

## Alva Adams

By Betty D. Freudenburg

The large family of John Adams of Black Earth, Wisconsin was rapidly diminishing. Of nine children, only five remained. Two of their sons had died, and a third was quite ill. Threatened that they were in danger of losing their third son to respiratory illness, the decision was made to take their doctor's advice and emigrate to the Rocky Mountains.

Oldest son, Alva, 21, was put in charge of the expedition. He would take eight horses for his mother, five younger children, and two hired men, to go westward in three covered wagons, one requested by Alva's father to be constructed as an army ambulance. They were warned by their physician against making the trip by train, because the doctor felt rail travel was too quick and could be dangerous for patients with lung diseases.

Alva agreed to send columns describing their experiences en route to Colorado back to their home-town paper, The Black Earth Advertiser. He would be identified anonymously as "Dane, Overland Correspondent" Black Earth was part of Dane county; perhaps that was why that name was chosen.

In addition to successfully overseeing the family trip for the health of the children, Adams hardly is an unknown character in western history. His accomplishments included election to the first Colorado State Legislature in 1876, success as a business

man, and later, being twice elected as governor of Colorado.

Also most memorable, while delivering lumber to Colorado City on July 31, 1871, Alva watched the first stake being driven for the new town site of the coming city. A week later, being offered a better job as an employee of C. W. Sanborn, he set about building a structure that would answer for a lumber office, hardware store and dwelling place. By August he had completed a small building on South Cascade Avenue, which was the first building on the present site of Colorado Springs, and there the business was carried on.

Alva Adams completed and slept in the first house on site of Colorado Springs! And as "Dane", he kept the residents of both Black Earth and the Colorado Springs area informed about the wonders of Colorado Springs, especially his climbing Pikes Peak.



*The account of Alva Adams' climb of Pikes Peak, as written by "Dane", is reproduced beginning on page 4*

**Old Colorado City Historical Society**

1 South 24th Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80904-3319  
 http://www.occhs.org (719) 636-1225

**WEST WORD**

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**The Old Colorado City Historical Society**

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1 South 24th Street

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or Don Ellis - splderwort@pcslsys.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	Sharon Swint	630-8384
Vice President	Janice deChadenades	598-7183
Secretary	Jo Cervone	266-9096
Treasurer	Suzanne Schorsch	488-0256
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	Beverley Disch	634-5023
	Tom Hendrix	633-7392
	Phil McDonald	532-0881
	Dave Murray	488-0256

**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**

**Luana Clark**

**Diana Francese**

**Robin Johnston Family**

**Curtis Neeley**

**Mr. & Mrs. Dave Van Ness**



*All dressed up for  
 Laura Belle's  
 150th birthday party*

Photo by Don Kallaus

# A TRUE WESTSIDE FAMILY

by Suzanne Schorsch

Most young teenagers have no idea what they want out of life - let alone where they want to be! For young Jennie Gardner, she knew she loved Colorado and she knew that she loved family, so it was no surprise that in 1922 she would end up in the Old Colorado City area of Colorado Springs with her husband, to live, raise her family and build a home. The home was completed in 1923 and is still in the family. But the story started before 1922. In 1913 Jennie traveled to Colorado in a covered wagon to visit her sister Minnie, who had homesteaded with her husband in Colorado. Jennie already loved Colorado through tales told to her by her sisters Gussie and Pearl who had visited Colorado. Their stories of beautiful Colorado made young Jennie think of Colorado as a fairyland. When Jennie's family decided to visit Colorado on holiday in 1913 her father suggested that Jennie keep a journal of their trip to Colorado and then back to their family farm in Kansas.

Jennie married Frank Caduff in 1920 after World War I and moved to Colorado to join her sister and follow her dream to live in Colorado. They built their house on North 24th Street where her daughter lives today. Frank worked at the lime plant in Manitou. Lime was used in gold processing. He then worked for Golden Cycle until the gold processing mill closed. Later he worked on the Pikes Peak Highway. The Caduffs had two children, Gerald and Merrilyn.

Jennie lived for her family, and like most families on the Westside, she raised not only children, but goats, chickens, dogs, cats and even the turkey her son won at a movie theatre give away. She had a love for music and poetry. Jennie was known for her pies and would bake ten at a time to make sure she had plenty to give to friends and neighbors. Later in life, at the urging of her children who loved to hear tales of life in a covered wagon, Jennie used the journal from her trip in 1913 to write her memories down.

The Caduffs children grew up as true Westsiders. Gerald Caduff served in the Navy

during WWII. After the war he spent his life as a teacher, then later as 1st President of the University of Southern Colorado. He was instrumental in the formation of Pueblo Vocational Community College. Merrilyn Caduff was born in the house on 24th Street in 1934 where she lives today. She spent 32 years as a teacher, teaching English, Grammar and Speech to high school students.

In the 1960's the Caduff family had Jennie's memories typed and spiral bound and made available to the public. It had wonderful reviews by the Gazette at that time as a wonderful look at the Pikes Peak region during the turn of the century. In order to preserve this book, the Old Colorado City Historical Society has raised funds to have the book published properly for prosperity. Almost 100 years after Jennie's journey to Colorado you can take this trip with her by reading *My First Trip to Colorado* offered now at the Historical Society's bookstore. This book shows a glimpse of life in America in the early 1900's from dug out homes to Victorian hotels, from in-home "singings" to new movies for entertainment and from travel in a covered wagon to seeing the United States by train.

The book, normally \$13.95 will be our special for the month of December for only \$9.95.



*Young Jennie Gardner center with family, used with permission from Merrilyn Caduff*

# Alva Adams description of his 1871 Pikes Peak Climb

By "Dane"

From: *Facing the Frontier - the Story of the MacGregor Ranch*  
published by the  
Rocky Mountain Nature Association  
Rocky Mountain National Park  
Estes Park, CO 80517  
Reprinted 2005  
© Betty D. Freudenburg

*The Advertiser*, Sept 7, 1871, *Overland Correspondence*. COLORADO SPRINGS, CO, Aug 15, '71

Most every visitor from those states where they can never, by natural avenues, attain an altitude of but a few hundred feet above the sea level, are ambitious when entering a mountainous region, to ascend one of the highest peaks.

To those who cast their anchors in this portion of Colorado, the rugged crests of Pike's Peak is the point to which their aspirations ascend. This peak, though not the highest, is the most widely known of any peak in the Rocky Mountains. It attained an historic note by being associated with the great gold discoveries of '59. This is an error of which it is difficult to determine its origin, no important gold discoveries having been made within a hundred miles of the peak, nor was it scarcely, if at all visible to those crossing the plains impelled by their golden expectations.

Of the many who came here determined to gaze upon the wonderful panorama to which the ascent of Pike's Peak is the entrance fee, but a small minority succeed. With many their desires evaporate or are at least obscured by the mere narration of the obstacles to be contended, of the physical labor and consequent fatigue that must be endured. Others succumb with the first few hours' journey regarding it as a thing to them, unattainable. Amid the many conflicting reports of the practicability and impracticability of the route of the unattractiveness and of the fascinating beauty of the scenery - our interest was excited, our desires aroused and we began to prepare for the undertaking. Our outfit consisted of two blankets and three days rations per man. Our journey was inaugurated with feelings more determined than boyant; for it

required but a short time to prepare us to fully corroborate any report that we had heard concerning the ladder like - without the round - character of the trail.

Our direction was along a mountain stream which we were to follow to its source among the snow banks of the peak. In following our canyon, to avoid some perpendicular wall we were compelled to ascend the almost perpendicular mountain side, clinging to the vines and bushes for support and assistance, and again descending with the disagreeable sensation that every step downward must be again retaken. The second mile of our journey in which the stream has a descent of over two thousand feet, possesses more grandeur, more beauty of scenery than is ever in many an entire life. It is a continuation of cascades and falls, between walls that sometimes rises many hundred feet, over which some former convulsions of nature had cast granite boulders of immense proportions forming numerous and extensive caverns, in several of which the water coming through an aperture at the top forms a perfect fall of many feet, the effect is beautifully strange and fascinating. The echoing sound generated by the subterranean waters combined with their weird aspect in the dim and uncertain light awakens our admiration and wonder. But our Shekinah is beyond and we cannot linger. Five miles of circulous travel brings us to the top of the foot hills, where we enter a mountain park with the wild meadow grass five feet in height; but here, on account of innumerable fallen trees, locomotion was a most torturous proceeding, far more difficult than climbing the mountain side. Three miles of this tedious route brought us to the upper base of the peak, where it raises its silvery head far above its companions. Here, hungry and exhausted, we camped for the night, devoured our provender with infinite relish, built a large fire as sentinel, to guard us from the approach of ravenous beasts, and, amid the howling of cyots and the distant cry of the panther, reposed ourselves to sleep, to prepare for the labors of the morrow.

Early dawn found us prepared for our onward and upward journey. The air was now growing perceptibly lighter, rendering respiration difficult and 'rests' necessary at the end of every few rods, our luggage, which, upon starting

weighed but fifteen pounds now seemed augmented into an immense burden.

Our approach to the timber line (over 11,000 feet above the sea) was indicated by the gradual diminution of the height of the pine and cedar, which finally terminated in a line of scraggy, stunted and dead trees, which had long continued the battle against nature - a struggle between the bonded vassal and the despot - but it was a fight against destiny. The monarch's wind and storm, with their ruthless blade, severed every aspiration to cast their verdent branches beyond the confines of the immediate protecting rocks, sapping their lifeblood and casting them back into a dwarfed insignificance to creep along the earth or to die. Typical of human despotism, which ever strangles, with the galling manacles of tyranny, those aspirations that reach beyond the confines of ignorance, out into that pure domain of knowledge and free thought, whose atmosphere is pregnant with human freedom and equality. Before us arose the barren peak seeming by its very abruptness to defy any nearer approach. But as it is the last charge that decides the battle, the last quarter that determines the race, we struggled on with renewed energy and after three hours of toil, lay in a snow bank that crowned with its mantle of purity the apex of Pike's Peak. Fourteen thousand three hundred and twenty-six feet above the sea. The goal was reached. The struggle was ended. The cost had been great, but the reward was ample. A grander panorama no man could desire to see. Far to the east the level plain merged into the distant sky. To the north nothing but a succession of rugged mountains met the eye. Visible upon the western horizon were the snow clad mountains of Utah. To the south loomed the Spanish Peaks, and beyond lay the plains of New Mexico. To the north-west, South Park, - one of the greatest natural parks in the world, - flashed upon our vision, rich and beautiful in its gently undulating hills of wavey green. But that which, on account of its immediateness is the most entrancing, is the picturesqueness of the surrounding mountains and the ravishing beauty of a cincture of crystal pure water lakes which surround the upper base of the peak. Nature's diamonds circled in a radiant band around this queen of mountains.

These scenes are beyond the grasp of language, no words can faithfully portray them or convey a true idea of their magnificence. One must himself see them, or remain forever in

ignorance of their grandeur and beauty. We would fain linger, for every moment unfolds new beauties new points of admiration: but our time is limited and other points demand our attention. The top of the peak has an almost level surface of about one hundred acres, an extensive field of immense granite boulders. We played "boy" by rolling boulders down an ice canyon of several thousand feet in length, down which they flew with the rapidity of a cannon ball, flying into a thousand fragments from their own velocity.

Several extinct craters exist, one of which, is still several hundred feet in diameter and as many deep, yet conveys an imperfect idea of their former dimensions. Man's admiration is here converted into a reverential awe. He feels his own significance, as his thoughts ascend to the Great Author of all these wonders, who long ages ago touched this mount and made it to smoke and cast forth its torrents of fire. It is an interesting problem for the geologist and antiquarian, to determine the period of the volcanic era of the Rocky Mountains, when these mountains greeted each other with their floods of fire and lava. Many relics of former visitors was found one of which bore the following inscription. "To whom it may concern - This certifies that I, William Hardin, of El Paso Co., CoL, arrived at day-light on the 10th day of July 1871, and if ever caught here again at four o'clock in the morning may I be apprehended as a fit candidate for the lunatic asylum." On the top of a mighty constructed monument we found cards of two adventurers encased in a bottle, which gave indications that their spirits had departed on their journey up. After plucking a few alpine flowers and mosses as descent, and upon our arrival at the foot of the mountains, experienced no surprise that the man who had twice ascended Pike's Peak was still a curiosity belonging to the future.'

DANE.

Considering Alva's recent illness, his climbing Pikes Peak was a remarkable feat. Today's hardest visitors climb to the 14,110-foot summit over an 11.7-mile trail that is an immense improvement over the route taken by Alva and his party on their wilderness climb. To this day visitors are advised that those with a history of respiratory or cardiac problems should not attempt to climb to the summit.

Betty D. Freudenburg

Seventeenth Annual  
**Holiday Tour of B&B Inns and Historic Places**

Sunday, December 4  
 1-5 PM

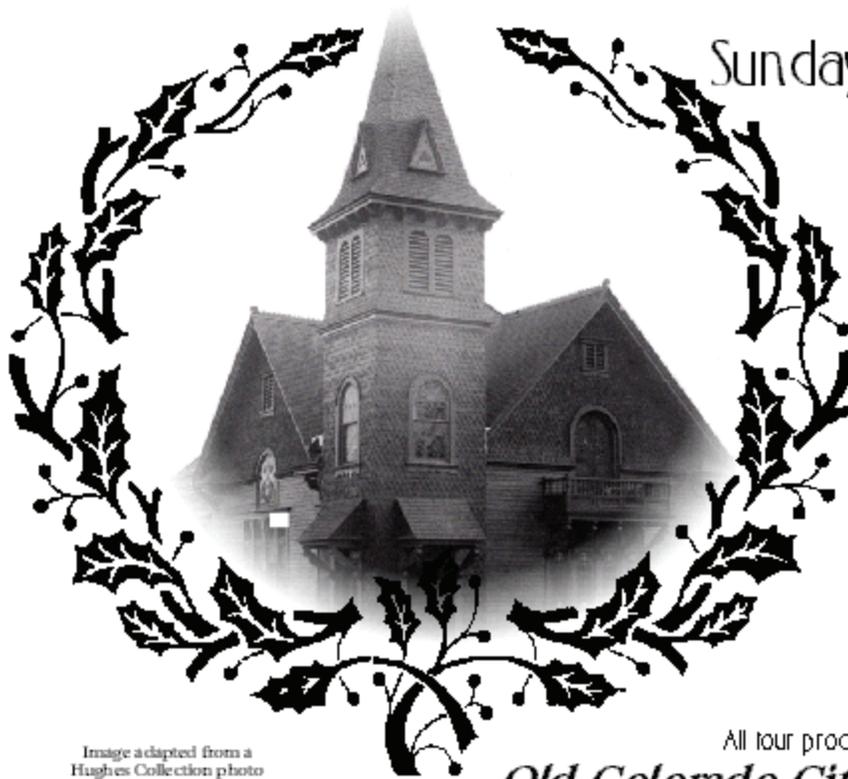


Image adapted from a Hughes Collection photo

- Avenue Hotel
- Blue Skies Inn B&B
- Holten House-1902 Bed & Breakfast Inn,
- Lennox House Bed & Breakfast
- Old Town GuestHouse,
- Onaledge
- St. George's Anglican Church

All tour proceeds benefit the  
***Old Colorado City Historical Society***

***SAVE THE DATE!!***

**HAPPY HOUR AT JAKE'S SALOON**

OCCHS FUNDRAISER

Saturday, March 3, 2012  
 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM

- \* Program featuring OCCHS member Phil McDonald as Old Colorado City saloon owner Jacob Schmidt*
- \* Silent auction - including antiques and other items*
- \* Wine, beer, and munchies (\$ Donation requested)*



**At the Old Colorado City History Center**  
 1 S. 24th St., Colorado Springs

## December President's Letter

Dear Members:

I hope Thanksgiving filled you both physically and emotionally and that it was shared with friends and family. There is nothing like togetherness during the holidays.

Laura Belle's 150th birthday party was so well attended that we had to turn away approximately twenty people. We will figure out how to avoid this at future programs. Much thanks to Suzie Schorsch for stepping in at the last minute for Joanne Karlson and decorating a parlor scene to thrill any Colorado City madam. The food was yummy, also, with two beautiful birthday cakes. Jo Cervone won much praise for inviting Jan McKell to tell the sweet and sad tale of the Queen of the Tenderloin.

We will be decorating our old church on Tuesday, November 29 for the holidays. Our beautiful building has to be ready for the crowds we expect on December 4 when local bed and breakfast inns and other historic places open their doors for our biggest fund raiser of the year. We are planning on a large number of people.

Many of the museums in our area close for the winter season when attendance is very low. Rather than do this our board of directors have decided to shorten our hours from January 1-March 31. The new winter hours will be 11 -2 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday. We won't cut back, however, on interesting programs. Friday, January 13 is a program entitled "Women Who Fought In the Civil War." It will begin at 11 a.m. Please come out and learn about this little known aspect of the Civil War.

Happy Holidays to you in the coming special season from me and my family. I am thankful for each of you.

Sharon Swint, President  
OCCHS Board of Directors

## Treasurer's Report

Previously in the Treasurer's Report we let you know the dollar amount held by the Historical Society in various accounts. As the new Treasurer, I'd like to talk about the people behind the accounts. OCCHS is blessed to have a beautiful facility in which we have our museum and meetings. This is due to bequests left to OCCHS by prior members. Children love to come to the museum and ring our bell. Each time the bell rings, we must remember those members who have passed and that in passing have left a bequest to the historical society. We must also remember those families who have asked for contributions to be made to the society in memory of their loved ones. It is through these gifts to our Endowment Fund that we are able to fulfill our Mission Statement "...to preserve artifacts and archival materials, encourage research and educate the community regarding the historical significance of Old Colorado City. The past two months many gifts have come in from people in memory of Agnes Johnson and Norman Clark. OCCHS thanks you and we respectfully remember Agnes and Norman.

Suzanne Schorsch  
Treasurer

### *In Memoriam*

## *Paul Shepard*

*June 18, 1939 - November 18, 2011*

*A native of the Westside, Paul Shepard had a passion for Westside history. He contributed his energy, enthusiasm, and talent to the Old Colorado City Historical Society in our archives, in our bookstore, and as an author.*

*Our sincerest sympathy to those to whom Paul was near and dear.*

OLD COLORADO CITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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## December / January Calendar

Sunday, December  
1 - 5 P.M.

17th Annual Tour of B&B Inns and Historic Places  
Tickets available at the Bookstore or at participating inns

January - all month

Winter hours 11 A.M. - 2 P.M.

Friday, January 13  
11:00 A.M.

Program: Women Who Fought in the Civil War Presented by Benny Nasser. Although much has been written about the American Civil War, a little known fact is that women, disguised as men, fought in both the Confederate and Union armies. This presentation will touch on the stories of several of these women.

Benny Nasser has a B.S. in Chemistry from Univ of Colorado and MBA from OSU. In search of his own roots, Benny found a great number of his ancestors fought in the Civil War. He is a member of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, the 21st Michigan Volunteer Infantry and the 2nd Colorado Volunteer Infantry. Benny also participates in Civil War reenacting units. He lives in Monument, Colorado.

### Old Colorado City History Center

1 S. 24th Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80904 - (719) 636-1225 - <http://www.occhs.org>

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