

WEST WOOD



proud member of the Coalition of Pikes Peak Historic Museums

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Woodrow L. Ralston – Westsider

by Tom Daniels

Not often do you get to meet someone as special as “Woody” Ralston. I had that privilege in the 1980’s when Woody and I were in the same railroad club together. Woody had spent his entire adult life in Colorado and always had a neat story to tell us at each monthly meeting.

Woody’s life began on June 18, 1915, in his grandfather’s farmhouse just outside of Norton, Kansas. Norton is eleven miles south of the Nebraska state line on the old Rock Island railroad main line from Chicago to Colorado. Woody’s father, Harry, was born in 1879, and was a native of Chicago. He was in the excavating business and eventually moved to Norton where he met his future wife Rosa. Woody was raised in Norton until he was about five years old when the whole family picked up their belongings and moved to Colorado around the 1920-21 time frame. Their first home was in Colorado City (by then Colorado Springs) at 2915 W. Bijou Street.

Harry’s excavating business got him interested in collecting prehistoric bones and fossils and it was said that he had enough varieties to open a museum. Harry also enjoyed dressing up in old fashioned costumes and entertained in most of the early parades and rodeos in Colorado Springs.

Woody attended several schools in Colorado Springs and started working jobs by his late teens. His first job was for the Saddle Horse Stables in Manitou Springs as a trail guide. He

then did a stint at the Modern Woodmen of America sanatorium. Because he grew up on the Rock Island mainline in Kansas, he greatly admired trains and landed a job on the Midland Terminal Railroad in 1939 at the age of twenty-four. He worked as a track laborer in the Cascade area. In the next thirty-seven years, Woody would have jobs with the Rio Grande, the Rock Island, the Manitou & Pikes Peak, the Colorado & Wyoming as well as at least seven other non-railroad jobs. In those days, before computers



Woody on horseback at the Saddle Horse Stables in Manitou Springs

Continued on Page 3

Museum and Bookstore Hours
Tuesday through Saturday 11:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.

Old Colorado City Historical Society

'Preserving the past for the future'

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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WEST WORD Editor c/o OCCHS

1 South 24th Street

Colorado Springs, CO 80904-3319

or Don Ellis - spiderwort@pcsys.net

SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS THE 15th OF EACH MONTH

MISSION

Revised August 2012

The Old Colorado City Historical Society is a nonprofit volunteer organization established to recognize the historical significance and unique culture of original Old Colorado City and early El Paso County which includes the present and future history of today's greater Westside neighborhood.

This organization perpetuates the preservation and display of artifacts and archival materials, encouragement of research, education of the children and the community, through the membership and the operation of the Old Colorado City 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	Business	\$ 75
Individual	\$ 25		
Family	\$ 35	Lifetime	\$250

Funds from a Lifetime membership are placed into an Endowment Fund to be used only for projects 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

Co-President	Betty Baker	636-1225
Co-President	Kathy McBride	636-1225
Vice President	Joanne Karlson	475-2574
Secretary	Brian Copeland	954-551-3677
Treasurer	Suzanne Schorsch	331-1786
	Bev Disch	636-1225
	Sandy Hanzlian	636-1225

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 10:30 A.M. on the day of the meeting for refreshments and visitation. Everyone welcome.

WELCOME TO OCCHS! ~ NEW & RENEWING MEMBERS

Myma Boecher

Sam Fosdick

Louise Fosdick

Celina Henry

Amanda Hlavack

Barry & Ellen Johnson-Fay

Arlene Lanman

John & Sally McGraw

David & Lynne Murray

Donna Phinizy

John & Lynn Rowsey

Carolyn and David Schell

Barbara Sweat

Mr/Mrs John E. Timberlake III



Woody from Page 1

Woody and Rosa at the Modern Woodmen of America Sanitarium

and time clocks, nearly everyone kept their own time books. Woody filled up three of them in his lifetime and kept them until his death.

Woody's father died in 1943 after a short illness. He was buried in Fairview Cemetery on the Westside. At the same time, Woody got a job with the Rio Grande as a fireman out of the Pueblo area. So Woody and his mother Rosa bought a home and moved to Pueblo at 2509 N. Court St.

Woody's mother Rosa died in 1968, and was buried next to her husband in Fairview. Woody had bought two plots next to his father's grave so he and his parents would all rest in the same place.

Woody still lived in Pueblo as he had now become the Building Service Supervisor for Pueblo College where he worked until his retirement in 1976.

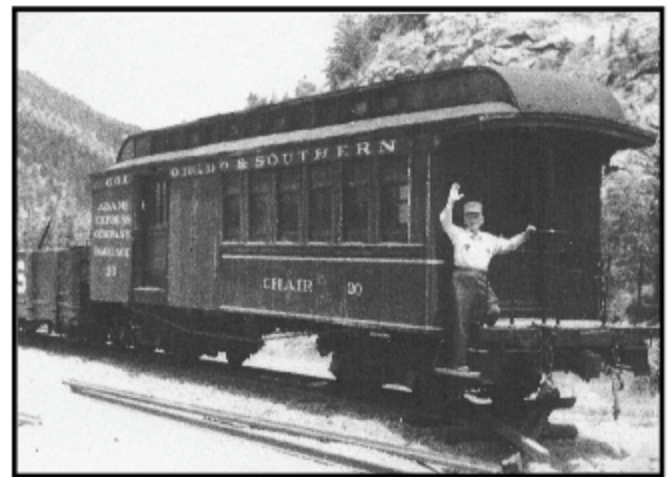


Woody and his maintenance car at the Modern Woodmen of America Sanitarium

Woody traveled to Colorado Springs with his friend Al Knicklebine once a month to attend meetings of the Colorado Midland Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society, which is where many of the areas' railfans first heard of Woody.

In the 1990's, Woody was forced out of his Court St. home as CDOT needed to widen I-25 in that area. He moved back to Colorado Springs, but his whereabouts were largely unknown. Some said they thought he was living in Manitou Springs hotels and apartments, but weren't sure. Woody died on May 7, 2007, after having been in one of the nursing homes on Fountain Blvd. in Colorado Springs.

Silver Key was in charge of Woody's estate. He was buried in Fairview next to his mother and father. His belongings, which were mostly



Woody at Central City

railroad books and pictures he had collected over the years were given to Joe Emmons, one of Woody's closest friends. Most of these items were donated by Joe to the Colorado Railroad Museum in Golden, CO. Woody's personal items were donated to myself to be stored in the OCCCHS Archives (time book summaries, family pictures, etc.)

In addition, when Woody was still alive, he made several donations to the OCCCHS which included locations of Colorado City businesses prior to 1979 and employees names of the Midland Terminal Railroad. OCCCHS Archives also has a cassette tape of an interview between Dave Hughes and Woody discussing memories of the Westside. All of these materials are on file in the archives department of OCCCHS.

Those of you who were fortunate enough to have known Woody will remember what a fun guy he was.

MOVIES BACK FOR TUESDAY NIGHTS IN JULY

Tuesday Nights in July this summer will once again feature movies that are associated with Colorado. In order to qualify, the movie either had to be filmed in Colorado Springs or Colorado, or was about a historical figure who lived in our state. Three movies have been selected and will be shown on July 1st, July 15th and July 29th. There is a two week pause between each movie to give the volunteers who help at the showings a longer break between films. Once again, we are limited to fifty seats per showing, but all seats this year are padded and no program will last over two hours.



July 15th at 7 PM

One Minute to Zero

... a 1952 film with Robert Mitchum, Ann Blyth and William Tallman. RKO pictures wanted to show the American people what the Korean War was all about as it was actually going on. Limekiln Valley at Camp Carson (now Fort Carson) was chosen as it resembled Korea. A runway was constructed and faux rice paddies were built and much of the action took place in this area just east of Colorado Hiway 115. Newsreel footage of the actual war was inserted in key scenes so you got the feel of seeing the real war. The stars were here for the six week shooting schedule and the World Premiere was held at the Chief Theater on August 12th, 1952. Sixty-two years later (in 2014,) if you know where to look, you can still see the outlines of the runway and rice paddies in the valley. We'll show you more at the movie.

The movies, as usual, are free. We do ask a donation for the refreshments which include popcorn, candy and soft drinks. Tickets for the refreshments will be available June 3rd, at the bookstore or by phone (719) 636-1225. A ticket is required for admission as we have to keep the audience down to fifty patrons. We hope to see you at Tuesday Nights in July.

July 1st at 7 PM

The Lawyer

... a 1970 film that was filmed in Colorado Springs. It stars Barry Newman, Harold Gould and Robert Colbert. Loosely based on the famous Sam Sheppard murder trial, it has great courtroom drama. The director made good use of Colorado Springs locations and you will see many of them as they appeared in 1970. Scenes were also filmed at the Banning-Lewis Ranch and Calhan, CO. The old El Paso County jail was even used and was changed (for the movie) to the El Palo County jail with the substitution of one letter. Because of the reenactments of the murder scene, this movie was originally rated R in theaters. Today, forty-four years later, it would probably be down-rated to a PG movie, but we'll warn you anyway.



July 29th at 7 PM

A Ticket to Tomahawk

... a 1950 movie with Dan Dailey, Anne Baxter and Rory Calhoun. The Tomahawk & Western Railroad can win a franchise if it reaches its destination by a certain date. But, the stagecoach company does everything in its power to see that it does not happen. This film would be best described as a musical-comedy western and it's a lot of fun. Filmed on both the Denver & Rio Grande and Rio Grande Southern narrow gauge lines in western Colorado. One song and dance number includes Dan Dailey and Marilyn Monroe in her fourth movie. And if you're lucky, you might spot one well known former Colorado Springs resident as an extra in the film.

Old Colorado City Historical Society

Children's Reading Day

with Colorado Children's Authors
Saturday, June 14th 11 A.M. to 4 P.M.

Come meet 5 children's authors and hear them read throughout the day. This children's reading day is one where children can learn to LOVE reading by interacting with the authors, participating in the story and seeing books come alive!



Authors Sally Burr and Gail Ross write books for their grandchildren to interest them in local animals and show their character, virtue and realistic behavior in their Black Forest Friends series.

The Jordan family in their book, Quest for Bunny Island, joins family talents together to tell the adventures that result when a group of animals discover they can talk like people.



Author Vanessa Kilik realized that "childhood isn't silly enough anymore" so she decided to write some fun in her book My Snow Globe Book.

Author Joan Musick wrote this book based on an unusually funny story told to her by a friend about her disappearing flowers. Joan also sewed the story into a quilt. In her Reverse Book series for children, she will read two books in one, because there are always two sides to every story.



Questions: call or stop by the Historical Society
636-1225
1 South 24th Street
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80904

President's Message - June & July

Summer is finally here! Take advantage of this great weather to visit your History Center. New exhibits and volunteer opportunities are just waiting for you.

Once again the Book and Treasure Sale was an incredible success. Susie Schorsch organized the donations for easy perusal and purchase. This fundraiser brought \$900.00 of much-needed revenue to our Historical Society.

Sandy Hanzlien arranged for our outstanding series of Friday programs. All of you who attended can attest to her knowledgeable and unique choices. She's already lining up speakers for the fall.

We all owe Don Kallaus a debt of gratitude for the CityWorks photography event. This fundraiser not only benefited the Historical Society, but gave the public an opportunity to see the historic photos of Glenn W. Murray. It was a nostalgic look at the growth of the city.

History Detectives was held as a members only event. The participants evaluated the three hour program and gave positive feedback. Joanne Karlson and her committee will use these suggestions to expand this offering for next year.

Take a step back into the past for Tuesday Nights in July. Tom Daniels has once again found a series of films for your enjoyment. Get ready for the popcorn and candy to go along with these memorable movies.

Just a reminder: August 9th has been set for our annual Founder's Day celebration. Mark your calendars.

Betty and Kathy

Treasurer's Report

Many of you will be wondering why you did not have to make cookies for Territory Days. Many of you have told me that you are glad you did not get called this year. It is not that you have not been appreciated for your many, many cookies over the years, but we are so busy selling cookies during the event that it has been hard to "sell" the Historical Society.

This year we had an information table and followed our Mission Statement. We got people interested in Colorado City history and talked about all of our events. We also took donations, and as of this writing, the end of the second day of the event is over, and we will probably take in more money introducing people to history and taking donations that we did on cookies.

We also, for the second year, had a free model train display in the Center, which has brought in more people to the museum that usually come during Territory Days. Sunday alone we had over 400 people not counting children!!!

Things are looking better financially as we head to the second half of the year. Our used book sale made almost \$900 and most of our crafter spots are full for the farmer's market.

Checking Account	\$ 18,245.79
Endowment	\$ 107,627.01
Savings	\$ 16,685.56
Bookstore	\$ 3,461.80
Total	\$ 146,020.16

As always, if you ever have any questions regarding our financial situation, please do not hesitate to call me, or, stop by the center.

Respectfully,

Suzanne Schorsch
Treasurer

The Old Colorado City Historical Society's Board of Directors meets regularly on the third Monday of the month at 1:00 P.M. at the
Old Colorado City History Center, unless otherwise announced.
Interested visitors are always welcome at the Board meetings.



**Upcoming Board meetings will be June 16 and July 21
at 1:00 P.M. at the *Old Colorado City History Center***

OLD COLORADO CITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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COLORADO SPRINGS, CO 80904-3319

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June / July Calendar

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11:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.
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7:00 P.M.
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Museum Hours: Tues. thru Sat. 11 - 4 Free Admission. Donations greatly appreciated.