



Old Colorado City Historical Society

VOLUME 23 ISSUE 5

May-June 2008

Bottles, Bottles and more Bottles

A FINE COLLECTION OF ANTIQUÉ BOTTLES

By Barbara Barbaro

I love antique bottles! It's a totally thrilling and exciting experience hunting for them, digging them up, cleaning them, and then spending hours researching all I can about them. If I'm not doing that, then I'm scouring the antique malls to find that one, special bottle to add to my collection. Through their embossments, paper labels, the bottle maker, and other bottle marks, each one represents a little piece of history.

If you're really not into collecting them as I am, but you're still captured by the mystique of old bottles, then I'd suggest that you visit the History Center and take a look at the ones on display. The History Center houses a small, but wonderful collection of whiskey, beer, soda/mineral water, and pharmaceutical bottles from the Colorado City era (1859-1917). Some are embossed with the names of well-known businesses in Colorado City during its heyday; others represent the surrounding towns of Colorado Springs, Manitou, Cripple Creek, Victor, and Denver. Its collection of pottery jugs runs the gamut of sizes, from one just 3-1/4 inches tall, to one 15 inches tall.

The following highlights some of the Center's prized bottles, with a few interesting facts thrown in about each one. Although not bottles per se, ceramic jugs played an important role as whiskey

containers and a means of advertising in the times of Colorado City, so they're also included. Keep in mind that each one of these bottles and jugs is over 100 years old! They're tough; they've survived decades.

Whiskey, Beer Bottles, and Ceramic Jugs

With at least 22 saloons located on the south side of Colorado Avenue between 1895 and 1913, one can only imagine the importance that whiskey and beer bottles played in the life of the town during that time. The miners, on their way to Cripple Creek and other mining towns, preferred staying overnight in the hotels or brothels in Colorado City because there were no saloons in Colorado Springs. They caroused all evening and night, and then the next morning caught the Midland Railway at 25th Street to carry out their daily jobs in the mines.

In her book, *A Quick History: Historic Colorado City, The Town With a Future*, Dorothy Aldridge writes of Colorado City that "her reputation as a watering hole was unquestioned", and that "her saloons had become noted for their pool halls, bowling alleys, open gambling, easy access to disorderly houses and free-flowing liquor". She adds, "That didn't mean that the average resident was a rounder...it was pretty likely to be the visitor who "whooped it up" on Colorado Avenue and in the red light district".

The Hoffman House was a well-known and popular Colorado City saloon. It was around at least between 1892 and 1912. Recently, the History Center was

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

WEST WORD

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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
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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
 May 9, 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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fortunate to have acquired a pumpkinseed-shaped whiskey bottle, circa 1895-1900, embossed "The Hoffman". It complements another smaller pumpkinseed, also with the "The Hoffman" embossment, that is currently on loan from Dave Hughes' personal collection. Both are on display in the Center. The pumpkinseed shape is the most popular style of



The Hoffman House

whiskey flasks in the Western states. The name comes from its rounded, or pumpkinseed shape with a flattened face and back.

Another rare bottle that was only recently discovered in the local area is an amethyst colored "dandy" flask embossed "The Oxford Club". It dates back to 1900. There's not a lot of information available on the Oxford Club. The first reference to the Ox-

ford appears in the 1900 Directory of Colorado Springs (which includes Colorado City) under the heading of "Saloons". This of course does not mean that it didn't exist before that year; the proprietor could have elected not to list it, or the publishers of the city directories in previous years may not have contacted the proprietor for updated listings. One can only speculate. The Oxford was located at 524 Colorado Avenue at that time and listed Gus Hogan as the proprietor. By 1903 however the Victor Saloon was listed at that same address.

During its heyday Colorado City had its very own glass works company, the Colorado City Glass Company. It was incorporated in 1889, with Adolphus Busch, co-owner of the Anheuser-Busch Brewing Company, and Jerome Wheeler as the principle stockholders. The company enjoyed a successful and prosperous business with its then considered, modernized plant. It boasted as being the largest

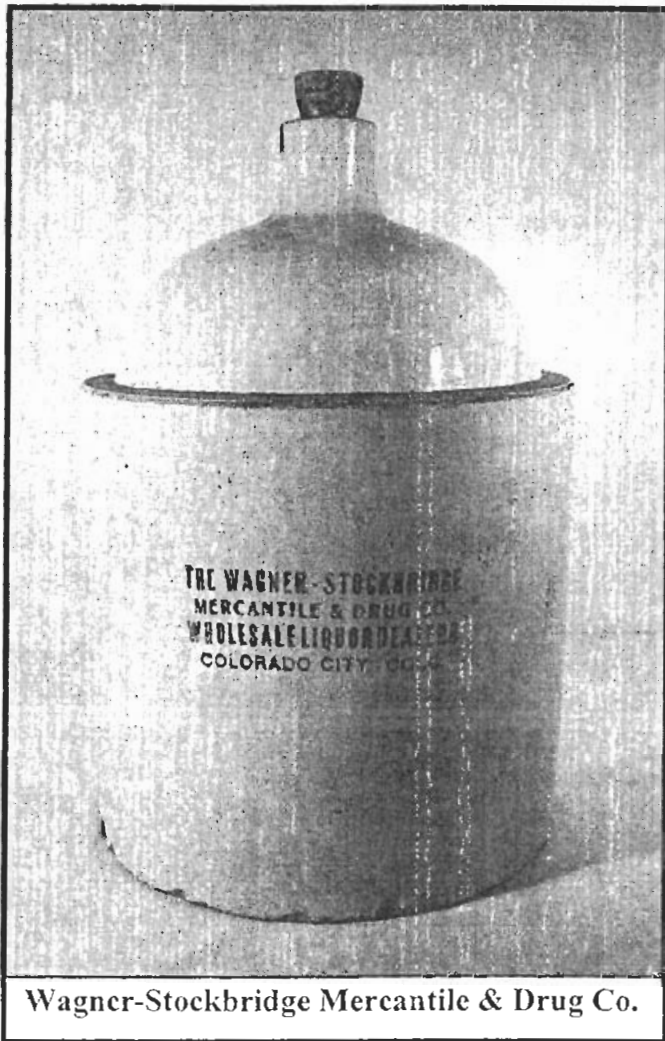


Oxford Club bottle

glass works between the Mississippi River and the Pacific Ocean. But on September 10, 1892 a fire broke out in the plant and destroyed the main building and its machinery. The company attempted to resurrect the business, but eventually closed its doors permanently in 1894.

A fine example of a beer bottle made by the Colorado City Glass Company, sometime between 1893 and 1894, is included in a separate exhibit featuring the glass company. It's embossed "C.A. Lammers, Denver, Colorado", a Denver bottle company. The company's bottle mark, "C.C.G.CO.", is located on the bottom of the bottle.

The durability of jugs to withstand the ruggedness of the surrounding areas among the mining camps was one of the reasons for their popularity, which extended between 1890 and 1915. Another was their means for advertising one's business, which



Wagner-Stockbridge Mercantile & Drug Co.

was also very popular in Colorado.

The 15" tall, cream-colored jug marked "The Wagner Stockbridge Mercantile & Drug Co., Wholesale Liquor Dealers, Colorado City, Colo.". It dates from the late 1800s to the early 1900s and is as handsome and durable as it is massive.

Charles Stockbridge came to Colorado in 1873 and was indeed a colorful person. Glen Preble, in his book, *Impressed in Time: Colorado Beverage Bottles, Jugs & Etc., 1859-1917*, explains that Stockbridge, among other things, "dabbled in the ice and mineral water business, sold arms in his store, and was the president and general manager of the El Paso Brewery located in Colorado City". The Wagner Stockbridge Mercantile & Drug Co. was listed in the city directories almost annually

between 1888 and 1915.

Soda and Mineral Water Bottles

The Ute Indians regularly visited the natural springs located in Manitou, not far from Colorado City, believing that they had great medicinal, spiritual, and healing powers. Manitou and other nearby springs provided fresh, naturally carbonated water not only to the Utes and local residents, but to nonresidents as well, who also sought their natural powers.



Pikes Peak Mineral Water Co.

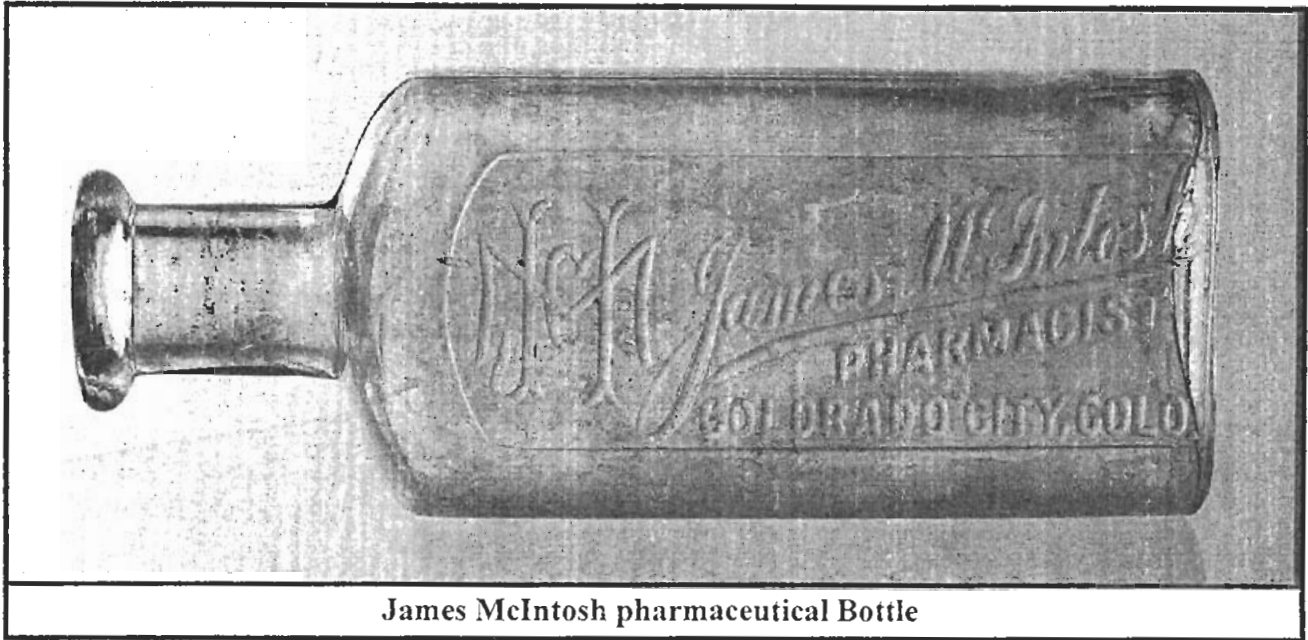
As a result of their enormous popularity during that era, many mineral and soda water bottling companies sprang up. In 1900 there were 30 manufacturers in Colorado, alone.

One of my favorite ones is from the Pikes Peak Mineral Water Company, located in Colorado City and in business from approximately 1887 through 1917. The bottle is embossed

"Pikes Peak M.W. Co., Colo. City, Colo.", and was made between 1889 and 1893.

A short, delightful advertisement touting their water appeared in the Colorado City Iris newspaper on August 14, 1887, which read, "The Pike's Peak Mineral

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James McIntosh pharmaceutical Bottle

Water Company's goods are the most refreshing of any on the market. Their wild cherry tonic is a household beverage. All orders receive prompt attention and delivery. Orders by mail solicited."

Pharmaceutical Bottles

Drugstores began around the same time that settlements occurred in the West, and pharmacists were in high demand. As time went on, the individually owned drugstores began to wane, and by 1902 drugstore chains came into existence.

One Colorado City pharmacist, James McIntosh, appears to have enjoyed a successful career as a pharmacist at the City Drug Store for at least 23 years. His drug store was listed in various city directories between 1892 and 1915. Through 1917 both his residence and the drug store were listed at 511 Colorado Avenue. Then, in 1918 McIntosh moved his business and residence to 512-514 Colorado Avenue, where the building was then referred to as the "The McIntosh Building".

One of the two McIntosh bottles at the Center is embossed "James McIntosh, Pharmacist, Colorado City, Colo.", and was made between 1890 and

1900. The other one, embossed "James McIntosh, Druggist, Colorado City, Colo.", is a rare find, and dates between 1888 and 1900. This particular bottle is interesting, in that it is not only embossed, but also has a paper label glued onto it. The label reads "James McIntosh, Prescription Druggist, Colorado City, Colo.". Paper labels became commonplace in the early 20th century.

Hopefully, this short overview of the History Center's bottle collection has helped raise an awareness and understanding of the importance that bottles and ceramic jugs played in the mid to late 1800s. Each provides a glimpse into Colorado City's daily life, its vitality, and its distinct personality as it continued to establish its role in the settlement of the Old West.

When you're in the area, stop in the Old Colorado City History Center and take a look at the bottles and jugs featured here, as well as others that are on display. You might just get that same sort of thrill and excitement that I do when I'm in some dark, half-caved-in building digging around for that special bottle.

April Treasurer's Report

On March 7th our \$85,000 Certificate of Deposit matured, so we put it, added \$5,000 from our earned interest to make our 'fixed endowment' now \$90,000. We put that into a special commercial Pikes Peak Bank Savings account which will earn a fixed 4.33% through July 31. Better return than either variable rate CD or T-Bill investments. We added to it, which we can (withdraw) the \$5,000 El Pomar painting grant, \$3,825 balance of the Shirley Bond Digitization grant, \$5,000 from Dave Hughes Digitization grant, and some earned interest, to bring the total up to \$116,799 earning interest.

Painting of the outside of our History Center by AM Painting will start around May 1st. They will be paid \$5,900 at the outset (\$5,000 of which is the El Pomar Grant) and the other \$5,900 from our own savings, when finished, by early June. That cost is depleting our savings a bit.

We paid our \$1,204 annual Liability Insurance bill at one time this year, as we have the Director's Liability Insurance in the past to save a little from paying it only monthly. We are now paying \$2,342 a year for insurance.

With our copier costs - new drum and maintenance - of \$370. and an electrical company upgrade to our junction box - \$385 - we have had several stiff charges this last month.

"We netted \$1,081 for our 26 April Victorian Tea which entertained and fed 88 dressed up ladies and gentlemen."

And we are looking forward to our Territory Days booth sales, Bake Sale, and Craft Fair in June, to build up our cash on hand over the next three months.

As of now according to our budget we would end 2008 with a surplus of \$1,105 of income over costs, and approximately \$4,386 in earned interest.

A little tighter than last year but nothing to worry about - yet.

Dave Hughes, Treasurer



The 2008 Victorian Tea at the History Center

~COMING EVENTS~

Friday, May 9th Annual Business Meeting & Program **NEW TIME!**

10:15 a.m. Light brunch followed by business meeting at **10:45 a.m.** **Election of board members, please attend and vote**

11:15 a.m. Program: "Working Women of the Pikes Peak Region in the 1920s"

Michael and Patricia Olsen

Will look at this first decade of the modern personal, political, and economic emancipation of women relating to our local area. Some raised Persian cats, others wrapped candies, many went to business school or a university. The illustrated program will include historical photos.

Saturday June 21st

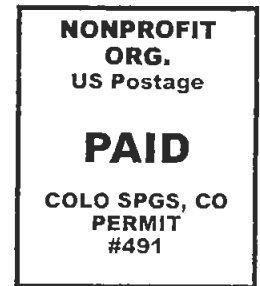
One of our annual fund raisers
Art & Crafts in Bancroft Park

DO YOU REMEMBER?



When a washing machine looked like this.

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



Okay you history buffs have fun with this one!

The US standard railroad gauge (distance between the rails) is 4 feet, 8.5 inches. That's an exceedingly odd number. Why was that gauge used? Because that's the way they built them in England, and English expatriates built the US railroads. Why did the English build them like that? Because the first rail lines were built by the same people who built the pre-railroad tramways, and that's the gauge they used.

Why did 'they' use that gauge then? Because the people who built the tramways used the same jigs and tools that they used for building wagons, which used that wheel spacing.

Why did the wagons have that particular odd wheel spacing? Well, if they tried to use any other spacing, the wagon wheels would break on some of the old, long distance roads in England, because that's the spacing of the wheel ruts. So who built those old rutted roads? Imperial Rome built the first long distance roads in Europe (and England) for their legions. The roads have been used ever since.

And the ruts in the roads? Roman war chariots formed the initial ruts, which everyone else had to match for fear of destroying their wagon wheels. Since the chariots were made for Imperial Rome, they were all alike in the matter of wheel spacing. Therefore the United States standard railroad gauge of 4 feet, 8.5 inches is derived from the original specifications for an Imperial Roman war chariot. Bureaucracies live forever.

So the next time you are handed a Specification/ Procedure/ Process and wonder 'What horse's ass came up with it?' you may be exactly right.

Imperial Roman army chariots were made just wide enough to accommodate the rear ends of two war horses. Now, the twist to the story:

When you see a Space Shuttle sitting on its launch pad, there are two big booster rockets attached to the sides of the main fuel tank. These are Solid Rocket Boosters, or SRBs. The SRBs are made by Thiokol at their factory in Utah. The engineers who designed the SRBs would have preferred to make them a bit fatter, but the SRBs had to be shipped by train from the factory to the launch site. The railroad line from the factory happens to run through a tunnel in the mountains, and the SRBs had to fit through that tunnel. The tunnel is slightly wider than the railroad track, and the railroad track, as you now know, is about as wide as two horses' behinds.

So, a major Space Shuttle design feature of what is arguably the world's most advanced transportation system was determined over two thousand years ago by the width of a horse's ass.