit; 5. Not of regional significance.

The item then is researched and analyzed by the staff and outside knowledgeable people and the giver advised by the President with a "Thank-you or please pick-up" letter. If there is no response from the giver within a period of time, the item may be sold, traded or given to others.

Now the folks downstairs take the item and measure and describe it on a "WORK SHEET". The size, material, and the giver, are recorded. Finally, it is given an accession number. This number will follow the item around. It is attached to the item, indicated as to the location and added on the file card. Finally, it is put in the computer by this number.

A word about the assignment of a number. The number is assigned using the standard, "Trinomial" system. This number changes each year. It starts out with the current year and also indicates in what order the item has been accepted by the Old Colorado City Historical Society.

Then a "file card" is filled out so that the member in charge of exhibitions can use it to locate similar items as needed.

The item is located on a numbered rack, drawer or on a lettered shelf. It may be located on a specified geographical wall, as would be the case with large maps. This location is added to the work sheet, file card and computer. Both artifact and archival material is treated in a similar manner. How-

A lot of Pepsi in bottles no less—when was the last time you saw a Pepsi-Cola in a glass bottle? Ah for the good ol' days!



Ross Lane whose one-man operation turned into one of the nation's most successful Pepsi-Cola's bottling companies.

enjoy success with the bottling enterprise, Lane became interested in raising cattle. He had one ranch out of Divide and a 3000 acre spread in the San Luis Valley.

Even a short story about Ross Lane would not be complete without some mention of his involvement with Colorado Springs First Presbyterian Church. He and Elsie were long time members, active in its affairs and generous supporters.

There is probably no better way to end this than with

some words from Lane's autobiography. He wrote, "If you work hard, take advantage of your opportunities, success is in the offing".

Editors Note:

On a personal note; I met Mr. Lane in 1954 when he was gracious enough to let me use his garage at the North Stone street bottling location to remove and then reinstall a new motor in my "hot rod". We were using the area where he took care of his truck fleet. During the couple of days that my father, who was a personal friend of Mr. Lane's hence the use of the garage, and I worked furiously on the car he sauntered into the area and looked over what we were doing. The engine we were installing had been hand built by no less a person then Louis Unser, and it was a real go fast piece of machinery, or at least while we were installing it I hoped so.

Mr. Lane looked the car all over, the big new engine, many of the parts all chromed and shiny, and asked me just how fast I thought the car would go. When told him it should do something in excess of 125 miles per hour he just stood there and shook his head. I don't remember his exact words but in today's vernacular it was something to the effect of "yeah right!"



Happy Halloween—the merchants along Colorado Avenue in Old Colorado City will once again entertain the younger set by distributing goodies from 3 to 6 PM on All Hallows Eve.

President's Message

We had a very full summer with a number of fundraisers for our Society. On Saturday, June 10th, we had our Garden Fair in Bancroft Park. Joanne Karlson ran this with help from her husband, Werner, overseeing the crafts. The Knorr's, the Ebersol's, Eloise Wynn, Doris Hendrix and Nancy Miceli worked the booths. Kay Atteberry and Vera Wescott ran our bake sale next to the Farmer's Market. Afterward, Nancy Miceli planted our extra plants in a lovely flower garden at our Center.

After Dick Eustice, Larry Van Wert, Gordon Gray and Tom Hendrix spruced up our patio, on Saturday, July 29th, we had a new fundraiser, a Patio Yard Sale, run by Arlene Casey. Sharon Swint, Eloise Wynn, Muriel Dunkley, and Sandy Hanzlian helped sell a wide variety of items. Merv Casey took three truck loads of leftovers to Goodwill afterward.

Then in August we had a couple of our usual fundraisers, on Saturday, August 12th, Founder's Day and on Sunday, August 13th, the Cemetery Crawl. We tried something different this year by having them together on the same weekend. On Saturday, Joanne Karlson and Jo Cervone organized the Founder's Day with music entertainment and crafters. Betsy Evans had a booth with books from our bookstore with Lorena Bymaster and Sandy Hanzlian helping her. They also sold tickets for the Cemetery Crawl. We even celebrated our ninth birthday giving away birthday cake and punch at our Center. Dorothy Vidmar helped me pass this out.

Then on Sunday we had a successful ninth Cemetery Crawl at Fairview Cemetery. Kay Atteberry arranged for eight portrayals by Jennifer Clark, Dave Hughes, Don Ellis, Nadine Kearney, Britney Furlong, Rod Cooley, Phil McDonald and Larry Blaugen. Betsy Evans and I took the tickets and the tour guides were Eloise Wynn, Arlene Casey, Jan de Chadenedes, Martha Lee and Jo Cervone.

We were very busy with all these events with good receipts which are needed to help us financially. Of course, this could not have been done without the extensive help from our wonderful volunteers. I

ever, the archival collections are housed on special shelves or in file cabinets or in acid free boxes in another room.

As an OCCHS Historic Collector, our computer and collection is open to researchers. It is also available to members and viewers interested in the "real thing". The Book Store volunteer will be their guide in contacting one of the downstairs staff, who will handle the item for the interested person.

So there you have the way our History Center works the recording end of the many items referred to in Chapter 1. The next Chapter will deal with the exhibits that are in the main room our Center.

Liz Geiss

would like to thank them all once again. We are again having our general meetings on the second Friday of the month with some very interesting programs coming up. Also we will be having our 12th Annual Bed and Breakfast Holiday Tour, Sunday, December 3rd.

Welcome to the new season at our History Center.

Bev Disch, President

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

NONPROFIT
ORG.
US Postage

PAID

COLO SPGS, CO
PERMIT
#491

~COMING EVENTS~

Friday, October 13th Colorado History Program

"Local Pepsi – A Lane Family Tradition"

One of Colorado Springs older businesses originally located on the Westside is Lane Sales, Inc., now Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company of Colorado Springs.

Local Pepsi representatives, Jim Lane and Diane Plassmeyer, will share Ross Lane's success story of a small town businessman who became a board member of this national company...a story many people have not heard.

Memorabilia from earlier decades will be on exhibit.

Program begins at 11 a.m. History Center opens at 10:15 a.m. for coffee and museum visitation.

Free. Donations welcome. Bring your friends.

Friday, November 10th Colorado History Program

"The Rest of Pike's Story...Setting the Record Straight"

Lewis and Clark had fame and honor upon returning from their expedition.

What happened in Zebulon Pike's life after his November 1806 sighting of Pikes Peak?

Keeping the historical records straight is the focus of Frank Tucker's program. As a Colorado College history professor emeritus, Mr. Tucker brings an interesting perspective to end this year of the Pikes Peak region celebrating Pike's exploration.

Program begins at 11 a.m. History Center opens at 10:15 a.m. for coffee and museum visitation. Free.. Donations welcome. Bring your friends.