



Old Colorado City Historical Society

VOLUME 23 ISSUE 1

January 2008

A FAMILY REMEMBERED

The Jacob Schmidt Colorado City Saga

Dave Hughes

Until our History Society Web site reached out far and wide again, the 'rest of the story' of Jacob Schmidt and his 1890s Colorado City Saloon and Beer Hall was little known, even after 100 years of research by local historians.



Famous Souvenir Schmidt Beer Mugs

The Society displays in its Museum some of the gambling paraphernalia from the Jacob Schmidt's Beer Hall and other saloons and a prized – by collectors - quite novel, wooden Beer Mug that he gave away at Christmastime. But beyond that, and the fact he committed suicide after Colorado City voted dry in 1913

– little else was known or entered into Colorado City lore.

Until one email through our web site changed all that.

It was from a Catherine Dymkoski, from Idaho, asking if we had any information about 'Jake Schmidt' or his Beer Hall. She got nothing from the Pioneer's Museum when she visited it armed with plenty of family facts. They didn't tell her we existed.

Over a few weeks time, Catherine, great granddaughter of Jacob Schmidt, was thrilled at all the location information we were able to look up for her in the Polk Directories. In turn she sent us stories, old photographs, family tree, family facts, and finally a long narrative about the Schmidt family.

What has emerged is the picture of émigrés from Germany who worked hard to get everything they got, took risks, prospered doing business in Colorado City, then endured tragedy when the anti-saloon faction in Colorado City forced them out of business, and led to the suicide of Jacob, the central figure of the family. But then the later success of his relatives.

No longer can we glance at the very large brick historic building at 2611 West Colorado, which now houses a Sports equipment store, which we only knew was one of the famous '23 Saloons' on the south side of Colorado Avenue - and just imagine a cardboard caricature of a saloon keeper. Instead we find a real family who doted on their children, had many relatives, were split in their views about the Saloon business, suffered the death of a beloved child from one of the diseases of the time, and who tried to make a living from two skills they brought to Colorado – beer making and delicatessen goods baking. But the moralizing ministers of Colorado City's Church Row north of Colorado Avenue and their Women's Christian Temperance Union wives shattered their dream. They forced Jacob to try both mining and farming for which he was not suited, and took the central figure of the family from them all.



"The 1890 Bakery on Saloon Row"

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

WEST WORD

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THE OLD COLORADO CITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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Colorado Springs, CO 80904-3319
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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	Beverley Disch	719-634-5023
Vice President	Tom Hendrix	719-633-7392
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	Joanne Karlson	719-475-2574
	Sharon Swint	719-630-8384
	Barb Barbaro	719-748-3483

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 8, 2008
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

(September - June)

TUES.-SAT 11 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

Closed Sunday & Monday

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Jacob Schmidt was born in Heiningen, Germany in 1865 and came to America in 1883. Bertha Braun, was born in Schaffhausen, Switzerland and came to America in 1884. She was 11 years older than Jacob. They arrived in Colorado City, married, around 1888.

Jacob shows up first in the Colorado City directory in 1890 as a Baker at '516 Colorado Avenue'. Today that would be 2515 West Colorado, which no longer exists.

In a family photo, Jacob is in front of the screen door. All are munching on pastry from the Bakery. Son Henry, who was just a boy when this picture was taken, later noted on the back of the photo that the man at the left was Louie Kranz who "Got shot in leg taking a gun in on a pawn broker deal." And that the seventh man over was Jack Gillespie, Barber shop owner next door.

The 1892 directory reports Jacob Schmidt owning that same business, then named 'City Bakery.' It also reports that it is the 'Residence' of Jacob Schmidt - which would include Bertha and their children. It also was the home of Rudolph Schmidt, brother of Jacob as a Bakery 'Clerk.'

Whatever the success or not of the Bakery, Jacob saw an opportunity, sold it in 1896 and bought a Saloon with Louis Rumph, whom he later bought out. Then things got interesting. Bertha, his wife, detested the Saloon. She was very religious. She and Jacob, had first run a Bakery in Leadville before settling in Colorado City. As the family story



"Jacob's First Saloon"

goes she 'refused to take any money from the saloon.'

The frame building that became Jacob's first Saloon was at 612 Colorado Avenue, where the 2611 brick building stands today. That was one block west from the Bakery. It is identified on the back of a very faded picture as his 'Saloon (First Building)' It shows Jacob Schmidt's signature 'Colorado City Beer Hall' sign with "Lunches of all Kinds" in large print on the window panes. Bertha likely worked in the food service portion even though she hated the Saloon operation. But they had to work hard to make a living. There is a family story that when they ran the Bakery she came in to serve customers the day after she gave birth to her daughter, Louise, who was born on Christmas Eve.

That was right about when - in the 1890's - the

Cripple Creek gold rush started booming. Gold seekers were hurrying to get up Ute Pass. But first they had to stay overnight in Colorado City before changing trains from the narrow gauge Denver and Rio Grande Railroad to the full gauge Midland train. The DR&G ran only as far as Manitou Springs over tracks on Cucharras street, one block south of Colorado. Would-be gold prospectors disembarked from the D&RG train at 6th street (26th today) behind the middle of Saloon Row and in the middle of the Red Light District. Most partied all night in Colorado City - because uppity Colorado Springs was dry. The next morning they piled onto the Midland train from the passenger station at the foot of 5th Street (25th today) on the far side of Fountain Creek. Jacob Schmidt had, in a word, a 'prime location' for his Beer Hall.

The Schmidt's prospered. For right at that same address - 612 Colorado -- the frame building disappeared in 1904, and Jacob built the current large, two story, historical brick and iron building that still stands at 2611 West Colorado Avenue.

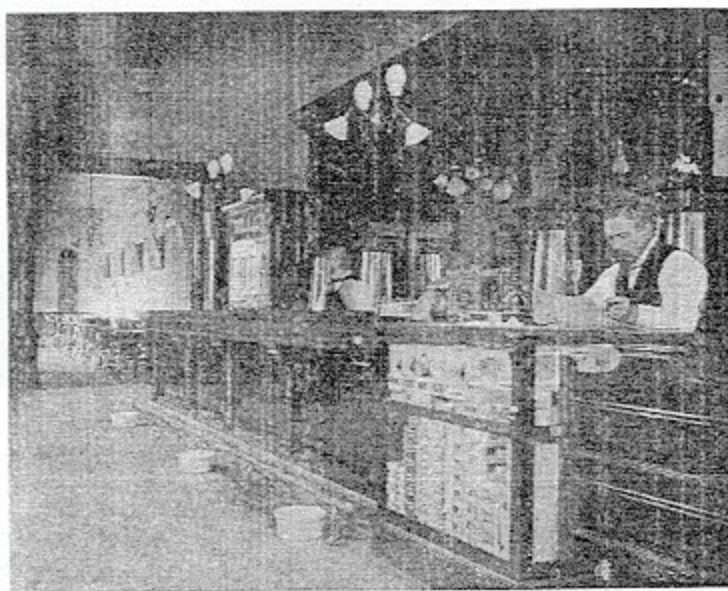


"Jacob Schmidt's Beer Hall"

You can see from an inside 1910 family picture of his Saloon how large and well appointed it was, with spittoons arranged neatly on the bar foot rail, and boxes of fine cigars on display. Gambling would have been upstairs. There are two long deep rooms, with high ceilings, hung paintings on the wall, and a splendid looking back bar. Mustachioed Jacob is in the foreground and assistant Joe Fairbanks in the background. All these give evidence this was an upscale saloon, not a seedy dive as some other Saloon row hangouts were.

In fact, one City Directory entry says that, besides a Saloon and Beer Hall it also was a German Delicatessen-Bakery. Jacob's bakery roots were not forgotten! Bertha undoubtedly worked that part of the establishment. Just as Roger's Bar became 100 years later on the Westside, it was also a family dining place even if it was on the south side of the Avenue and served liquor.

The youngest son of Bertha and Jacob, Reinhold, died when he was only 7. Nobody knows for sure why. Jacob's grandsons later thought it was from scarlet fever. How much they missed the sweet lad was evidenced by the only picture showing him with the rest of the family. They had dead Reinhold's face



“Inside Jake’s Saloon”

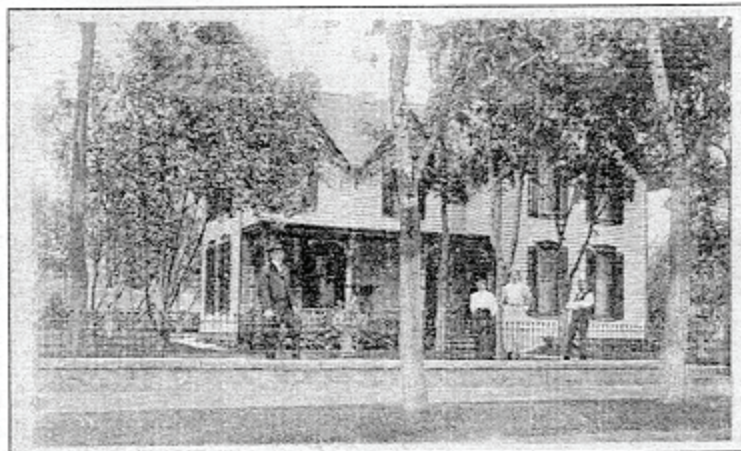


“The Schmidts with Henry and Louise and dead Reinhold

painted into the family picture with both children Henry and Louise who survived.

After living for a time at 1007 West Colorado Avenue (3006 Colorado today) the Schmidt family moved into the upscale ‘Love’ home at 931 – today’s 2932 Colorado. It is pictured here. Partners Quinby and Love, who had themselves carved out a large farm on what today is Camp Creek and part of Rock Ledge Ranch, invested in the ‘Love and Quinby’ real estate platted addition to Colorado City. It was an Uptown address for Colorado City, and a fine home, with an acre of land with Hassell Iron Fencing and a red sandstone street border that was probably bought from Bott & Langmeyer who quarried and sold ‘stone’ from around Red Rock Canyon during those years.

Henry, the surviving son wrote much later in a letter about the family “I went to business college in the Springs and



“Their Love and Quinby Home”

got a job with the Colorado Midland railroad and kept it for around four years. Father was rather hard on the help and rather exacting and kept wanting me to quit and tend bar for

him. It was very much against Mama’s desire but I gave in and was in the saloon for over seven years. I didn’t drink anything and got along o.k. that way.” Young Henry was also a gifted athlete, playing for both the Golden Cycle and Westside baseball teams and being noted in the Denver Times for his pitching skill. He had gone to ‘business college’ when only 14, and learned many clerical skills, including shorthand, which he retained the rest of his life.

Then the bottom fell out for Jacob and his business.

State and National Prohibition was looming, but the Ministers of Colorado City’s Church Row, led by the redoubtable Rev Duncan Lamont who preached from the very Baptist Church building that is now

There is irony in the Jacob Schmidt Beer Hall Story. In 1988 your Historical Society had a sales contract on that same 2611 West Colorado historical building. We were able to get one \$45,000 grant, but we could not raise \$350,000 more it would have taken to turn its first floor into a Colorado Avenue Museum.

Even had we gotten that we would need to have rented the 2d floor out for office space. And after we found, in the basement, two large arched built - in Beer Coolers, we toyed with the idea of opening a stairwell entrance on the west side, getting someone to operate a Rathskeller basement restaurant, make and sell a ‘Jacob Schmidt’ microbrew! We even registered the name.

Support our Historical Society with Beer sales from Saloon Row? Why not? It may still be a good idea.



“The Schmidts at Penrose in their 1911 Mitchell”

our History Center were moving even faster. After one failed attempt they convinced Colorado City voters to vote Dry in 1913. All the Saloons of Colorado City had to shut down. Some tried to stay in business by moving 5 blocks north of Colorado Avenue on 4th (24th) Street and stay open in the Town of Ramona. But they too disappeared as the State and nation went dry.

So Jacob Schmidt briefly tried mining in Cripple Creek with his son Henry, but that didn't work. His descendants still own mineral rights to the 'Colorado,' 'April Fools' and 'Gold Dollar' mines. He bought an Apple Orchard near Penrose Colorado. But as his son Henry wrote "He bought a fruit orchard near Canon City and worked his head off and things were not bringing in a return for the effort. Fruit was cheap and the place needed so much in the way of improvements, etc. Mama and I worked along with him. Louise also would alternate between the Colorado City home and the ranch. It was quite different from the saloon business where you could see something coming in each day and it finally got too much for him."

The last straw was a cut off of his orchard water. Jacob Schmidt took his own life with a pistol May 14th, 1914.

But that was far from the end of the Schmidt family.

Jacob's Daughter stayed in the Pikes Peak region and as Louise Schmidt Huff rose to be appointed Auditor of the City of Colorado Springs in 1929. She stayed at that position for more than 35 years. Her son, Don, attended Colorado College. She lived at 216 North Cascade in Colorado Springs. She was one of only four women city auditors in the country. A single mom and successful working woman.

Jacob's church-going brother Rudolph lived until he was 83, and was buried in Seattle with an impressive list of pall bearers.

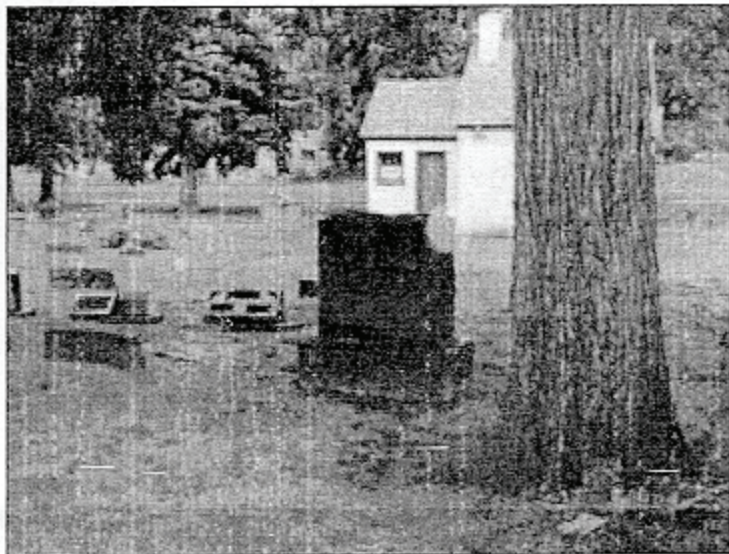
Jacob's son Henry stayed in Colorado until 1923, owned and lost a farm, started a family, was in several businesses, was an inventor with successful patents. He was hurt by the

Great Depression, but ended owning a successful tile business in California.

And redoubtable Bertha Schmidt, residing in her old age with daughter Louise in Colorado Springs, lived until she was 96.

Jacob, Bertha, her daughter Louise and tiny Reinhold chose to be buried in westside's Fairview Cemetery. Their graves and headstone are right near the middle entrance to Fairview.

The Schmidts Saga is a real story of Colorado City pioneers.



A Schmidt Grave in Fairview”

“Booked” for the winter? Or need a special gift?

Use your OCCHS member discount in the History Center Bookstore.

Many titles to choose from, including—

- *“Mysteries & Legends of Colorado”*: True Stories of the Unsolved & Unexplained. \$12.95 **NEW**
- *“Guide to Colorado Historic Places”*: The Most Comprehensive Guide Available. Sites supported by the Colorado Historical Society's State Historical Fund. \$27.95 **NEW**
- *“Centennial State Trolleys”*: The Life & Times of Colorado's Streetcars. \$24.95 **NEW**
- *“In Red Rock Canyon Land”*, by John G. Bock. A local favorite, **now available!** \$6.95
- *“In & Around Old Colorado City”*: A Walking Tour, by Kathleen Norman. \$9.95

President's Message

We had our thirteenth Annual Holiday Bed and breakfast tour, Sunday, December second. It was a lovely sunny day and we had a good turnout at our seven participating inns. Several were in town, three were in Manitou Springs and one up the pass in Cascade.

Many of our members helped with this major fundraiser for our Society. Sally Clark and Joanne Karlson dealt with the media and TV network. Jo Cervone took posters around and got us some very nice door prizes. Don Ellis made the masters with a festive Santa and Sleigh on it for the tickets and the posters.

Marge Knorr set up the table for coffee, punch and cookies that were served at our Center. Lynn Wiseman helped with this as well. Bev and Jack Patterson and Sheri were hosts. Our good bakers, Betsy Evans, Marge Knorr, Betty Grantt, Eunice Quinn, Vera Wescott, Joanne Karlson, Pat Ebersole, Elinor Messerschmidt, and Anita Chimmel made the tasty Christmas cookies.

Hostesses at the Inns were Sharon Swint, Kathy McBride, Doris Morland, Muriel Dunkley, Martha Lee, Eloise Wynne, Pat Ebersole, Jan de Chadenedes and Anita Schimmel. Kay Atterbury handled the drawing for door prizes and Betsy Evans helped me sell tickets on Sunday at the Center.

So when all the receipts from the tickets were gathered, we made almost 1700 dollars which made this a very successful fundraiser event for all.

Bev Disch, President OCCHS



"Happy New Year!" That greeting will be said and heard for at least the first couple of weeks as a new year gets under way. But the day celebrated as New Year's Day in modern America was not always January 1.

The celebration of the new year is the oldest of all holidays. It was first observed in ancient Babylon about 4000 years ago. In the years around 2000 BC, the Babylonian New Year began with the first New Moon (actually the first visible crescent) after the Vernal Equinox (first day of spring).

The beginning of spring is a logical time to start a new year. After all, it is the season of rebirth, of planting new crops, and of blossoming. January 1, on the other hand, has no astronomical nor agricultural significance. It is purely arbitrary.

The Babylonian new year celebration lasted for eleven days. Each day had its own particular mode of celebration, but it is safe to say that modern New Year's Eve festivities pale in comparison.

The Romans continued to observe the new year in late March, but their calendar was continually tampered with by various emperors so that the calendar soon became out of synchronization with the sun.

In order to set the calendar right, the Roman senate, in 153 BC, declared January 1 to be the beginning of the new year. But tampering continued until Julius Caesar, in 46 BC, established what has come to be known as the Julian Calendar. It again established January 1 as the new year. But in order to synchronize the calendar with the sun, Caesar had to let the previous year drag on for 445 days.

JANUARY PROGRAM**"Manitou Soda Spring: A Font of Prosperity" ~****Friday, January 11 at 11 a.m**

The Manitou Soda Spring has been at the center of the health culture in the Pikes Peak region since the days of the Ute Indians. Today, it is a focal point of a revived historic site, located in the lobby of the restored Manitou Spa Building. And, what stories this building could tell! **Deborah Harrison**, a local historian and author, will detail the always interesting and sometimes controversial past of the spring, and the building. Ms. Harrison is a member of the Manitou Springs Historical Society. Her presentation will include historical photos.

BUSINESS SHUTS DOWNDecember 15th, 2007

Dave Hughes, General Partner in Old Colorado City Communications, informed his customers last week he will stop providing the Internet service to them on January 15th.

That will end 23 years of his computer communications business operating from the Templeton Building at 2502 West Colorado Avenue.

Hughes, who is turning 80 in a few months, says he wants to retire from getting calls from customers 24 hours a day after they connect a wrong cable between their computer and radio!

As a computer communications pioneer, Hughes set up the **first** political computer Bulletin Board in the city called 'Roger's Bar' in 1980, the **first** pre-Internet dial up personal computer communications service in Colorado Springs in 1984, the **first** Westside Internet service in 1990, and the **first** commercial Wireless Internet service in 1995, before Wi-Fi existed.

The National Science Foundation was so impressed with reports about his pioneering extension of connectivity to rural one-room schools in Montana, they awarded him, between 1995 and 2000, \$2 million in 7 grants which sent him into the rain forests of Puerto Rico, onto the steppes of Mongolia, the middle of lakes in Wisconsin, to the coldest regions of central Alaska and the hottest desert mesas of southern New Mexico. Much of that later NSF work was

developing ways for biological and environmental university scientists to connect up to fields of their remote sensors.

"I started this as a business" he said, "because it took US West 13 years and Adelphia 9 years to get an Internet connection, which I knew would be vital for business, just the 3 miles from downtown Colorado Springs to the 92 commercial buildings of Old Colorado City. Now they are here, sort of, so I can turn my attention more to developing an advanced web site for our local Historical Society. I will remain connected, broadband, from my home on 24th Street."

Hughes was awarded the Electronic Frontier Foundation Electronic Pioneer Award in 1993, and has received recognition for his work from all over the world, most recently for connecting up Sherpas on Mount Everest to the full Internet, wirelessly.

WELCOME TO NEW OCCHS MEMBERS*who joined in August, September and October~*

Sharon L. Bennett, James and Triny Jackson

Robert Loudon, Marijica Martynius,

Lou and Barbara Carpenter, Charlease Bobo

Dennis Palsgrove, and Paul Shepard.

~and those who joined in November and December~

Canon Inn, L.L.C., Michael Gemmill, Michael Lloyd Davies, Rell & Kathy French, Michael Nelson, Kenneth Goldsberry, Diane Wilson, Hank Schmidt, Robert Schmidt, Jean Hughes, Marillyn Bow, Sandra Muma, Catherine Dymkuski, Patrice Hughes,

Holly Shanahan, and Christine Borek

~as well as twenty-two renewing members in November & December!

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On the Mountain with the AdAmAn Club
~ An 85-year Holiday Tradition

A snowy Saturday, December 8th, couldn't keep 39 people from attending an entertaining Powerpoint presentation by Don Sanborn and OCCHS member, Don Kallaus, along with viewing an exhibit of some of the club's artifacts and photos.

New Year's Eve 1922 was the beginning of this 85-year tradition started by the "Frozen Five": Fred and Ed Morath, Fred Barr, Willis Magee and Harry Standley who didn't want an ordinary New Year's Eve so they came up with this adventure. In a report about the program, a Gazette article stated that "one of this region's most famous and exclusive clubs was started by an act of vandalism", but

member, Don Sanborn, jokingly explained what is said to have really happened.

OCCHS member, Don Ellis, shared some of his photos and memories of climbing with them when he was a Boy Scout in high school. At the end of the program, the audience applauded this group of men (and two women) who challenge the Peak each New Year's Eve and entertain the community with their traditional fireworks show. There were some great stories!

So if you missed this program, we are hoping that they will be available to present this talk again for the 2008 "Tuesday Nights in July" series. The exhibit will remain at the History Center until Saturday, January 19th.