

WEST WOOD

Old Colorado City Historical Society

Volume 23, Number 7

September, 2008

IS HISTORY BUNK?

by Dave Hughes

One of the immortal sayings attributed to Henry Ford was "History is bunk." And I know many young computer geeks who believe the same thing and hate to have to learn any 'history' in school. They just want to invent new digital things.

Actually what Ford said to the Chicago Tribune in 1916 was "History is more or less bunk. It's tradition. We don't want tradition. We want to live in the present, and the only history that is worth a tinker's damn is the history that we make today."

Well, where does that put all the historical societies, including ours in Old Colorado City? Are we bunk? I don't think so. Else I would never have helped found ours way back in 1980, even

while pushing the digital envelope into the future from very early model personal computers, right in the middle of 'Historic' Colorado City.

For the truth that escaped Ford, as evidenced by some of the weird political positions he later took, and that many a computer geek misses, is that History is, above all, about people and why they do what they do. Not what computers do. History is the important story of the evolution of human behavior, knowledge, beliefs, as well as use of 'tools' - even computers.

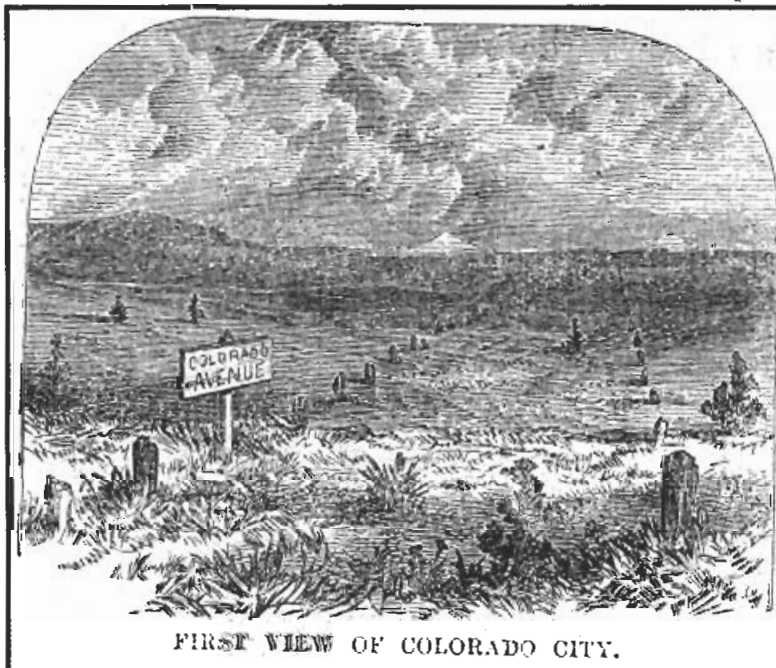
A wiser man, George Santayana, said "Those who cannot learn from history are doomed to repeat it."

Well, apart from academic university history departments, and our little Old Colorado City

Historical Society what have been the other historical organizations in the Pikes Peak Region?

The longest lasting 'historical' organization in the area is the "El Paso County Pioneers."

That venerable institution had interesting roots. It was formally organized in 1896. Irving Howbert helped form it. Part of their motivation came from the fact that, while the earliest pioneers tried to save relics and papers about their pioneering families and experiences from the days when Colorado City was first founded, they kept being lost. So an Association was formed. The phrase "To collect and preserve..." was part of its constitution



FIRST VIEW OF COLORADO CITY.

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		
Treasurer	David Hughes	636-2040
	Art Crawford	578-1158
	Janice deChadenades	598-7183
	Beverley Disch	634-5023
	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
 NEW MEMBERS!**

Linda Kaska
 Margaret Smith
 Joseph Perry (LIFE)

LETTER TO OCCHS

Dear Laura Bell, Mr. Schmidt, Mr. Bott, Mrs. Lamont, Dr. Winternitz, Mrs. Trout, Mrs. Baxter, and Mayor Ingraham,

Thank you so much for sharing your lives with us. My wife and I were greatly entertained by your portrayals at the recent cemetery walk.

Please find enclosed photos of each of you in thanks for your efforts. (Sincerest apologies to Mayor Ingraham; my new-fangled digital camera's batteries died at the very site of your burial. You cut a very handsome figure!).....

Sincerely,
 Rick and Rose Bergles,
 West-siders

(Editor's note: These photos are on display in the History Center Museum.)

**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 Sandy Hanzlian

By Barbara Barbaro

Born and raised in Buffalo, New York, Sandy found her way to Colorado in early 2005 after her two daughters, vowing never to return to New York, had moved out here.

Living on the Westside and being a walker, Sandy became aware of the History Center when she would take her walks via Pikes Peak Avenue. As chance would have it, she met Joanne Karlson (current president of the Historical Society) in a Tai Chi class. Being a newcomer and knowing no one, she started talking to Joanne about activities in the area that she might get involved in, and Joanne told her about the American Association of University Women (AAUW), and the History Center. Before she knew it, she had the bug to become a volunteer.

Sandy has done a wide range of volunteering at the History Center, from being a regular in the bookstore, to helping at various events such as the Cemetery Crawl, the Arts and Crafts Fair and Territory Days. An old hand at holding garage sales back in New York, Sandy enjoyed lending her experience at the History Center's garage sale held in the court yard a couple of years ago. She also enjoys helping out at the Tuesday Nights in July lectures.

When asked what her favorite thing is about the History Center, Sandy didn't hesitate by answering "the Friday lectures". She enjoys learning about the history, geography, and social economics of not only Old Colorado City, but Colorado and the whole West.

Despite the time Sandy puts into working at the History Center, she still has time for her other interests such as being involved for the past three years in the AAUW, which supports women's organizations, and also promotes opportunities for women, especially in the educational arena. She enjoys attending their luncheon meetings with guest speakers.

About two years ago she became active in the Pikes Peak Neighbors organization, an offspring of the old Welcome Wagon. In 2009 she's looking forward to sharing the role of program coordinator with another woman. To round out her wide-ranging variety of activities, Sandy is also a member of Amiable Amblers, a walking group.

Sandy believes that people are attracted to Old Colorado City because it represents the

spirit of the West, which, in its heyday, was made up of common, working class folks such as farmers, miners, and shopkeepers. She speaks highly of those folks, which she reminds us were willing to move out west and start a new life with very few possessions. She says that when walking through Old Colorado City even today, there is an air of friendliness and inclusiveness, an acceptance, you might say, of who you are and where you're from.

I asked Sandy if she had any memorable moments at the Center with either visitors or other volunteers. Her quick and heartwarming response was, "talking to the visitors and hearing their stories of why they're here in Old Colorado City". She especially likes interfacing with visitors from the East coast, where she feels an immediate bond.

Having a lifetime career as a teacher and educator, there's no doubt why Sandy's thirst for knowledge fits so well with the History Center. As she puts it, "There is so much to learn and gain through involvement with the History Center. Its wealth of information, resources, and talented people provides an inspirational background on which to continue learning."

The History Center couldn't be happier that Sandy found her way to its doors.



and bylaws. But to be a full fledged member one had to have arrived in the Pikes region prior to January 1st, 1864! Or be a direct descendent of same.

As the early pioneers aged, the rules had to be changed - first of all one had to have arrived here 50 years before applying. Then it was changed to 35 years. By 1976 there were 180 members, with a quarter of them being 'associate' members a category that was created to keep the organization alive. Today anyone with an interest in local history may join. It has 400 members.

Besides collecting and preserving history, the Association organized the marking of historic buildings and sites. Old Colorado City is indebted to their efforts to mark 'The Fort' at 2818 West Pikes Peak in the 30's, the granite marker with bronze plaque in Bancroft Park in the 40's, and the small stone monument on Boulder Crescent to the three boys who were killed by the Arapahoe Indians in 1868. They also erected a monument in 'Pioneer Park' in Pleasant Valley in the 50's, inscribed with names of 45 pioneers who were buried there.

The Association, with the help of Chief Buckskin Charley and his band of Ute Indians, even marked the 'Ute Pass Trail' in 1912.

Some of the relics members collected or donated were then displayed in a small museum in the Stratton Park Pavilion in 1908. Irving Howbert who had been County Clerk and Recorder then helped arrange relics into four cases that were displayed in the hallways of the then pretty 'new' El Paso County Court House, which had been built in 1903.

That was not enough. By 1935 the Association persuaded the Council of the City of Colorado Springs to purchase the Knights of Columbus Hall at 25 West Kiowa street. The site can still be seen, marked by a free-standing clock tower right in front of it on Kiowa. Laborers paid by the city with Depression Era federal WPA funds, moved all the displays from wherever they were stored into that one building. The Association then formally deeded their entire collection to the City of Colorado Springs. That was 1941. With that, the first separate city-supported Pioneer Museum, was born. It started with an unpaid honorary curator, Mrs W. W. Price. She was followed later by a tireless, and then paid curator - Dorothy E Smith. Then in 1979 the Pioneer Museum was moved into the original 85 year old 1903 County Courthouse building, which had been rescued from destruction only

after a public outcry, after the City had destroyed many of the historic buildings downtown. The County sold the building to the City for a token amount - \$1.00. Today that Museum, originally named after the Pioneer's Association, has 14 full time city employees paid from a \$1.3 million city budget.

The El Paso County Pioneer Association, has continued on, focusing more on the history of Colorado Springs than of greater El Paso County.

The Historical Society of the Pikes Peak Region was formed in 1950 and had a variable history. It met in one of the rooms of the downtown Penrose Library, right next door to what was still the small Pioneer Museum. Historians such as Dr. Norman Bender of UCCS, Rosmary Hetzler an historian at the Pioneers Museum until she retired in 1984 and Joyce Johns, who was one of our early Presidents, were active members. They watched presentations from historians such as Harvey Carter of Colorado College.

They conducted field trips, such as to visit the rare and famous surviving Kit Carson Carousel far on the eastern plains in Burlington, Colorado.

During the Denver-centered "Rush to the Rockies" celebrations of 1959, marking the 100th year since the discovery of gold in Colorado, Kenneth Englert, as President of that umbrella Historical Society helped engineer the transportation of the 1859 Garvin Cabin from the Broadmoor Golf Course on which it sat from 1929 on, to Denver where it was placed on the State Capitol Grounds right on Broadway, for two years before being returned to Colorado Springs where it was given by the Society to the City and put in Bancroft Park.

By the 1970's interest had waned in the Historical Society of the Pikes Peak Region and the then President Jim Wilson was prepared to shut down the Society when dynamic Juanita Breckenridge took over, revived it, built membership back up to nearly 300 members. They placed historical plaques on historic houses throughout the region and had annual dinners attended by up to 100 active members. It was tied to the Colorado Historical Society. Its members attended its Denver programs.

But by 1985 the Society faded again, and it closed its books and finally went out of existence just as our Old Colorado City Historical Society which we first organized in 1976, focused on the history of forgotten Colorado City, early El Paso County and the blue-collar Westside of Colorado Springs. In the

early 90's we acquired the 1889 First Baptist Church of Colorado City building, to make it into a History Center as well as Museum in order to display artifacts and memorabilia from all the 150 year life of the original Colorado City/ Colorado Springs' Westside, including those from the Civil War and Indian fighting days which Colorado Springs never went through, to the railroad, gold milling, saloon, gambling, and sporting house history of those early days, most history of which had never been publicly displayed in the Pioneer's Museum.

There were some other short lived early organizations, such as the 1914 'Half Century Club' and the 1928 Covered Wagon Pioneers. The 'Colorado Springs Ghost Town Club' which sprang into existence after World War II in 1946 as wartime-designed Jeeps stimulated rocky mountain Ghost Town trips. One key member of that organization whose work became important to our society's earliest grasp on Colorado City's history was Lorene Englert. She delivered papers to the Club, wrote articles, recorded the earliest land transactions of Colorado City, and tracked down the 1859 'Fosdick Plat' of Colorado City from the National Archives which is the foundation map for all the lots, blocks, street names from 20th to 30th Streets along West Colorado Avenue and between Unitah to and over Fountain Creek to the Midland area.

Then, during the dual local celebrations of the nation's 1976 Bicentennial and Colorado's Centennial, the 'Pikes Peak or Bust by '76' Committee was formed. It supported over 250 separate activities, publications, markings, and commemorations between 1975 and 1977 before dissolving. It was the first organization to promote the separate history of 'Old' Colorado City, via an annual Territory Days Festival.

The Manitou Springs Historical Society was formed in 1972 and progressively grew until it acquired "Miramont Castle" in 1976 which is today its large and active museum, tea room and book store off Ruxton Avenue.

Now there are efforts afoot by a separate organization called Historic Manitou, Inc, to acquire a building for a separate Manitou City Heritage Center.

The Palmer Lake Historical Society has existed since 1956, and secured the Lucretia Vaille Museum with its library in 1981 serving Palmer Lake, Monument, and the entire Palmer Divide.

The Colorado Springs Pikes Peak Posse of Westerners International was formed in 1976 after the Denver Posse which was formed in 1945. The more informal tone of that organization can be gleaned from its stated purpose "The members promote the study and understanding of Western history and, at the same time, have fun and avoid taking themselves too seriously."

However, both have published valuable annual 'Brand Books' full of well researched regional history articles.

The Ute Pass Historical Society was first formed in 1976 in Cascade Colorado, under the tutelage of Ute Indian Historian Jan Petit. Its museum emphasized the Indian heritage of the Ute's and the route up the very old 'Ute Pass' for many Indian tribes heading for hunting grounds around South Park.

But as often happens, the ability of local history societies to support a free standing Museum and staff with its costs becomes too much to bear. That Society just about went out of existence, until it was more recently reborn in Woodland Park, with more modest goals.

A new organization centered in Florissant, west of Woodland Park, named the Pikes Peak Historical Society, has already opened a Museum there.

Likewise there arose a Fountain Valley Historical Society in 2005 formed out of 5 local much older civic organizations which collectively owned a building used for community meetings. They decided to both form an Historical Society and give the building to the City of Fountain on the condition that it could house a Museum there. The City agreed and pays for some of the building expenses. Members of that Society are trying to preserve the rich history of Fountain and its earliest surrounding ranches and farms. The land it is on was traversed by Zebulon Pike in 1806 on his way to attempt to climb the Peak now named after him. Farms and ranches were homesteaded in the 'Fountain Valley' as early as 1860 and its Stage Stop was for a long time the only stopover between the Arkansas River and Colorado City and Ute Pass, one route into the Rocky Mountains and the gold mine camps.

Not to forget the lives and contributions of one important segment of El Paso County's population, the Negro Historical Society of Colorado Springs was formed in 1982, and several publications have been produced by its members.

Beyond the metro Colorado Springs area, many other Societies and Museums have flourished from time to time. There has long been a Cripple Creek Historic Society, and a Victor Historic Preservation Society

Now if History is Bunk, the Pikes Peak Region has a lot of bunkum, for there not only are and have there been numerous historical societies, there are even more free standing Museums, usually with a small organization supporting them. Several are listed below.

- The Dr. Lester Williams Fire Museum
- The Glen Eyrie Castle owned by The Navigators
- The Old Homestead, Cripple Creek and the Cripple Creek District Museum
- Victor's Lowell Thomas Museum.
- The Pikes Peak Historical Street Railway Foundation and Museum.
- The Western Museum of Mining & Industry
- El Pomar Carriage Museum owned by the El Pomar Foundation
- Historic McAllister House, owned by the Colonial Dames of America
- Rock Ledge Ranch Historic Site, owned and operated by the City of Colorado Springs.
- T.H.E. (Teller.History.Environmental) Coalition engaged in saving the 100 Year old Midland Depot at Divide, Colorado.

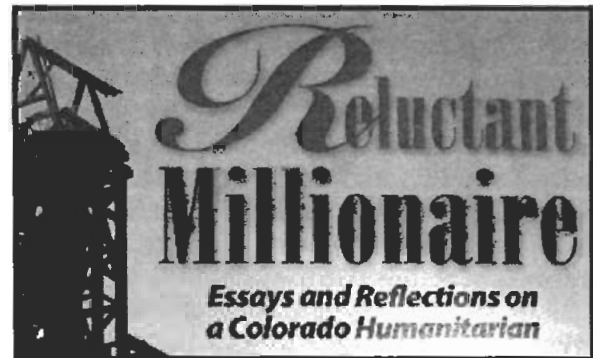
Now, while computer geeks may have disdained the study of history, in fact those in the Old Colorado City Historical Society who love history, want to see it preserved, and want to gather even more from afar, telling the Colorado City story far beyond the confines of the display room of its Museum, have been using computer and internet tools for the past 10 years to display the original Colorado City's history.

As of this writing this small Society is building a powerful new web site with the latest Internet computer tools which will not only present, in text and photograph, past history, but will present to the world new oral stories and video clips by and of old timers. And sometimes it may broadcast audience presentations over the Internet in real time. That will permit those who are related to anyone who ever lived in Colorado City or on the Westside, to provide their family histories to be published 'online' and be stored

in our digital archives. We then will be able to support members who never are able to visit us in Colorado Springs. And yet, eventually, they and the public can see and inspect every artifact, document, photograph, oral story, and video we have in our collection.

Maybe the history of the Pikes Peak region is not bunk after all. Especially when one counts the thousands of annual visitors who patronize all the museums and historical societies, diverse events and programs in El Paso County I have listed above. And the 60,000 who have visited our history web site, limited as it is.

Maybe by our preserving and distributing our Colorado City History in such Hi-Tech ways we are doing the only thing that was acceptable to Henry Ford - 'making history today.'



FROM THE BOOKSTORE-

By Betsy Evans

How many of you have been entertained at a local program where Richard Marold assumed the persona of Winfield Scott Stratton?

Did you marvel at the vast array of personal facts Mr. Marold had gathered regarding intimate details of this shy millionaire's life?

Mr. Marold has just published a book containing much of his research on the local icon, Winfield Scott Stratton. Each chapter is headed by a question and followed by quick responses for one or two pages. This is an interesting book for research or just a quick read!

Winfield Scott Stratton - Reluctant Millionaire, by Richard Marold \$14.95

From the President's Desk~

Yes, OCCHS is returning to an annual dinner. This newsletter includes **your invitation** to this event on September 25th. Don't miss this opportunity to bring a guest, visit with old and newer members, and hear Ed Nichols, new President and C.E.O. of the Colorado State Historical Society, share his perspectives about the current preservation of Colorado history!

We wish to express special thanks to the El Pomar Foundation for their grant to help paint the History Center exterior. We should have taken a photo of the 'cherry picker' (the crane) extended to the top of the building! What a sight! Some of the museum's newer exhibits drawing attention are Phil McDonald's collection of presidential campaign memorabilia, children's toys, and Indians of the Pikes Peak region. Barbara Barbaro has resigned from the OCCHS Board to spend more time working with the archives and exhibits. Much progress is being made in these areas.

Art Crawford and his sister have donated and planted iris from their parent's home along our patio fence. We welcome any perennial plants you want to donate. Let us know if you are willing to help with pruning and other yardwork. It's good exercise!

Summer events and fundraisers have included the June Craft Sale in Bancroft Park and Tuesday Nights in July programs as well as August Founders' Day and the Cemetery Crawl. I hope you attended some of these events! Thanks go to the following volunteers: Kay Atteberry, Leslie Bergstrom, Jo Cervone, Art Crawford, Jan deChadenedes, Bev Disch, Muriel Dunkley, Pat Ebersole, Don Ellis, Betsy Evans, Pat & Andy Fejedelem, Sandy Hanzlian, Doris & Tom Hendrix, Dave Hughes, Werner Karlson, Marge & Joe Knorr, Jan Knox, Martha Lee, Jay Lowery, Kathy McBride, Anita Schimmel, Paul Shepard, Sharon, Dave & Sara Swint, Eloise Wynne, and the many contributors to the Bake Sale, plus our program speakers: Mary Humphreys, Pat Musick & New Deal friends, and OCCHS members, Phil McDonald, Don Kallaus, and Don Sanborn, and Cemetery Crawl actors,

Ken Marcus and Jennifer Tilton. We appreciate the generous money contribution from the Pikes Peak National Bank to help with Founders' Day expenses. Thank you, everyone!!

And, a reminder. If you would like to receive email notices (rather than phone calls from the telephone tree) plus occasional historical articles, please send your request and your email address to:

history@oldcolo.com

See you in September.

Joanne Karlson

July-August Treasurer's Report

Income went up in July and early August as we held Founders Day and our Annual Cemetery Crawl

We earned \$1,070 from Booth Rentals the 9th of August, and received \$500 from the Pikes Peak Bank to support the event. Thus we had \$1,570 from which we spent \$475 for entertainment to attract people to the Crafter's offerings, and \$145 for Advertising to promote it ahead of time. So we netted \$1,050 for our doings in Bancroft Park on Saturday.

Our Cemetery Crawl was more popular this year than last, in spite of threatening weather. We took in \$1,008 in ticket sales for nearly 150 attendees. Being a cool day we sold only \$8.00 in pop and water. A total of \$1,016 income from 10AM to 3PM on Sunday. Our main expenditure was for advertising - \$145.

Thus we netted \$871 from this event. For both events combined on 'Founder's Day Weekend' your society gained \$1,921 for its coffers. Pretty good.

As of mid August we had \$112,388 in our interest-bearing savings account, \$5,500 in our checking account and Betsy had \$1,169 in her Bookstore Account. \$90,000 of the \$112,388 continues to be our Fixed Endowment fund, \$7,825 of the balance is obligated to Digitization development, while the remainder, \$14,563 represents our general purpose 'savings.'

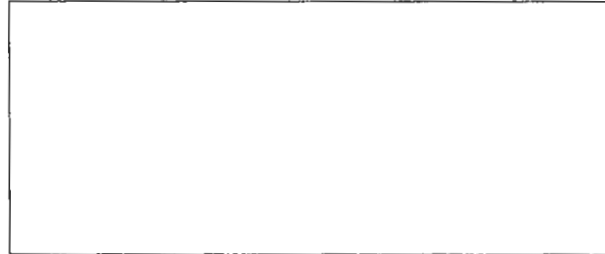
Dave Hughes

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



SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

Friday, September 12 **Monthly programs begin.** 11 a.m. Open at 10:30 a.m.
"Colorado City & the Civil War" presented by Dave Hughes with an
illustrated discussion about the historic Battle of Glorieta Pass

Saturday, September 13 **Book Signing and Program** 1 p.m.
"The Borders Within: Encounters with Mexico and America"
presented by Doug Monroy, History Dept. Chairman at Colorado College,
with discussion about the changing historical perspective of the
understanding of 'place' in Western U.S. history

Thursday, September 25 **Annual Dinner at the Clarion Hotel**
Guest Speaker: Ed Nichols, President and C.E.O. of the Colorado Historical
Society. \$25 members.

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