

WEST WOOD

Old Colorado City Historical Society

Volume 23, Number 8

October, 2008

A Short History of the Midland Depot at Divide

Unfortunately, the only remnants of the 60-year era of the railroads along Ute Pass are the former rail beds along the roads, some of which are not readily noticeable, and the deteriorating Midland Depot at Divide.

In the past, between 1886 and 1949, when the Colorado Midland and Midland Terminal railroads were operating, there were many depots and stations along their tracks. Among all the depots along the Colorado Midland rails from Colorado Springs to New Castle, only three survive as stand-alone structures and only one in the Ute Pass area. Most are long gone or compromised, victims of

progress, like the stone depot at Manitou Springs which is part of a residence, or the depot in Basalt which is now part of the Alpine Bank. Others were torn or burned down. The depot in Woodland Park burned in the 1930's. One end of it was saved and later repaired. It now sits, painted yellow and white, in Memorial Park by the lake. The depot in Colorado City burned in 1931. After 1918, the depot in Florissant was moved to the Fossil Beds and used as offices. Later, it is reported that a house in Divide was built with the wood. The large station house in Leadville (taking up a whole city block) was torn down.

The depot at Hartsel still stands but has been abandoned - leaving only the Midland Depot at Divide as a monument to the railroads' history along Ute Pass.

The Midland Depot at Divide was a unique depot in its day, serving two railroads - the Colorado Midland and the Midland Terminal - with tracks (or bays) landing on both the north and south sides. In the



Continued page 4

Old Colorado City Historical Society

1 South 24th Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80904-3319

WEST WORD

PUBLISHED TEN TIMES A YEAR

The Old Colorado City Historical Society

A NONPROFIT CORPORATION

©2008 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 Don Ellis - spiderwort@pcisys.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	Corporate	\$250
Lifetime	\$150		

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	Joanne Karlson	475-2574
Vice President	Phil McDonald	532-0881
Secretary	Janice deChadenades	598-7183
Treasurer	David Hughes	636-2040
	Art Crawford	578-1158
	Beverley Disch	634-5023
	Tom Hendrix	633-7392
	Mel McFarland	533-1311
	Sharon Swint	630-8384

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.

WELCOME TO OCCHS! ~ NEW & RENEWING MEMBERS

Betty Baker
Rose Rospierski
Stephen Shepard
Mart Tate
Sandra Moncada
Betty Jo Cordona
Betty Rapjack
Donald & Betty Peterson
Krista Ann Jautz
John & Kathy Fish
Lou & Barbara Carpenter
Lorena Bymaster
Helen R Leonard
Muriel Dunkley
Triny & James Jackson
Anna England
Donald McGilchrist
Robert Loudon
Art Crawford
Evelyn M. Hurr
Charlease Bobo
Niente Smith
John R. Sweet
Rhonda Cordry

WANT EMAIL NOTIFICATION?

With email notification, you could .. find out what's going on at the History Center between issues of *West Word*? learn more local history, have more frequent contact with the History Center, and reduce volunteer time spent phoning the telephone tree.

If interested, please email the following information to:

history@oldcolo.com

Your Name

Phone #

Email address Attn: (if needed)

Volunteer Spotlight – meet Paul Shepard

By Barbara Barbaro

Paul Shepard, a native of the Westside, must have snippets of history running through every vein in his body. Armed with a Masters degree in history from the University of South Dakota, Paul taught social studies in the Widefield area for 32 years. It only takes a few minutes of talking with this low-key, soft-spoken man before his love for teaching history, and his continued love of being surrounded by Colorado and its local history, clearly emerges.

Nine months ago Paul became a member of the Historical Society, but his interest in the Society goes way back. Years ago when his mother had a store in Cripple Creek he attended a lecture sponsored by the Historical Society about Cripple Creek. (The Society hadn't moved into its current home at that time.) Attending that lecture piqued his interest in the Society even more. He was also acquainted with two of the Society's main stalwarts, past-president Bev Disch and Dave Hughes. He and Bev knew each other during their decades of teaching, and during that same timeframe, he witnessed Dave doing what Dave does best, promoting the Society. How could anyone possibly escape the Society's lure when surrounded with those two people?

Paul fondly recalls boyhood memories of living on the Westside when he lived on 23rd Street. He and his family would take walks around the town, and always seemed to find their way to the Cross & Sons Soda Fountain for a soda. He also has a deep family attachment to Old Colorado City, in that his grandparents came here around 1919, not long after Colorado City was annexed to Colorado Springs. Because of this, he says he'd love to see more interest and focus on the history of the Westside during the 1920s and 1930s, the time when his grandparents lived and breathed the Westside.

Although he occasionally works in the History Center's bookstore, Paul's favorite job is working in the Archives department, located downstairs in the bowels of the building. He and long time Society member Tom Hendrix have devoted untold number of hours identifying, cataloguing, preparing, and filing thousands of historic photos. He is currently pouring through photos from the Luther McKnight collection, and muses at the sheer number of photos McKnight would take of a subject, a rock for example, from four or five different angles. As you can see, working around archives requires composure, coolness, and most of all, patience.

Eager to become even more involved, Paul recently joined the Society's newly developed Research Committee. His article, "Labor vs. Management – The Colorado City Strike", an in-depth look at Colorado City's part in the labor wars in the early 1900s, was featured

in the February 2008 issue of West Word [Vol. 23, Issue 2].

Someone once said that we cannot escape history and neither can we escape a desire to understand it. If I didn't know better, I'd think that Paul coined those words himself. He certainly is living them.



early 1900's (the busiest times), it had two ticket agents, a telegraph operator (the telegraph pole still stands on site) and common waiting and baggage areas. A brick platform surrounded the depot, extending well beyond the building to the east and south to accommodate passengers and baggage.

Initially (i.e., 1886), the Colorado Midland had only a side-track in Divide, but later a small depot was erected in 1887 - simply an agent and telegrapher's office. It was replaced in 1894 with a second depot when the first building and several other businesses in Divide burned.

The second Depot was replaced by a third structure in 1904 when the "Midland's" facilities in Divide were greatly updated. The present (1904) Depot, a 104 year old structure, is what remains. Adjacent to the Depot was a storage shed to the east and an outhouse to the west (the location of the outhouse is probably now partially under Weaverville Road). There was also a powder magazine on the south side of the depot where the railroad stored explosives - used, among other purposes, to remove snow and debris from around the tracks in winter.

The surviving history of the Midland Depot at Divide is also interesting. After the Depot was closed in 1949, when the Midland Terminal railroad ceased operations, the depot and surrounding property and the section house and rail yards were purchased by the Weaver family. The Depot sat relatively unused for a time, but later Ted Weaver opened an antique shop in it. One branch of the Weaver family continued to live in the section house. A descendant of the family recently reported that they used the powder magazine as a fruit cellar.

In 1985, after at least one ownership change, a new, non-historic east wing was built (or at least begun, according to a recently discovered building permit) which first served as a residence. In the mid to late 1990's, the building became a road house and bar for awhile under the name of the Whistle Stop. In 1999, the Depot was purchased by a local Divide developer (who is the current owner) to save it from being demolished.

Currently, the Depot at Divide is in pretty bad shape. The foundation has been eroded and water has run into and under the main structure for years, further crumbling the underpinning and causing other problems. The siding of the depot is greatly weathered and the integrity of the infrastructure is suspect. Most of the four acres surrounding the depot has changed contour over the years, the result of the burial of aqueduct pipes serving the water needs of Colorado Springs, the roadbed and drainage of U.S. Highway 24 and the county's growing admin and maintenance complex to the south, although the rail beds for the Colorado Midland and Midland Terminal railroads, as well as the "Y" where they met, can be clearly seen east of the Depot.

Preservation Efforts

Earlier, in this decade, the Teller Historical and Environmental Coalition (T.H.E. Coalition), along with other interested organizations, began a project to preserve the Midland Depot at Divide. An historical review was anticipated in order to place the Depot on state or local historical registers. By 2004 with help from a grant, a Historic Structure Assessment and a Master Plan were in place, and Teller County had declared the Midland Depot at Divide a historic site (2003). However, the State of Colorado would not issue a historic designation, presumably because of attached 'non-historic' addition and/or because the historic footprint around the depot was perceived to be rather small. Activities at the Depot were held to garner community support.

Unfortunately, after 2004, the project languished with only partial efforts continuing until spring 2007 when T.H.E. Coalition once again organized a meeting at the Depot of all interested parties, including the Divide Chamber of Commerce, the Divide Park Board, the Rampart Range Library District and the Ute Pass Historical Society, in an attempt to re-energize the preservation effort. The meeting was successful and a re-energized effort is now moving forward. A Midland Depot at Divide working committee has been established, under the auspices of

T.H.E. Coalition, which includes community volunteers with expertise in historical issues, structure preservation, grant writing, public relations, architectural design, construction and legal issues, as well as planning and project administration. T.H.E. Coalition has acquired a second grant from the Colorado State Historical Fund to conduct an archeological survey of the Depot and grounds, and acquisition plans are underway.

That archeological study has been accomplished with a final report expected later in 2008. The initial results of the study were both exciting and promising. For one, it was discovered that the brick platform around the depot extended much further east and south than once suspected. The powder magazine was discovered on the south bank (on Teller County property), as well.

The long-range preservation plan for the Depot spans a number of years - from the present through 2011, or beyond. After acquiring the property, funding for the preservation is planned through state and local grants, often requiring matching dollars. The first step will be to stabilize the Depot structure, followed later by reconstruction to nearly its former state. The historic preservation effort alone is predicted to be a one million, two hundred thousand dollar (\$1,200,000) project. Ultimately, the preserved Depot will house a visitors' center and a section for historic displays and railroad exhibits - complete with outside tracks. The 2004 MDAD Master Plan, which needs to be revised, includes a number of other projected historic, recreational and commercial uses.

For example, in addition to the historic preservation of the Depot, the non-historic addition to the east is being renovated and may become offices for local non-profit organizations. The open field to the south is reserved for commercial purposes. Besides the historic and commercial components of the project, there is also a recreational aspect, including settings for picnic areas and other activities. In addition, the grounds surrounding the Depot lead into the Hayden Divide Loop Trail, which is a local segment of the American Discovery Trail extending coast to coast.

The Colorado Midland and the Midland Terminal railroads are a legacy of the both the Pikes Peak/Ute Pass region and the central Rockies. The railroads are as much a defining aspect of local community culture as were the logging and sawmill activities, ranching, the Ute Indians, the Cripple Creek/Victor gold mining district or any other element of local history - arguably one of the most important aspects. The Midland Depot at Divide was an integral part of the railroads' transportation system where thousands of passengers and tons of ore and freight passed by its unique double bays. The glory days of the Colorado Midland and Midland Terminal railroads are gone forever, but we can honor their legacy by preserving one of the last remaining symbols of that time. Preserving the Midland Depot at Divide is a natural and logical effort to conserve and maintain a historical site, and to protect it as part of our regional heritage for future generations.

"It's time to get the Midland Depot at Divide back on track."

History compiled from various sources by David Martinek, MDAD working committee for T.H.E. Coalition. Revised - May 23, 2008

Fall or Springs Tour of Glorieta Battlefield?

If there is enough interest the Society will plan an overnight tour to Fort Union and the Glorieta Pass Civil War Battlefield in northern New Mexico. We would be in a 9 or 15 passenger van, all the way on I-25, over Raton Pass and the Santa Fe trail to Fort Union National Monument, then stay overnight at the open reservation Baptist Convention Center at the summit of Glorieta Pass, then be guided by Park Rangers over the battlefield. No Walking. And return by 5 PM the second day. Cost around \$150 each including meals, room, van and associated costs. If interested either email history@oldcolo.com or call Dave Hughes at 719-660-5764.

FROM THE BOOKSTORE

By Joanne Karlson

What could be better than a walk through Colorado's mountains, woods, or valleys! How about a history hike? Hikers and historians Ben Fogelberg and Steve Grinstead take you there, and then take you beyond...sharing vignettes of days past to enhance these 50 walks to historic places in and around Rocky Mountain National Park, Fort Collins, Boulder, Denver, Colorado Springs, Pueblo, La Junta, and Trinidad.

View gold and silver mines in their lofty mountain perches, visit old homesteads, walk to the site of a coal-mining tragedy, explore the burn zone of the Hayman Fire, descend a canyon to discover rock art and dinosaur tracks, even climb to remnants of a crashed B-17 bomber! From mile-long strolls to crossing the flanks of fourteeners, *Walking Into Colorado's Past: 50 Front Range History Hikes* has fun and fascinating hikes for all ages.

Each entry includes: the story behind the hike destination, how to get there, hiking conditions, trailhead facilities and contact information, maps, and full-color photos.

Soft cover. 248 pages. \$19.95.

A variety of similar titles are also available in the bookstore, including trips into New Mexico.

REVIEW

By Dave Hughes

Anza and Cuerno Verde, Decisive Battle, 2d Edition

Wilfred O. Martinez

Published by the Old Colorado City Historical Society, 2008

This book by Dr. Martinez of Pueblo, who is distantly related to the Cartographer of the famed Juan Batista de Anza 1779 Campaign against the Comanche is a rare gem of a book that documents one of the earliest Spanish incursions into the Pikes Peak region.

After decades of raids led by the fierce Comanche Chief Cuerno Verde against Spanish settlements north of Sante Fe, Anza persuaded King Charles of Spain to make him Governor of New Mexico. This thoroughly

researched book documents the campaign that rid the Spanish, Ute and Apache Indians of the Comanche scourge once and for all. The campaign carried the 600 Spanish soldiers and their Indian Allies across South Park, right down Ute Pass through the area where Colorado City was founded 80 years later, and resulted in one battle in what is now Colorado Springs. It ended in the victory 15 miles south of the Arkansas River over the Comanches which gave the name of that Chief - 'Greenhorn' - to the battle and the southern Colorado mountain by that name.

The 2d Edition includes original maps from Spain, full text of Anza's Journal in Spanish, and an accounting of Martinez' novel use of horses and riders to retrace the journey with more fidelity than previous authors, and pins down the battlefield sites more accurately. This version is so authoritative, your Society has underwritten the reprinting of this 2001 classic. So we are the publisher. \$16.95 with, of course, 10% off for society members.

At the History Center:
Tuesday, October 14, 7:00 p.m.
Sandstone Weathering -
forms and processes

Weathering of the sandstone in Red Rock Canyon and the Garden of the Gods has created shapes and forms which sometimes inspire aesthetic appreciation, sometimes spur imagination, sometimes engender fanciful names.

Brandon Vogt who is on the faculty of the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs has a special interest in the processes which created those forms, and has made them the subject of his doctoral dissertation. He will tell the story behind the weathered sandstone forms in a talk entitled "Sandstone Weathering - forms and processes."

On Saturday, October 18, Dr. Vogt will lead an educational walk in Red Rock Canyon to complement his talk.

sponsored by Friends of Red Rock Canyon.

From the President's Desk-

Remember the first time you visited Old Colorado City...and the History Center? Do you remember someone you met? What aspect of our local history makes you excited?

To be passionate about history means to be enthusiastic and to do what you love. Many OCCHS members enjoy being "history detectives" by connecting the various dots of information, exploring consequences, and finding new directions. How refreshing to have an "aha" moment by yourself or with others!

Recently a small group met to brainstorm some of the directions that our historical research should be taking...and what should be done first.

Suggested projects are writing articles for WestWord and booklets OCCHS can publish, continuing with oral history interviews, researching information for coming exhibits and/or helping with artifacts and photographs, sharing a collection as part of a museum exhibit, helping plan a spring workshop on researching your home, and developing a media presentation using OCCHS photos..

Research topics include new characters to portray at the Cemetery Crawl, history of local businesses and churches, telegraph and the Garvin Cabin, aspects of daily life in Colorado City and early El Paso County, and specific events and people.

Consider taking this opportunity to contribute for even a few hours. You can contact the following through the History Center if you have some research suggestions, questions, or are interested in helping.

Paul Shepard, Kathy McBride, Sharon Swint, Dave Hughes, Jo Cervone, Don Ellis, Tom Hendrix, or Phil McDonald.

And some additional OCCHS information is....

- Tom Hendrix has accepted the vacant OCCHS Board position and Janice deChadenedes was elected the new secretary. Thank you both!

- We are honored to have Ed Nichols, President and C.E.O. of the Colorado State Historical Society, as the keynote speaker at the Sept. 25 annual dinner. The next issue of WestWord will have a report on this event. Mr. Nichols is bringing several staff members and will be visiting the History Center before the dinner.
- The Bed & Breakfast Holiday Tour fundraiser is set for Sunday, December 7th.
- Walking tours are starting again. Call the History Center for information.
- Betsy says "come and browse the newer titles in the Museum Bookstore".

Enjoy this beautiful fall weather!

Joanne Karlson

September Treasurer's Report

Not much new to report since our August report.

Our interest rate for our Endowment went down again, from 4.25% to 3.5% now. And with the big Financial meltdown it may be cut again to stimulate the economy. We will be lucky to earn as much as \$3,500 in interest this full year.

We have \$112,998 in our interest-bearing savings account now.

Our bill for Tax Preparation by Kasten Accounting which also provides details of all our income and expenditures for 2007, was \$600. We have a new online reporting requirement as a 'Charitable' organization to the State of Colorado, where our financial details are required.

My latest calculation of our operational costs show that it costs us now \$9,000 a year to keep our History Center doors open. We will not be able to hire even a half time Administrator until we reach at least \$450,000 in our fixed Endowment, earning 6% interest. We have \$90,000 of that now.

Dave Hughes
Treasurer

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



OCTOBER CALENDAR

Friday, October 10th 11 a.m. Open at 10:30 a.m.

“A Westside Family Business: Then and Now”

David Simpich shares memories of the growth of his family's business, The Simpich Dolls, and what the Westside was like in those earlier days. With his parent's retirement, you will be interested to learn details of what David is planning for the building, his marionettes, and other uses of this nearby business. Renovation has already begun. The Simpich name will continue in Old Colorado City with some promises of things to come before this Christmas season. He has traveled around the U.S. with his shows, yet many local residents have never seen or met David Simpich...and his friends!

For more information, call (719) 636-1225 or email history@oldcolo.com