



Volume 25, Number 5

June, July, 2010

Report from the Colorado-Wyoming Association of Museums Conference

By Dave Hughes Sr

David Hughes Jr. and I attended the Annual CWAM - Colorado-Wyoming Association of Museums meeting in Laramie, Wyoming, May 13th-15th as representatives of OCCHS, which has been a member for several years. We gave a presentation about our Museum as one of the sessions.

CWAM largely represents the interests of many smaller and rural town Museums across the wide open spaces of Colorado and Wyoming. The meeting helps curators and boards share their solutions to problems and learn about national as well as regional trends which will affect them in the future. Community involvement and outreach seemed a recurring theme. And there was lots of discussion about the growing influence of the Internet.

There were not too many useful insights gained, in such topics as new funding sources. All the social events were held in neat historically restored Laramie buildings.

The two most striking impressions both of us came away with were (1) how fortunate our all-volunteer Society is, to be so organizationally stable and financially solvent during this time of economic stress. (2) Just how advanced we are in our OCCHS vision and progressive implementation of the total digitization of all our collections. It impressed

many when they realized that our web site, is not just a 'distributor,' but also a 'collector' of history (such as from remote descendents of Colorado City pioneers) as well as a source of income to the society as a whole.

While one report was made by a nationally funded studies of museums we - and even the presenters - were stunned that fully 83% of all museums surveyed who know they are being forced into the Internet have no long range 'Digital Preservation Plan.' Not even digital conservation of their photographic collections much less digital renderings of all their artifacts. They simply don't know what to do or how to do it. Additionally, in response to questions we posed to all those who attended our hour and a half presentation we learned OCCHS is far ahead of every other - even very well staffed museums - in our extension of our 'traditional' physical museum into a global cyberspace 'Virtual Old Colorado City Museum' via our web site.

Attendees wanted our cards, several want to visit our History Center, and many asked David Jr. what it would take to get him to help them get far better into their own inevitable 'Digital Future.' I just invited all to join our Society, remotely, and sign up via our website!

Old Colorado City Historical Society

1 South 24th Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80904-3319
http://history.oldcolo.com 636-1225

WEST WORD

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The Old Colorado City Historical Society

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WEST WORD Editor c/o OCCHS

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Colorado Springs, CO 80904-3319

or Don Ellis - spiderwort@pcsys.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:

Student	\$15	Lifetime	\$150
Individual	\$25	Business	\$50
Family	\$30	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	Phil McDonald	532-0881
Vice President	Janice deChadenades	598-7183
Secretary	Sharon Swint	630-8384
Treasurer	Johnie Jackson	550-0999
	Beverly Dlsch	634-5023
	Tom Hendrix	633-7392
	Dave Munay	527-6778
	Suzanne Schorsch	488-0256
	Paul Shepard	633-8090

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

Bill Arnold
Rick & Rose Bergles
Sue Comish
Gordon Gray
Werner Karlson
Arlene Lanman
Janet Rose Lyons
Dave & Lynne Murray
Verna Nelson
Robert & Sandra Patchall
Sarah Ryals
Al & Donna Rich
John & Lynn Rowsey
Jay & Andrea Vickerman



Photo by Judy Willey

Marge Knorr holding her
Volunteer Recognition certificate

Volunteer Spotlight – meet Liz Geiss

by Barbara Barbaro

The History Center is losing one of its longest and dearest members of the Society, Liz Geiss. After having volunteered at the Center for over 20 years, Liz is leaving the Westside to be closer to her three children. In fact, by the time this issue of the West Word has reached everyone, she should be settled in her comfy two-bedroom apartment in a Denver retirement village.

When Liz began working at the History Center she was already volunteering her time at the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, but was ready to take on additional work. That was at the time when Lucille Cunningham, Ralph Conner, and other early Society pioneers were in the process of finalizing the papers to take possession of the Baptist Church for the History Center's new home. The fit was perfect..Liz lived within a block of the new Center and they needed volunteers. She stepped up to the plate and began organizing all of the downstairs area, which became the Center's Collections

Department, where all of its artifacts, archives and photographs are stored. Her connection with the Fine Arts Center came in handy, too. At that same time, the Fine Arts Center was in the process of disposing of dozens of wooden storage drawers and other items they no longer needed. Liz snatched them up and brought them over to the History Center. To this day the drawers are still being used to house the majority of its artifacts. Liz' late husband, Chuck, was instrumental in building various storage areas for downstairs, including all of the shelving for the drawers and the cabinets for storing clothing and textiles. Liz, Lillian Ross from the Pioneers Museum, and a handful of other women worked hard at setting up the original accession books and records. It was none too soon either, because Luther McKnight, a local resident and collector extraordinaire, had just bequeathed loads of items to the Center.

Born in Staten Island, New York, she eventually attended Syracuse University and got her degree in art. From then on, her life seemed to revolve around teaching art. Her first job was teaching art in a central school and ten rural schools, all at the same time, and later, she taught in Wallkill, New York, a job she held for many years. During that same timeframe Liz married Chuck Geiss and they lived in Greenwich Village. As she so fondly described it, they paid \$60 a month for an apartment, which she gussied up to look like a \$90 a month apartment. She and Chuck eventually had two boys and a girl, and ended up in Plainfield, New Jersey, where again, they lived for many years. Later on she received her Master's degree from Columbia University.

Eventually, all of their children, then adults and on their own ended up in Colorado. Liz and Chuck, anxious to be close to them moved out to Colorado from New Jersey. The rest is history, you might say, as Liz quickly became an active contributor to the Historical Society and the History Center. In all the years she's worked at the History Center, she's always worked downstairs in the Collections area.

What's in store for Liz in Denver as she enters this new phase of her life? She's not quite sure



Continued page 4

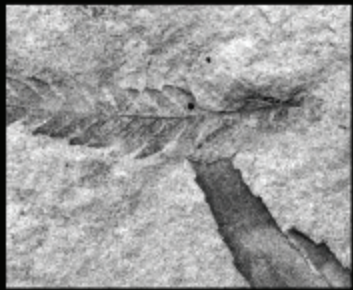
Liz Geiss continued from page 3

right now, she says. Her kids live close enough where they can easily spend quality time together. She mused that she's always loved history and art and may do some teaching. The deep thinker that she is, Liz likens herself to the astronomical sign of the scales, "put the pros on

one side, the cons on the other, see which one weights over, and then make your decision". We're sure her decision to leave the Westside and join up with her children is a wise one, but there's a big void here at the History Center already. All of us here in the Collections Department will deeply miss you, Liz. Best of luck in all that you do!



Members of the Collections Department have lunch one last time with Liz. left to right: Martha Lee, Liz, Barbara Barbaro, Jan deChadenedes, and Dave Murray



Geologic Folio

Red Rock Canyon Open Space

Colorado Springs, Colorado


Ken Weissenburger, Sharon Milite & Don Ellis

Program and Book Signing

June 26 at 2:00 P.M.

at the

Old Colorado City History Center



OCCHS BOOKSTORE

September 2009 - May 2010

In September, Bookstore management changed from Betsy Evans, who successfully ran the bookstore and built a large selection of books for museum shoppers to be able to purchase, to Susanne Schorsch.

Upon assuming management, a complete inventory of all items in the bookstore took place and was computerized to better allow for asset management. Research was done to see what we paid for each item, number ordered, and time each item had been in inventory. This was done to better track old merchandise that needed to be discounted and marked down. This also allowed for tracking best selling items and to ensure that stock was sufficient for best sellers.

The next step was to put our bookkeeping system on the computer, first on spread sheets that are easily understood so that if management changes again, it is easy for a new person to take over bookkeeping. Free bookkeeping software from Microsoft and Quickbooks is being looked at for the future.

Next we looked at ways to have better mark up for a larger profit picture in the bookstore, bringing in some gift lines for the Christmas season and looking at consignment.

The main objective for the bookstore volunteers is to be hosts to any people that visit our museum and to raise money for OCCHS by promoting donations from our visitors to our "donation box", sales from the bookstore, and helping sell tickets for events.

Starting in 2010, it is the hope that the bookstore can be further involved in the promotion of Westside history by promoting writers and helping writers with publishing and marketing. We have entered into a relationship with Mother House Publishing where we will be working closer with a local printer in promoting writers by publishing and marketing. Our first joint effort has been with the Red Rock Canyon book written by members of Friends of Red Rock Canyon and a member of OCCHS. We have helped with marketing and a pre-sale to come up with

money for printing costs and to pay for inventory to sell in our bookstore. Our pre-sale promotion sold over 100 books at \$39.99 each allowing us to print 45 extra copies that can be sold in our bookstore. As of May, most of these 45 extra inventory books have been sold. A second printing is scheduled for June 1st, prior to a lecture and book signing that we will hold on June 26. Marketing is still continuing on this book. Actual profit from this book will be split between OCCHS and Friends of Red Rock Canyon. OCCHS is responsible for the accounting and sales.

We have two other books scheduled for this summer that we are working on with Mother House. We will help with marketing and have pre-sales. We are also planning a "Writers Rave" (a "meet the writers" event) where local authors published by Mother's House will be showcased at our society.

Bringing in new people to visit our museum through events and promotions of local writers has already helped with sales. As of May 1st, we are breaking all sales goals for the year!

It is the management of the bookstore's plan, along with the wonderful volunteer staff, that our bookstore becomes an active and contributing area working toward the goals set by our historical society.

Suzanne Schorsch

NEW THIS SUMMER!

ARTS & CRAFTS

on W. Pikes Peak Avenue

**Saturdays - June 12th through August 29th
9 A.M. - 2 P.M.**

5 crafter spaces will be set-up on the front lawn of the
Museum to coincide with the farmers market.

**To see how you can help with this fundraiser ...
Call Jo Cervone at 266-9096**

ANNUAL OCCHS BUSINESS MEETING

May 14, 2010

The annual OCCHS business meeting was opened at 10:00 A.M. by president, Joanne Karlson. A quorum for elections was established by Betty Baker, membership co-chairman.

Guests from the El Paso County Pioneers Association were introduced.

Various reports were accepted in writing from:

President - highlights of the year including the many Sesquicentennial activities, board changes, the annual dinner, bookstore changes, and various other committee changes, as well as her outlook for the future of OCCHS;

Treasurer - our current financial position which is very close to our budgeted figures as we enter into our main event season when profits should exceed our expenditures;

Bookstore - information on the financial status of the bookstore, events and promotions coming up and current printing activities;

Collections - information on volunteer status, digitization of photos, displays and new acquisitions

Dave Murray, Bev Disch, Suzanne Schorsch, Tom Hendrix and Jan deChadenes were unanimously elected to serve on the OCCHS for the next two years. Paul Shepard, Phil McDonald, Johnie Jackson and Sharon Swint continue on the board to fulfill their current terms. The election of new officers on the board will be held at the first board meeting of the new year on May 17, 2010.

Twenty volunteers were recognized as having worked 125+ hours at OCCHS in 2009. They include: Barbara Barbaro, Jo Cervone, Jan deChadenes, Art Crawford, Bev Disch, Muriel Dunkley, Don Ellis, Liz Geiss, Sandy Hanzlian, Dave Hughes, Johnie Jackson, Marge Knorr, Martha Lee, Phil McDonald, Dave Murray, Suzanne Schorsch, Paul Shepard, Sharon Swint, Jerry Travers, and Eloise Wynne. In order to keep better records of volunteer hours in 2010, members were reminded to mark down their work in the volunteer notebook at the front desk.

Announcements were made regarding the summer Arts and Crafts activities, Tuesday Nights in July speakers and the Territory Days and Bake Sale. Joanne again requested more volunteers to research Westword articles, to help with events, programs, maintenance, and the Bookstore.

A program was presented by the El Paso County Pioneers Association. It was a power point history of El Paso County's efforts to collect and save our pioneer history from the late 1800s to present.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 A.M.

Respectfully submitted by acting secretary,
Sharon Swint

Past President's Letter

Looking back at the past 12 months, I am glad to report that Society volunteers are stepping forward to help with projects, our finances are stable, and we continue to be a "voice" for Old Colorado City's unique history. The highlights of 2009 centered on our year-long Sesquicentennial celebration and the dedication of the historical monument in Bancroft Park.

I especially want to thank the many Bookstore volunteers, Susie and Betsy, and the collections department for their time and contributions towards making our History Center an interesting community center. They stepped forward to work with visitors and researchers as well as create wonderful exhibits. Behind-the-scenes, Don Ellis has consistently produced a high quality WestWord newsletter and Jo Cervone has been our media contact. The OCCHS Board had an active, productive group of leaders. There are many, many members to recognize and thank. You know who you are!

After serving six years on the OCCHS Board of Directors and two years as President, I am "retiring" again. My husband and I plan to do some traveling and participate at the History Center on a different level. New leadership means some changes, but also some fresh new voices for OCCHS, as it should be with any vital organization. Best wishes to all.

—Joanne Karlson, Past OCCHS President

President-Elect's Report

By Phil McDonald

On Monday, May 17, the Board of Directors of the Old Colorado City Historical Society selected me as our new President. It was with no small measure of reluctance, that I accepted the Board's action. Truth be told, I have some mighty big shoes to fill. Joanne Karlson's stewardship of our organization left the society a more vibrant and healthy organization. Thanks, Joanne for a job well done.

The most significant factor that mitigated in favor of my acceptance of this position is that I will have the support of a wonderful core group of volunteers who have worked with verve and enthusiasm in the fulfillment of their responsibilities to the society. It is said that one of the keys to sound leadership is to surround yourself with competent and enthusiastic people and turn them loose to do their jobs. It is my intention to do exactly that!

The state of our society is strong because of the contributions of myriad individuals in many different areas; archives and collections, programs, membership, digitization, fund-raising, advertising, maintenance of the bookstore, building and grounds, publicity, website management, and management of our finances. A healthy organization is one which is blessed with a broad base of support and participation. The Old Colorado City Historical Society is so blessed. I feel privileged and honored to work with so many wonderful people.

Westside Community Center

Our Society started collecting nearly \$6,000 in our early drive to help save the threatened Westside Community Center. Then the large Woodman Valley Chapel came to the City's rescue. Now that the center is operating as a separate LLC, using just donated private contributions, we are pleased to transfer our fund to the Center, which will acknowledge our generous, legally tax exempt, individual donations.

Dave Hughes

TREASURER'S REPORT MAY 14, 2010

The building Maintenance and Utilities cost were less this past month than in the earlier months of the year. We are beginning to see some income from our events as the Victorian Tea is held in the month of May. We had \$150 of income in April. The income figures for the Bookstore are amazing but are misleading. There are future expenses that will use most of this indicated profit. But they will show double the budgeted profit for the month and they did the budgeted income for May in the first week of the month. Overall through the first four months we were only 4% above budgeted expenses. Our season of profitable events is just beginning with the Tea and Territory Days the last weekend of the month.

TOTAL LIQUID ASSETS

OCCHS Bank Account	\$ 4,548.15
Book Store Bank Account	\$ 5,311.99
Memorial Hos. Rev. Bond	\$ 50,937.00
Cal Regents Re. Bond	\$ 25,259.50
Edward Jones Bonds (Cash)	\$ 1,078.21
Fixed Endowment Savings	\$ 14,433.59
Fixed Endowment Savings	\$ 90,010.34
Earned Income Savings	\$ 10,988.98
Shirley Bond Digital Acc't	\$ 4,125.20

Total Liquid Assets \$ 116,682.62

If you would like to make the Old Colorado Historical Society the recipient of some part of your estate please visit with the Treasurer or someone on the Board of Directors for information. You know these funds will be used in a responsible manner. You may make a specific designation or let them be used in the general fund. Thank you for your consideration.

Johnie E. Jackson, Treasurer
Old Colorado City Historical Society

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June & July at the Old Colorado City History Center

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JUNE

Saturdays, 9 to 2

Arts & Crafts on Pikes Peak Avenue & S. 24th Street

Tues., June 8
7 p.m.

"Noxious Weeds" Michelle Oldham, El Paso County Forestry and Noxious Weed Inspector. Sponsored by Friends of Red Rock Canyon.

Sat., June 26
2 P.M.

"Geologic Folio - Red Rock Canyon Open Space" program and book signing with Ken Weissenburger, Sharon Milito, and Don Ellis

JULY

Saturdays, 9 to 2

Arts & Crafts on Pikes Peak Avenue & S. 24th Street

Tues., July 6
6:30 P.M.

Ice Cream Social fundraiser - All welcome!
Small fee

Tues., July 13
7 P.M.

"Forts of the West" program presented by Phil McDonald,

Tues., July 20
7 P.M.

"Nicola Tesla, Lightning & Colorado Springs" presented by Richard Marold, Program & Reception:

Tues., July 27
7 P.M.

"Law & Disorder in Old Colorado City" and the KKK Program & Book Signing with Barbara Barbaro & Paul Shepard

Museum Hours: Tues. thru Sat., 11 - 4 Free Admission. ~ Donations greatly appreciated