

# WEST WOOD

Old Colorado City Historical Society

Volume 26, Number 5

June / July, 2011

## An original Fosdick Plat found



by Dave Hughes

There is no more fundamental historical document in the possession of the Old Colorado City Historical Society than the Fosdick Plat. And there is no more valuable version of it owned, by the Society than an original 1860 lithographed copy of that 38 by 28 inch Plat map that came into our possession in January. A couple in Washington State came into ownership of it after a father died. They offered the map to us via our Web site last year. The Society bought it for \$150. The Fosdick Plat laid out for the first time - in 1859 - the physical design of Colorado City - all its blocks and lots, streets and alleys, and the earliest map of how to get to Colorado City and gold country from Kansas. It was artistically done, and superbly lithographed in Boston.

Every Society member is familiar with the story about the founding of Colorado City August 12th, 1859, 151 years ago. About how Anthony Bott, having failed to start a town in 1858 called El Dorado at the foot of Ute Pass, went to Denver to interest risk takers there to invest in a new city. The potential investors who were then in the Denver formed the Colorado City Town Company. They then sent two of their members, Melancthon Beach and a Rufus Cable to ride down from Denver City and quickly stake a large claim on behalf of all of

them. They drove the first stake for a 1280 acre claim two miles long and one mile wide astride Fontaine Que Bouille - Fountain Creek. There being no shelter here - they rode back to Denver again, stopping just long enough to give a name which stuck to those red rocks west of Camp Creek - "Garden of the Gods."

But what, exactly did they mark out? It was an ambitious dream called 'Colorado City.' Right in the center of what would soon become 'Colorado Territory', at the base of famous Pikes Peak and at the mouth of the Ute Pass gateway to gold country. It was a grand vision for an important city to supply miners and prospectors. It also was as much as anything a real estate venture. The investors intended to be the town founders and profit from the venture.

As in all real estate developments, then and now, a professional has to draw up a legal description by latitude, longitude and measurements to the foot, across of the plot of land. The land inside the boundaries of the claim would have to be precisely marked out in numbered blocks and lots which could be surveyed, sold and legal title to them passed to the buyers. Public streets, alleys and other public spaces would have to be defined. A document containing all that had to then be registered with

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### Old Colorado City Historical Society

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

#### WEST WORD

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### The Old Colorado City Historical Society

A NONPROFIT CORPORATION

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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 - [splderwort@pcsys.net](mailto:splderwort@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      | Sharon Swint        | 630-8384 |
| Vice President | Janice deChadenades | 598-7183 |
| Secretary      | Phil McDonald       | 532-0881 |
| Treasurer      | Johnie Jackson      | 550-0999 |
|                | Jo Cervone          | 266-9096 |
|                | Beverley Disch      | 634-5023 |
|                | Tom Hendrix         | 633-7392 |
|                | Dave Murray         | 527-6778 |
|                | Suzanne Schorsch    | 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

Allen County Public Library

Jack Beal

Rhoda Cordry

Joe Fosdick

Louise Fosdick

Sam Fosdick

Betty Freudenburg

Werner Karlson

Billie T. Kilman

Art and Heidi Lacy

Gennie and Mike Mayberry

Bill and Linda McNally

David & Lynne Murray

Sandra & Robert Patchell

John & Lynn Rowsey

Eric Swab

Mr/Mrs John E. Timberlake III

Jay & Andrea Vickerman

## Arts & Crafts

on W. Pikes Peak Avenue

Saturday

# June 11th.

*This will be  
 our season's first  
 Arts & Crafts Day  
 on the  
 History Center's grounds.  
 Arts & Crafts Days  
 will be regular  
 Saturday events  
 through September.*

*Fosdick continued from page 1*

various government levels to insure that property rights under Federal laws would be respected.

Thus one Henry M Fosdick, Engineer was retained to survey the plot and then make an engineering drawing of all the information to be filed and used by the owners to market their land. That drawing was what we call the 'Fosdick Plat.'

Henry M Fosdick, originally from the Boston area - 'in the shadow of Bunker Hill' - was a Harvard Engineering grad. He left Boston in the 1850s after he lost, by fire, his successful sugar mill business into which he had invested \$80,000. It had over 500 workers. He was a part of many immigrant (from England) Fosdicks in that area who still live there today. But Henry was broke. Leaving his wife Lucy and four children behind - he then got employment for a time as a design engineer on the Grand Trunk Railroad of Canada. He then came south from Canada where he was retained to survey an early railroad route from Coolidge, Kansas to Las Animas, Colorado. He actually arrived on the Arkansas river, by covered wagon, in southern Colorado in 1856 - two years before gold was discovered on Cherry Creek.

What Henry then saw an opportunity was not gold, but a chance to use his engineering skills to survey water ditch systems for irrigating dry farms close to the Arkansas River. Engineers were in short supply on the Frontier. He would be in demand everywhere he went.

He first filed a homestead claim at the headgate of the Colorado Canal, 5 miles from where Boone, Colorado was founded by Albert Boone, a grandson of Daniel Boone. Albert later married 12 year old Susan Fosdick.

Henry did more than surveying. In 1859 he served on a jury in Pueblo County along with Colonel Charlie Goodnight (Goodnight-Loving cattle trail from Texas) for the trial of a man accused of murder.

Sometime in the fall of 1859 he was contacted by Colorado City Town Company founders - to lay out the townsite from that first claim stake location Beach and Cable had driven on August 12th, 1859. That northwest founding corner can - with due diligence - be found in the alleyway off Echo Lane in today's Pleasant Valley. Curt Neeley and I tracked down the immediate area last year where the stake was driven. There is no marker there, although there ought to be.

The Colorado City men instructed Henry what they wanted, paying him, according to Sam Fosdick, a grandson of Henry - who lives today in Fowler, Colorado where many other Fosdick families live - with lumber, livestock and lots in the new town. Obviously working fast he had the Plat done and signed by November 1st, 1859. It was legally recorded on December 20th with the new El Paso County. With other information added to the Plat, including promotional material it was beautifully lithographed by Meisel Brothers Printers of Boston. The Fosdick Plat is the bedrock document for the original Colorado City.

In three articles I will, besides giving the background of Henry Fosdick, and his family, explain the detail in the Plat itself and all its accompanying information, and the history we can glean from it. In a subsequent Westword article I will explain how anyone who has an original Colorado City address while it existed as a separate town - from 1859 until it was dissolved by vote in 1917 - can find with reference to today's Colorado Springs street names and addresses exactly where their pioneer forbearers lived or worked. Up to now that required a knowledgeable society member to study old Polk City Directories in our History Center Library, then convert the address given to them, into current named streets and addresses, or El Paso County legal descriptions. That is complicated work which I did for drop-in visitors the last 30 years and in answer to emailed queries the last 13 years since we launched a web site. After more than 15 remote descendents of Colorado City pioneers found our web site, many had addresses in letters that were of the original Colorado City streets and numbers. Finding those same locations in the area today, now part of Colorado Springs - is very tricky, as street names changed three times, addresses changed two times, and even- odd number addresses changed sides of the street once.

I knew it would be possible to relate the old Colorado City addresses to current Westside Colorado Springs addresses since I first laid my eyes on a faded and somewhat illegible reduced-size copy of the Fosdick Plat which Lorraine Englert gave to me back in 1975 when I first started researching the original Colorado City to rescue it from the wrecker's ball like downtown Colorado Springs had been. Lorraine had to move to a lower altitude for her health. She did some of the preliminary research in the 1970s about Colorado City. She got the plat from a man

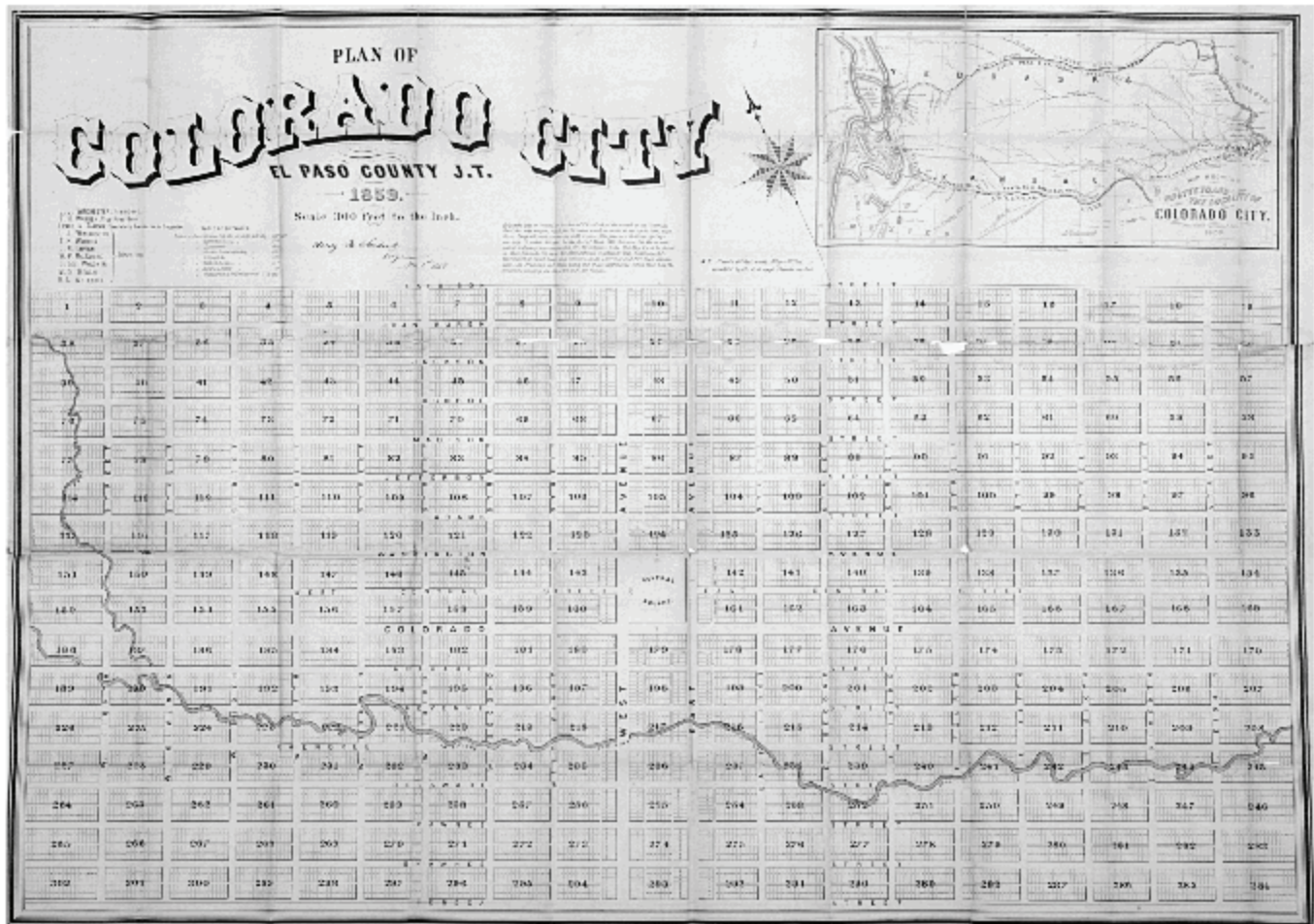


Figure 1

in Washington DC who worked in the National Archives, read a story she wrote in the Denver Post. He was able to make a rather poor copy, much illegible, with the copying technology of the day and sent it to her. So the recent discovery of a fragile folded-up but larger original 1860 lithograph with its fine printing all legible, was really an important recent historical find for the Society. No other organization in El Paso County has a copy. It is very rare.

At Figure 1 is a view of the entire Plat. Because the original printed Fosdick Plat is 38 inches by 28 inches its numbers and text are in such small, fine print, that one cannot read them on any surface less than that size. So here I will post digitally photographed extracts after you glance at the entire plat laid out. The fold marks are still there from when it was folded into a 3 by 4 inch pocket-sized wallet for the last 150 years. The original is very fragile.

The eastern end of the original Plat would be at today's 12th Street, Colorado Springs, and the Western end would be today's 32d Street.

Colorado City was laid out symmetrically much like a grand traditional European city

would be designed. Was Engineer Fosdick influenced by his Harvard education? Or the dreams of the town founders? Everything is arrayed outward from a Central Square. Fountain Creek is prominent as is the branch north called then and now, Camp Creek that runs in front of the Garden of the Gods through Pleasant Valley today.

The upper quarter of the Plat contains the legend, the Town Company officers, a paragraph

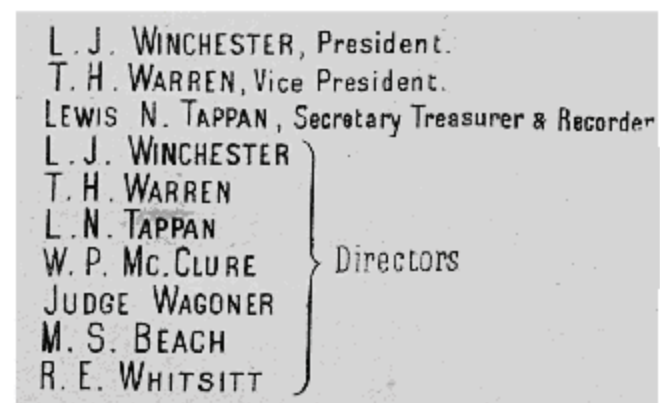


Figure 2

touting Colorado City, Fosdick's Engineer signature, and a map telling easterners how to get to Colorado City from Kansas. We can enlarge and look at each section. Figure 2 shows the Town organizers.

Figure 3 is Fosdick's signature as the author of the legal plat

Henry D. Fosdick  
Engineer  
Nov 1 1859

Figure 3

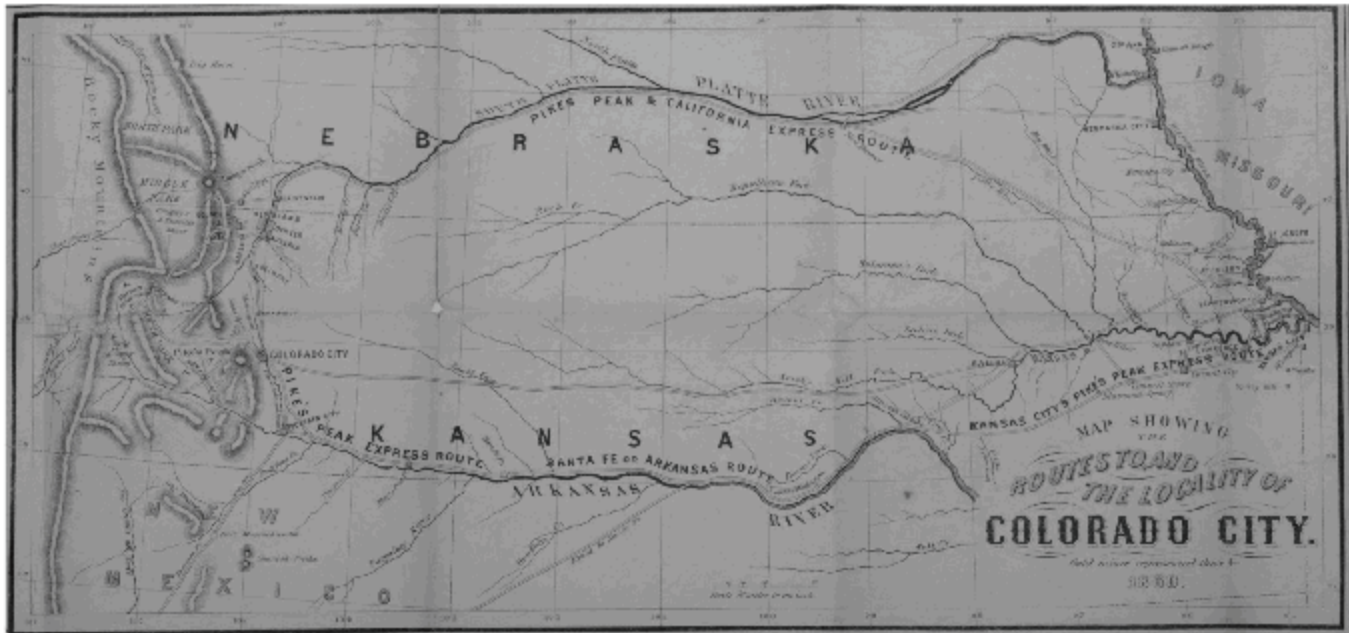


Figure 4

Since this Plat was clearly used from the time it was printed by 1860 as a promotional piece as well as a legal description, Lewis Tappan, one of the directors provided a map - Figure 4 - showing easterners how to get right to Colorado City and the gold mines to its west - from Kansas.

And in an incredible promotional paragraph - Figure 5 - the virtues and potential of new Colorado City were spelled out.

That promotional script, printed no later than

April or May 1860, when the town was less than 7 months old, is incredible because it claimed over 255 'houses completed' when we know from later facts, there never were over 200 houses built before Colorado Springs arrived 12 years later, and when founded only 80 persons still lived in Colorado City. The Civil War, the Indian Wars, loss of the designation as the Territorial Capital to Denver, and the failure to find gold nearby reduced Colorado City before it really even got started!

*Colorado City is located at the base of Pike's Peak, at the mouth of the "Colorado Pass", the only wagon road for 70 miles north or south, to the South Park, Blue River, Tarry all, and Arkansas Gold mines. The famous Boiling Springs are only 1 1/2 miles distant. On the first of March 1860, there were 255 Houses completed and many more contracted for. By reference to the U. S. Map, it will be observed that Colorado City is on the same parallel of latitude with Baltimore, Md. Cincinnati, O. Saint Louis and Kansas City, Mo. Lawrence and Fort Riley, Kansas, and San Francisco, Cal. thus being one of the important Cities that belt the continent, uniting the Atlantic with the Pacific.*

Figure 5

Continued on page 6

*Fosdick continued from page 5*

But the Fosdick Plat showed everybody what a grand scheme was planned.

If you look at Figure 1, it shows Central Square and surroundings

Central Square was flanked by Colorado Avenue on the south side, and what was named Washington Avenue on the North side. (that is Kiowa today) Then there is an East Avenue and a West Avenue running north and south flanking the Central Square top to bottom. That would be 21st and 22d streets today. Because Central Square was laid out to occupy 2 blocks, there is no thru street through the middle of Central Square, so there is an East Street, and West Street radiating out from the square to the edges of the plat.

The property heart of the Plat has 302 Blocks, 2 east west avenues, and 18 streets, 60 feet wide, with alleys 20 feet wide. There is no attempt to adapt to the terrain. The streets do not follow contour elevations. But Colorado Avenue and Washington Avenue were obviously designed to be the grand avenues running from one end of the town to the other. They are 100 feet not 60 feet wide. East and West Avenue were also 100 feet wide, running north to south.

One reason some avenues were designed to be at least 100 feet across, was because it took that much space for a wagon team with four or more horses to be able to turn around in the main streets.

The dominant Central Square would have been between 21st and 22d street today. It was obviously never developed. It is not Bancroft Park, which is two blocks further west inside Block 158. There are four layout types of blocks. 224 of them have 32 lots, 16 on a side. The end rows, east and west, have 40 lots, 20 on a side. The ones in row below Block 9 and 11 have east or west facing lots while Blocks under 10, have east AND west facing lots. 31 lots instead of 32. There are 46 such blocks.

Each lot is 30 feet wide and 125 feet deep - back to an alley that was 20 feet wide. Lot widths and depths on the westside where the original Colorado City was, are largely still the same. So from all this you can calculate that in 302 Blocks there were a total of 9,874 lots the town developers hoped to sell or develop. Pretty ambitious for a little pioneer town.

All this is confusing today, even while portions of the Fosdick Plat remain, because Colorado City did not build out according to that Grand Plan.

In the next two issues of West Word I will tell more about Henry Fosdick's family whom he brought out here by covered wagon to live in Colorado City, and how the town shrunk and eventually dissolved. Also how one can find, today, locations that originally were Colorado City addresses.



8<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Pikes Peak Regional  
History Symposium  
*Presented by Special Collections, PPLD*

FILM &  
PHOTOGRAPHY  
ON THE FRONT RANGE

Saturday  
June 11, 2011

East Library • 5550 N. Union Blvd.  
Colorado Springs, CO 80918

Reservations required for  
this free event.

For reservations or information  
call (719) 531-6333, x2253

Register online at  
[ppld.org/pikes-peak-regional-history-symposium](http://ppld.org/pikes-peak-regional-history-symposium)

Doors open at 8:30 a.m.

Symposium begins at 9 a.m.  
A complimentary light lunch  
will be served.

## President's Report

by Phil McDonald

To my friends at the Old Colorado City Historical Society: It is with equal measures of relief and regret that I write this. This will be my last president's report. I will be continuing my service to the Society by serving as the newly elected Board Secretary. The next president's report that you read in this space will be written by Sharon Swint, who has been elected as my successor. Sharon will do a terrific job and I know that we will all give her our enthusiastic support.

In my previous reports to the society, I have attempted to reinforce a common theme. That is an expression of appreciation to all of you, the members. My job was relatively simple. I prepared the agenda and conducted the meetings. The real work was done by our many enthusiastic and competent volunteers. In the last issue, I attempted to recognize each of you personally. Hopefully no one was overlooked. If that was not the case, I sincerely apologize. It has been a privilege and an honor to have served you. Thanks for a good year!

The Old Colorado City Historical Society is proud to announce the election of new officers for 2011-2012.

*President, Sharon Swint*

*Vice-President, Jan deChadenes*

*Secretary, Phil McDonald*

*Treasurer, Johnie Jackson*

## APRIL FINANCIAL REPORT

There are several reasons that again this year after four months we are indicating a loss for the year. It is normal for some loss as our income always is less than our expenses for the simple reason that we don't have the income to offset the amount of our expenses. This is normal and our budget is planned to take this into consideration. Our income only really begins in June every year. Utilities are always higher for the first four or five months. We plan our income making events and donations to exceed our proposed budget and we have been successful every year. Our expenses are a little out of normal this year in that we have purchased some equipment to make our monthly programs better for the speakers and the audience. We entered the year with a larger than normal bank account because we anticipated making these purchases. Our great success is directly due to the great volunteers in our organization. I take this opportunity to thank each and every one of them. If you are not counted in this number, please consider joining this great group of people. We can always find a place where your efforts will be appreciated.

|                        |              |
|------------------------|--------------|
| OCCHS BANK ACCOUNT     | \$ 11,116.32 |
| BOOKSTORE ACCOUNT      | \$ 2,283.78  |
| TOTAL FIXED ENDOWMENT  | \$ 96,075.68 |
| EARNED INCOME SAVINGS  | \$ 11,519.72 |
| DIGITALIZATION ACCOUNT | \$ 7,358.20  |

|                     |               |
|---------------------|---------------|
| TOTAL LIQUID ASSETS | \$ 128,353.70 |
|---------------------|---------------|

Johnie E. Jackson, Treasurer  
Old Colorado City Historical Society



## Tuesday Nights in July

July 12

July 5



July 19

July 26



(See Calendar for program listing)

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

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## June / July Calendar

**Saturday, June 4**

1:00 P.M. Display



3:00 P.M. Program

**Display:** *In the OCCHS parking lot - A REAL  
Vintage Hill Climb Race Car and the Pikes Peak Hill  
Climb Historical Association's Mobile Museum -  
sponsored by Swint Realty, LLC*

**Program:** Pikes Peak Auto Hill Climb - Then and Now  
presented by Don Sanborn

### *Tuesday Nights in July*

**Tuesday, July 5**

6:30 - 8:30 P.M.

**Tuesday, July 12**

7:00 P.M.

**Tuesday, July 19**

7:00 P.M.

**Tuesday, July 26**

7:00 P.M.

Old fashioned Ice Cream & Pie Social  
(small charge for food)

**Program:** 'Making the Gather:' Longhorns, Loving and  
Goodnight Trail into Denver - presented by Robert Carrigan

**Program:** The 1st Battle of Manassas - presented by  
Johnie Jackson

**Program:** The Scouts at the battle of Beecher Island & the  
Colorado Boys - presented by Mike Nelson

### **Old Colorado City History Center**

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

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