

# HISTORIAN

NEWSLETTER  
WINTER ~ SPRING ~ 2013

The Ouray County Historical Society (OCHS) thanks Ouray County Plaindealer, for their assistance in printing and distributing our newsletter.

**MISSION STATEMENT:** The Ouray County Historical Society (OCHS) is dedicated to preserve, protect, procure, exhibit, and interpret whatever relates to the natural, social, and cultural history of Ouray County and the adjacent San Juan Mountain Region of Colorado.

## OCHS Archives & Ross Moore Library Find New Home on Main Street

### New space just blocks from Ouray County Museum

The OCHS is thrilled to announce that its long search for a museum annex has finally ended. Our dream of establishing the Ouray County Historical Society Research and Education Center will become a reality this year.

The OCHS board recently purchased a unit in the historic Story Block on Ouray's Main Street between Seventh and Eighth Avenues. The approximately 1,700-square-foot space will house the museum's historical collections, including the Ross Moore Library, Doris Gregory research files, paper archives, and rare archival photographs. The collection has been constantly growing since the OCHS was founded in 1971.

Anyone who has ventured into the museum's current archives area knows that the space is cramped to say the least. Access to records requires both patience and agility! Valuable paper and photo archives occupy two small rooms, while books are stashed in closets throughout the building. These historic photos, documents and books number in the thousands.

Researchers from throughout the country each year request information and copies of photos and documents from these archives. Individuals find the materials invaluable for investigations into family history and genealogy.

The museum needed not only more storage space, but a quiet and pleasant area for staff and visitors to read and conduct research.

The new space, just a few blocks from the museum, promises to fulfill the vision of a true research and education center. The Main Street presence will not only house and protect the museum's historical collections, but provide a place for study, education, and contemplation. The library will include a workspace for members of the public to do research by appointment. An inviting display area will eventually feature signature items representative of the museum's exhibits.

"We studied the Silverton Historical Museum's archive for inspiration," said Laura LaBrecque, volunteer building project manager. "We will have custom book shelves and a moveable track system for archive files. In back, we'll take advantage of natural light for a large, staff-only work space."

Local companies will provide electrical work, carpentry, and fire protection. Volunteers are needed for some initial demolition work, Laura added. A "soft opening" is planned for early April. Staff and volunteers are gearing up for the daunting task of moving the archives, several computers, and reproduction equipment from the museum to the new facility.

OCHS archivists are particularly excited about the new space. Board Member George Moore has spent about seven years organizing an important part of the archive. He has digitally catalogued more than 4,000 books of the 7,000-piece Ross Moore Mining History Library of the American West. George plans to update donor Ross Moore, of Lake Jackson, Texas, on the progress of the Main Street facility.

"I'm sure he will be very pleased," said George. "Although containing material on a wide variety of subjects, the focus of the library is on the mining, geology, history and geography of Western Colorado and the surrounding area, and includes a number of hard-to-find and valuable publications."

A searchable catalog of nearly 90 percent of the collection is available online on the OCHS website.

Glenda Moore, George's wife and the museum's paper archivist, will certainly benefit from the expanded workspace. (She has been trying to work in a cubbyhole wedged among file cabinets.)

"The contents of the archives are priceless and each donation is treated with special care," she wrote in a previous newsletter article. "In the archives, we feel that we preserve the past to

understand the character and the future of Ouray County."

Gail Saunders, board member and photo archivist, is delighted at the prospect of working with the museum's extensive photo collection in a more functional environment.

"The photo collection contains many rare photographs of early-day Ouray, including photos of Ouray's famous residents," Gail said. Images of newspaperman Dave Day, Ouray founder Gus Begole, Chief Ouray and Chipeta, and many others reside in the collection. It also includes photos of long-gone mining regions, towns, and freighting operations as well as street and business scenes of both Ouray and Ridgway.

"Photos are still being added each year as families and others share their photos with OCHS," said Gail. "Currently we are scanning the photos and placing information about them, as well as the scans, into a database that will eventually be available online."

The acquisition of a home for the Research and Education Center is a major milestone. For the first time in many years, the OCHS can now increase our outreach to visitors as well as provide adequate space for our growing library and archives.

### NEW OCHS 2013 EVENTS PREVIEW

**John Fielder Autumn  
Photography Workshop**  
September 28 & 29  
*Space Limited... Plan ahead!*

**Geology Tour**  
August 6

*Further information:*  
**Ouray County Historical Society**  
970-325-4576



*Winter  
Time Past  
Times*

## Ouray County Historical Society: President's Message

On behalf of the entire board of directors and staff of the Ouray County Historical Society allow me this opportunity to wish you a very prosperous 2013. This upcoming year will be filled with many new and exciting offerings by the OCHS. Familiar events such as the "Evenings of History", Photo Exhibits and Special Exhibits are already on our books. New fundraising events such as a geology tour and photographic workshop are in the works. The "Loghill Lungbuster Challenge" bike race will again be held in the Fall.

As an organization, we continue to

grow with many new business and individual memberships. And with the acquisition of our new archival building we are excited about the upcoming year.

We trust you will always keep us in the back of your mind when it comes to donations, volunteerism and support. Remember to tell a friend about the "Best Little Museum in the West".

It always excites us to see the wonder and hear the praise of

those who visit our museum and leave with a new found understanding of just what makes our little corner of the world - a true gem.



By Kevin Chismire



## Open the doors to the San Juans

By Jenny Hart  
Ouray School  
Fourth Grade Teacher

This fall, fourth graders from Ouray, Ridgway, and Telluride collaborated to produce the third edition of our region-

al history book- Open the Doors to the San Juans. Each school group learned about the landmarks in their own communities. We had some opportunities to work together. Ridgway and Ouray students experienced the Ridgway Railroad Museum together as well as a hike on the Bear Creek Trail in Telluride to see mining artifacts first hand. While we were in Telluride, we met with the Telluride classes to do the Bear Dance. Girls had to choose a boy to dance with by swiping a shawl toward the boy. We learned about the Ute tradition of honoring spring (although it was fall) with a Bear Dance while getting to know new friends.

In Ouray, we took over 20 field trips around Ouray County to learn firsthand why our history is so special! We visited some very special places and made amazing connections between the things we learned. Many people helped to bring Ouray History to life for us. We are deeply indebted to all of them.

Based on what we learned, we worked in small groups to produce the historic writings in our book. We wrote plans for our paragraphs, working especially hard on our topic sentences. We helped each other to write the big idea and detail sentences for our paragraphs. Finally, we spent a lot of time typing our work. We found lots to edit and revise, so we went back again and again to polish our writing and make it reflect all we had learned. Students voted on the

best paragraph for each topic.

Concurrently, Mrs. Lizzio, our art teacher, helped students to create the artwork for the

book. Again, students voted on the best artwork for each topic. Fourth grade students who were not chosen for their text or artwork were in charge of taking digital pictures of our topics to give a modern perspective. Other students were invited to visit The Ouray County Historical Society to research its archives for copies of some historic pictures. We hope that these illustrations will bring the text to life and provide a bigger picture of our knowledge. In this way, all members of our classroom participated in some way to the creation of our project.

Ridgway and Telluride fourth grade students also worked very hard on their text and artwork for the book. We plan to add to our book each year with each new class and compile a complete history of our beautiful San Juan Mountains.

In the end, we all came together one last time for an author party for 92 fourth graders at the historic Wright Opera House in Ouray. Students read their articles to the group and we enjoyed yummy cake with historic pictures on it! Copies of the book are for sale at Buckskin Books in Ouray and of course, at OCHS too.

We learned so much about the history of our very special county. Students are very proud of our history and want to help preserve it. Next year, we will publish a new edition with new pages added by the future fourth graders. This project will just continue to grow!



Fourth Grade students on a history hike with Jenny Hart, Ouray School Fourth Grade Teacher.

## Summer Interns Gain Hands-On Experience at Museum

Two local college students brought fresh ideas and initiatives to the museum during the summer 2012 season. Stephanie "5" Hanshaw and Tom Stovicek worked as interns for the OCHS from May through August. Both engaged with staff and visitors and learned how to tackle challenging projects as well as routine responsibilities.

5 Hanshaw---the origin of her numerical nickname is too complicated to explain here---is a sophomore majoring in physics at the University of Colorado, Boulder. The granddaughter of former OCHS board member Penny Hanshaw, 5 had worked as a museum volunteer while attending high school in Ouray.

As an intern, she often stationed herself at the greeter's window, which freed up staff to handle other responsibilities. 5 had a knack for conveying her enthusiasm about the museum to visitors and considered that one of her favorite jobs.

"I especially liked greeting people as they came in the door and telling them all about the amazing museum and our wonderful little town," she said.

5 also devoted much of her internship to organizing and executing a spe-

cial children's program. Children's Day included guided museum tours designed especially for children and their interests.

"I think the children who attended learned about history in new and exciting ways---and they got to take home goodies," said 5, who spent many weeks assembling treat bags and planning activities for Children's Day. "I learned a lot myself about how to organize an event and bring together several different ideas into one cohesive whole."

Her duties also included cleaning exhibit rooms, replacing informational hand-outs and watering the museum grounds daily. She often spent her free time in the Mineral Room, 5's personal favorite part of the museum.



Tom Stovicek



Stephanie Hanshaw

Tom Stovicek, also of Ouray, majors in history and philosophy at Regis University in Denver. Since history majors at that school are

required to complete internships, Tom approached Museum Director Maria Jones about a summer position. "I thought it would be a great opportunity to learn more about local history," he said.

OCHS staff quickly learned they could count on Tom to repair just about anything that needed fixing, especially computers. Among other projects, he created a new OCHS Internet profile. In fact, he had originally thought about majoring in computer science, "until I figured out I would have to take math."

Tom most enjoyed research projects that got him into the museum archives.

He considers the search for source documents a type of treasure hunt. He applied his research skills to helping plan and execute Vignettes of History 2012, a major fundraising event with a World War II theme.

As he noted in a report for his internship supervisors, Tom learned that local history operates on a different level from national history.

"I found that the connections in local history are more closely related to source materials," he said. "For example, the museum preserves artifacts that belonged to people from the Ouray area who died many years ago. In this way, local history operates as part of the mourning process and also a way of keeping memories alive."

An unexpected opportunity arose when Tom was invited to accompany some OCHS board members to the site of the Revenue Mine, which is resuming operations. The group toured historic mining buildings to explore possibilities for preserving the structures.

"I had underestimated how involved the OCHS is with the local community," Tom said. "It's much different from viewing history as an academic discipline."

# Dr. Spangler's Barn Yields Treasures

When ten-year-old Katie Voss toured the museum with other students from Olathe Elementary School, she mentioned a close family connection to the museum. Katie's grandmother, Kathy Charles, was born in the building when it was the Miner's Hospital.

That revelation resulted in a new donation to the Patient Room and a fascinating story of four generations in Ouray County.

It all started when Kathy, also of Olathe, told Katie where her grandmother was born in 1948. "She said, 'You were born in a museum, Nana?' I explained that it was a hospital at that time and showed her my birth certificate," said Kathy. "Then after the field trip, Katie kept talking about it. It had been years since I went through the museum so I returned with Katie and had an awesome tour."

They did not go to the museum empty-handed. Last June, Kathy brought a rudimentary intravenous (IV) fluid stand and vintage porcelain bed pan she had salvaged from a barn that was being torn down. That barn had once belonged to Dr. Edward Spangler, who practiced medicine in Ouray (with interruptions for military service) from 1934 to 1975. He operated the Miner's Hospital from 1946-1956 and also from 1959-1964 when it closed. Kathy donated the items to the museum where they are now displayed in the second-floor Patient Room.

During her visit, she also shared

some of her family history with OCHS staff. Although Kathy has lived in Olathe since 1985, her family roots in Ouray County go back four generations on both her parents' sides. John Charles Sr., her paternal great-grandfather, was born on a ranch near Cow Creek and worked at the Camp Bird Mine, as did one of his sons. Kathy's father also was a miner who worked at the Idarado Mine until about 1950.

Her paternal grandmother was born in a cabin at the foot of



Kathy Charles gets a hug from Katie Voss

Courthouse Mountain where Kathy's great-grandparents homesteaded. John Jr., her great-uncle, was an intrepid snow plow driver for the Colorado Department of Transportation.

"He wouldn't stop even after he retired," said Kathy. "When the first big snowstorm dumped on Red Mountain Pass the next winter, the snow plow was missing from the shop. My uncle was up on the mountain still doing his job."

Kathy's maternal great grandfather

was Frances B. Hockley, who homesteaded in Pleasant Valley and later in Happy Hollow, now Elk Meadows, on Miller Mesa. At the time, he and rancher Marie Scott were the primary property owners in the area. F. B. owned the Ridgway Hardware Store, then located on the northwest corner of Lena and Sherman Streets. A community-minded merchant, he donated all the hardware needed to build the Ridgway Community Church. Beginning in 1904, F.B. served three terms as mayor of Ridgway.

His granddaughter, Martha Hockley Barrett, was Kathy's aunt. She happened to be head nurse at the Miner's Hospital when her niece arrived in the world. In 1948, Martha helped Dr. Spangler deliver Kathy Charles. Kathy's family lived in Ridgway at the time and later moved to Montrose.

With so much Ouray County history in her family, it's no wonder Kathy was thrilled to find the hospital items in Dr. Spangler's former barn. (Originally in Ouray, the barn was torn down and reassembled at another location).

"I found the IV stand and bed pan among broken bottles in a storage room. Knowing it had been the doctor's barn, I decided right then I would give them

to the museum," she said. "Then I boxed them up, moved, and years passed before I ran across them again."

The OCHS appreciates her decision to donate the items to the museum--- and thanks Kathy for encouraging her grandmother to revisit the historic building where she was born. Katie is a remarkable young lady who has a great future as a historian.

## OCHS Honors Two Irreplaceable Volunteers

The OCHS lost two valued volunteers in 2012. Phil Icke, board member extraordinaire and Don Kellogg "Jack of all Trades" are deeply missed.

The "Law Office" in the Museum has been renamed to honor Phil, his mother and father. Phil's father was a judge and attorney in Ouray for many years. Phil's passion was care and maintenance of the Museum's grounds. A memorial bench, inscribed with his name, will be placed under the beautiful crab apple tree on the west lawn of the Museum.

In honor of Don Kellogg, a commemorative plaque will be placed at the entrance of the Sun Room in the Museum. His skilled renovation work transformed a somewhat dingy and dark space into an inviting display area and sitting room.



Don Kellogg



Phil Icke

## Curator's report: Museum improvements, etc.

In 2012 we made a number of improvements to the Museum. These include new walls in the Veterans Room that enclose the top of the hospital's old dumb waiter. This allowed us to display a series of large framed WWII recruitment posters. The roof has been repaired where water was leaking into the Walsh-Zanett room. A new window blind has been added to the Toy Room.

The San Juan County Historical Society has given the museum four glass display cases. One, installed in the Patient Room, contains a display of surveying equipment used in the Camp Bird Mine in the 1930s, and the second, installed in the Operating Room, contains a collection of medical tools used in the hospital. A new display case outside the Foresman-Ericson Room includes, among other items, a set of engraved martini glasses belonging to Judge Icke's wife Rose, a Civil War cartridge belt buckle and a 1920s Rolls Royce reusable safety razor.

A "gem" was discovered in a box of moldy stained wallpaper that was to be thrown out. Mixed in with the wall-

paper was an original colored 4 foot x 6 foot poster advertising a movie made of the 1897 Corbett-Fitzsimmons fight. The movie was played at the Wright Opera House. A duplicate of the poster now hangs in the General Store area.

The Domestic Room has a Victorian Singer pedal sewing machine that was missing three of the four carved spindles that hold up the drawer. Local contractor Rick Blackford had the missing spindles reproduced to match the original one.

A number of other intriguing items have been donated this year. They include a 1930s Monopoly board hand-made by members of the Duckett family, a large schematic of the hospital indicating how each room was used during the Idarado Mine's operation of the hospital, and a large



By Don Paulson

incubator used on a ranch outside Ridgway.

A number of years ago, Tom Rosemeyer, the last on-site Camp Bird Mine employee, donated 165 original Camp Bird maps to the museum. Bob Larson has scanned these maps and returned the originals. The new mine owners will provide

us with digital copies as well as a detailed index matched to our accession numbers.

The Otto Mears exhibit has been one of our most popular exhibits in recent years. Because of many requests, we are holding it over for a second year. It features the life and times of Otto Mears, the Pathfinder of the San Juans.

We have an exciting Evenings of History program planned for this summer. Talks include: *What the Vanoli Gold Belt Theater Site Can Tell Us*

*About the "Old West; What's in Your Attic? The Story of the 1897 Corbett-Fitzsimmons Fight Poster and Early Motion Pictures; Recreation and Celebration in Ouray County Through the Lens of Historic Photos; How the Peaks, Mesas, Valleys and Rivers in the San Juan Mountains Got Their Names; Ridgway and Its Railroads; and the History of the Red Mountain Project.*

We have scheduled guided tours (\$10 per person) of Cedar Hills Cemetery, Main Street Ouray and the Silverton Railroad right-of-way on Red Mountain. On July 10th and August 14th I will be offering guided tours of the Museum in which I will give the details of some favorite displays. I will also provide guided museum tour at any time of the year for groups of six or more.

Our two annual art shows are The San Juan Memories Photo Show in July and the Quilt Show in September. We continue to add new informational signs to our displays so if you haven't visited the museum in a while, you will find many changes. For additional information, see our web site at [www.ouraycountyhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.ouraycountyhistoricalsociety.org).

# OURAY COUNTY HISTORIC HOTELS

By Carolyn Kelly

This article is the first of a series that will appear in the OCHS Historian Newsletter featuring historic hotels in Ouray County. The following article focuses on those historic hotels which continue to operate today.

## BEAUMONT HOTEL ~ OURAY

**The Beaumont Hotel**  
SEBELIEN & ROBERTS, Proprietors



Headquarters for Tourists, Mining and Commercial Men. Best Service and table in the San Juan Country. Transient rates three to four dollars per day. OURAY, COLO.

*Ouray Herald, Mar 10, 1910*

The Beaumont Hotel opened for business on July 25, 1887 with a grand ball attended by guests from all over the area. The *Solid Muldoon* said of the ball, "The new hotel was ablaze with light last Friday evening and the corridors, rotunda and parlors filled with handsomely dressed women and gallant beaux. The house was beautifully decorated for the occasion and the famous Telluride orchestra and band discoursed the latest and best promenade and dance music." The photo below shows the hotel in the 1920s



There were initially 39 hotel rooms. Bathrooms were supplied with hot springs water. The architect of the hotel was Otto Bulow, a native of Sweden, after whom Bulow's Bistro, one of the hotel's earlier restaurants was named. (The more recent Bistro Restaurant, newly converted to The Ore House Bar and Grille, was the location for a melodrama theater in the late 1880s.) The hotel originally included Thatcher Bros. Bank and a Western Union office, among other businesses. Other rooms in the hotel comprised a presidential suite with fireplace, a large dining room and reception area. The gentlemen's entrance to the hotel was designed for the Third Street (Main Street) front of the hotel and the unaccompanied ladies' entrance was designed for the Fifth Avenue face. Doris Gregory's *History of Ouray*, states that "no respectable lady would come in from Main Street unless accompanied by a male escort." In 1964 the Beaumont Hotel was boarded up by the then new owner, Wayland Phillips, following a dispute with the City of Ouray, which refused her request to pave all of the adjacent 5th Avenue as a parking lot for the hotel. The hotel remained vacant for 34 years, until it was sold to Dan and Mary King in a silent auction by the executor of Wayland Phillips's estate. The 1998 photo (below on the left) from the Beaumont Hotel website shows the hotel before it was refurbished, after some 30 years of closure.



After obtaining input from the community regarding the desired function of the building going forward, the new owners, Dan and Mary King, who were then part-time Ouray residents, determined that they would restore the building as a hotel. The 2003 photo (above right) was taken by local resident Chris Nygaard after the restoration of the Beaumont was completed in 2003. The Beaumont is included on the National Register of Historic Places and was also awarded the first Colorado Governor's Award for Historic Preservation. The hotel is 75 feet wide on Main Street and 127 feet along Fifth Avenue. You will notice the gothic style, brick construction with stone trim, tower gables and mansard roof were all retained in the restoration. Once again the Beaumont is the flagship hotel of Ouray. Current owners are Chad and Jennifer Leaver.

## WESTERN HOTEL ~ OURAY

The Western Hotel was built in 1891 for John Johnstone and Fred Mayol by Ouray builder Francis Carney. Carney also built many other historic Ouray buildings including the Ouray County Courthouse and the Ouray Miners Hospital (now the home of the Ouray County Historical Society Museum). A recent photo of the Western Hotel appears below.



After several different owners, Clifford Rogers purchased the hotel in 1899. He ably ran the hotel until it was sold to Floro and Marie Flor in 1916. The Flors had previously owned the Geneva Hotel. The Flors raised seven children in the hotel. Julius Sonza remembered the Western "as a hotel for miners. They called Marie 'Mother Flor.' She would do their laundry and take care of their clothes. The miners left their belongings in a trunk at the Western when they left to work in the mines for the summer. In the winter they would come back to the Western where a room would be waiting for them."

**HOTEL WESTERN.**

Best 25c Meals in the City.....

UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT  
NEWLY FURNISHED.

Transient and Local Trade solicited. Special rates by the week or month.

**M. A. ROGERS.**

*Ouray Plaindealer, September 20, 1901*

Floro died in 1931 and Marie operated the hotel well into the 1940s when she began leasing the hotel to others. Marie sold the hotel in 1961. The hotel is owned and operated today by the Pieper family. It is the oldest wood-frame hotel in Colorado.

**WESTERN HOTEL**

Home of Miners  
MRS. MARY FLOR  
- Prop.

*Ouray Herald, April 4, 1941*

**St. Elmo Hotel**

Owing to the exorbitant price of all kinds of produce, Mrs. Kate Heit announces the following prices to be charged at the St Elmo Hotel.

MEALS 35 cents  
Board by the week \$7.00 to \$8.00  
Meal tickets \$6.

*Plaindealer, Nov 5, 1909*

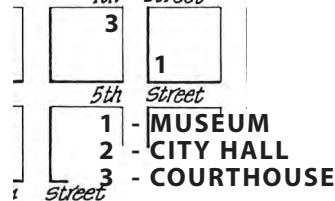
## ST. ELMO HOTEL ~ OURAY



The St. Elmo Hotel was built in 1898 by Kittie Heit, beside her Bon Ton Restaurant, which was operating at least by 1886. According to a report by The Ouray Herald, the cost of the hotel was expected to be \$7,500 for the 46'x 80' two-story brick hotel. Originally, the building had a front porch over the sidewalk. But the city building committee advised the Ouray city council that the porch was in violation of the building ordinance and Kittie was forced to take down the porch. Its oriel, or bay window was added to the hotel either in 1899 or 1900. During miners' strikes against the owners of Telluride mines, Kittie gave free lodging and meals to many of the miners. She died in 1915. The bay window was removed during the 1940s and the brick covered with stucco. In 1982 the Lingenfelter family restored the hotel including its bay window.

## Become a member!

Please join us and become a member of OCHS. Your financial and volunteer support is essential to the historic preservation of Ouray County. Members receive free admission to the Museum, a 10% discount on items in the OCHS bookstore and free admission to the OCHS Evenings of History Series.



## OURAY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

- |                               |                |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Kevin Chismire, President     | George Moore   |
| Tom Hillhouse, Vice-President | Don Paulson    |
| Joey Huddleston, Secretary    | Walt Rule      |
| Bud Zanett, Treasurer         | Gail Saunders  |
| Joey Huddleston               | Robert Stoufer |
| Gail Jossi                    | Ted Zeggars    |

### NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE:

Maria Jones, Kate Kellogg and Gail Saunders.

### MISSION STATEMENT:

The Ouray County Historical Society (OCHS) is dedicated to preserve, protect, procure, exhibit, and interpret whatever relates to the natural, social, and cultural history of Ouray County and the adjacent San Juan Mountain Region of Colorado.