

The Louisville Historian

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TAKE A WALK ON THE SUNNYSIDE

*Bridget Bacon
Museum Coordinator*

Of the many coal mines that once operated in the Louisville area, the Sunnyside Mine is not as well known as mines like the Hecla, where gunfire broke out in 1914 during a long strike, or the Acme, which was located right downtown among residences and businesses. Not only does the Sunnyside Mine have a unique history, but it is one of the few mines in the area located under what is now public property. It also has been honored by the Louisville Housing Authority, which named its most recent housing development on East Street "Sunnyside" after the mine.

The Sunnyside Mine location is at the Carolyn Holmberg Preserve at Rock Creek Farm, which is part of Boulder County Parks and Open Space and also is the area that includes the pumpkin patch at Dillon Road and US Highway 287. It's a great place to hike, soak in the spectacular views, and reflect on the lives of Sunnyside coal miners and their families.

Rock Creek Farm just south of Louisville encompasses many different aspects of east Boulder County history all in one place. The Plains Indians, the Overland Mail Stage Route, the Goodhue Farm and the Goodhue irrigation ditches, and Stearns Dairy all left their imprints on this land. In addition, the Sunnyside Mine there and its mining camp attracted immigrants seeking work from other states as well as from Europe. Finally, the railroad spurs that serviced the mine represent another important aspect of the history of this area.

Coal was discovered on the Goodhue Farm in 1900. The Sunnyside Mine was opened almost immediately and was operated first by the Big Six Coal Co., then by the Vesuvius Coal Co., until it closed in 1921. The name "Sunnyside" for a mine was common and another mine by

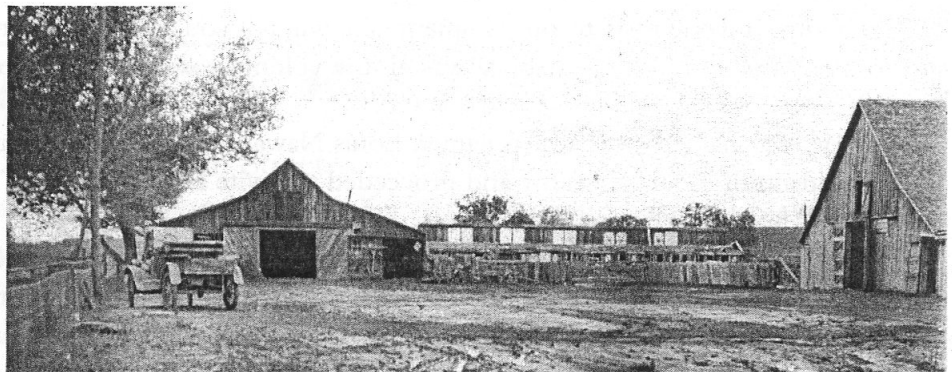
that name even was founded elsewhere in Boulder County.

The thickness of the Sunnyside coal bed was four to five feet, slightly less thick than that of the average Louisville-area mine. The mine had two veins, one of which was among the area's deepest mines at 339 feet. The total amount of coal mined from the Sunnyside was about 300,000 tons. 1913 was the year of its highest production. Records indicate that about 30 to 50 miners worked at the mine at a time.

Unfortunately, miners had continuing difficulties with the fact that the area has a very high water table and the Sunnyside was prone to flooding. In fact, pumps had to operate around the clock to keep water out of the mine workings.

As with other area mines, railroad spurs serviced the Sunnyside. Rail cars would bring in supplies and take away the coal brought up by the miners.

Coal mines were dangerous places, and the Sunnyside was no exception. At least one miner died there and many more were likely injured. In 1902, William Spegal was killed in an explosion at the Sunnyside. A small cave-in above his head rained dirt down upon him, but even more seriously, the collapse released gas that ignited his lamp. The explosion also seriously burned another miner.



The Goodhue Farm, date unknown.

Continued on page 3

2005 PIONEER AWARD FOR CAROLYN CONARROE

Donald Ross
Chair, Historical Commission

The Louisville Historical Commission is pleased to announce that Carolyn Conarroe is this year's recipient of the Pioneer Award. This award is presented annually to a person or persons who contributed to the welfare and interests of the Louisville community. Donald Ross, Chair of the Louisville Historical Commission, presented the Pioneer Award to Carolyn at the Chamber of Commerce Awards Banquet on January 27. The following is the text of Don's presentation.

The person receiving the Pioneer Award this year accomplished many great things since moving to Louisville. The family came from Simla, Colorado, a small town on the eastern plains of Colorado. They published a newspaper there.

In 1965, the family decided to move to Louisville and they became owners and publishers of the *Louisville Times*.

In 1970, this woman was appointed director of the Louisville Public Library, which at that time was housed in the old City Hall.

A group of ladies called the Saturday Study Club, of which she was a later member, had a great deal to do with starting the Library in 1927. For four years, she was the Library's director.

With the help of the citizens from Louisville and the Rocky Mountain Fuel Company, a collection of photos and stories were gathered. Her husband, who published the *Times*, printed the stories and pictures in the weekly paper. Jack DiGiacomo, who was a photographer, assisted by copying all the photos for the Library files.

In 1976, our city celebrated its centennial-bicentennial years. Our pioneer lady tonight was appointed to a committee to organize the event. The Miner's Statue in front of City Hall was part of the committee's endeavor.

In 1979, the city asked for a committee to create and organize what is now known as the Louisville Historical Commission. Our lady was part of that committee. Since that time and still to this day, she has a great interest in contributing to the history and preservation of Louisville.

Working for the *Louisville Times* (I don't know if her husband paid her or not), she continued to research our town's history and have it printed in the newspaper. When enough history was gathered, she wrote and published a book, *The Louisville Story*. Anyone interested in our history can purchase this book at the Louisville Historical Museum or at the offices of the Chamber of Commerce.

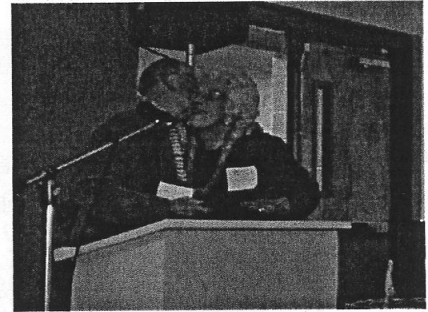
After a few years, she wrote and published another book, *Coal Mining in Colorado's Northern Field*. Can you imagine the research that went into these books? As of this day she now has a third book in print, *Louisville Legends: The Record as History*.

Every time anyone talks to our recipient, she will tell you that volunteers formed our community's government and all of its agencies. It was all the volunteer work that helped build Louisville as we know it today.

Our city was named after a man named Louis Nawatny. Guess who found on the Internet, the great-grandson of Louis Nawatny and proceeded to invite him to our city. This was a very memorable event.

I guess the greatest accomplishment in her life is being married to her husband for 55 years. They have three children, David, Cindy, and Doug. If my memory is correct, all three of the children worked for the *Louisville Times* newspaper. The *Times* was operated by the family for 33 years.

I am happy to present to you tonight, the recipient of the 2005 Pioneer Award, Carolyn Conarroe.



Don Ross presents the Award to Carolyn Conarroe at the Chamber of Commerce Banquet.

Continued from page 1

According to a miner who was interviewed in 1956, the Sunnyside had “a little village” around it where miners and their families lived. The housing reportedly was constructed of wood and corrugated sheet metal and consisted of very small buildings sitting on rock with no foundations. Of course, these structures had no running water.

The coal mined in the Louisville area was soft lignite that could not be stored for long periods. As there was little demand for coal for heating in the summer, the mines typically would shut down and miners had no work during the warm months. The miners at the Sunnyside had one advantage over other miners in this respect in that they could seek temporary work on Goodhue Farm itself during summers.

The Sunnyside mining camp was the birthplace of the person who would become perhaps Louisville’s most famous native, William Jovanovich, who in the embodiment of the American dream went on to become president and CEO of the preeminent publishing firm of Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. Jovanovich was influential in the publication of numerous significant books, and the company had nearly 12,000 employees at the time of his retirement in 1991. As was reported in the Summer 2002 issue of *The Louisville Historian*, Jovanovich passed away in 2001. In his memoir published after his death, *The Temper of the West*, he wrote about his father, who was a Serb from Montenegro, his mother, who was Polish, and his birth in 1920 at the Sunnyside coal camp.

As Jovanovich relayed in his memoir, in 1921 the flooding at the Sunnyside Mine was so

severe that it washed away the miners’ tools. This had severe consequences for the miners themselves, who were viewed by area mine operators as independent contractors and were required to supply their own tools. For the Jovanovich family, this was the last straw in a series of hardships and they moved to Denver soon after.

The same year that the Jovanovich family left, the mine closed. Buildings, mine dumps, mine shafts, railroad spurs, and objects were all abandoned. When Boulder County acquired the property in 1980, the shafts were closed permanently and the refuse hauled away. The only apparent physical remnant left is the Sunnyside Mine dump. There still appears to be an abundance of water in the form of Rock Creek and other small waterways that criss-cross the area, making it easy to understand even over 80 years later why the Sunnyside had continuing problems with flooding.

If you would like to visit the site of the Sunnyside Mine at Boulder County’s Rock Creek Farm and soak up some local history, drive south from Louisville on Front Street, which becomes S. 96th Street, and turn east on Dillon Road. Turn south on 104th Street and continue on the dirt road to the parking area. Continue south on the trail on foot; the Sunnyside mine location can be seen from that trail to the west after crossing Rock Creek. Other trails are also available for hiking, including around Stearns Lake.

Sources: Boulder County Parks and Recreation; *Boulder Daily Camera*, Dec. 17, 1956; *Boulder Tribune*, April 25, 1902, “Miners Killed at Louisville”; Carolyn Holmberg Preserve at Rock Creek Farm Management Plan Addendum, Sept. 5, 2002; Jovanovich, William, 2003, *The Temper of the West*, University of South Carolina Press; Louisville Historical Museum files

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW LOUISVILLE?

1. What was the original name of Main Street?
2. What city building was the childhood home of a Major League baseball player who played in the World Series and lost – to the Boston Red Sox?
3. What was the year of the last graduating class of Louisville High School?

The answers appear on page seven.

REMEMBER WHEN: A LOOK AT LIVING IN THE PAST

Bob Enrietto

Historical Commission Member

Remember when you pulled into a gas or service station and two or three attendants would come to the car and ask what they could do for you? If you wanted gasoline, one attendant would start filling the tank; one would raise the hood to check the oil level in the engine and coolant in the radiator. They would also wash the windows, check the air pressure in the tires, and sometimes sweep the front floor of the car.

In some larger cities, you could have your car picked up, serviced, and returned to your home. The service station would send an attendant to your home riding a three-wheel motorcycle with a front tow bar and bumper clamp. He would attach the motorcycle to the rear bumper, drive to the service station, service the car, attach the motorcycle to the rear bumper, return the car to its owner, and ride the motorcycle back to the station. I believe there are a few stations that still provide this service, but the charge is substantial.

Remember how our mail was delivered? Mail arrived from Denver on a passenger train and was picked up at the depot by a contractor who delivered it to the Post Office. There was no home delivery so the mail was sorted into numbered boxes facing the front of the office that were accessible from the front by a combination lock. Residents would gather in the vestibule and pick up their mail. If you did not have a box, there was a general delivery window where you

could ask for and receive your mail. Outgoing mail was deposited at the Post Office and was carried to the depot and placed on the afternoon train to Denver by the same contractor who delivered the morning mail. This gathering of residents to pick up their mail also allowed one to catch up on the latest news about the town and some of its residents.

Remember the ice boxes? Before the days of mechanical refrigeration, the ice box was the way to keep food from spoiling during warm weather. Ice was delivered by truck to each house. The home owner was issued a large diamond shaped card with the numbers 25, 50, 75, and 100 placed on each point. The card was placed in a front window with the number displayed on top showing the pounds of ice needed. The ice man would drive by, see the sign, and deliver the requested pounds of ice.

As the ice melted, the water ran into a drain and down to a pan placed under the ice box. Of course, this required someone to empty the pan and there was more than one incident where the kitchen floor was very wet from the overflow.

During the winter, many people placed an insulated box on the outside of a window with a sliding pane and used this system to keep their food cool.

The above is a sample of what living was like many years ago, and while it might seem primitive, it seemed to bring people together.

SHARE THE GIFT OF HISTORY

Share the gift of history by sharing the gift of membership in the Louisville Historical Society. Your gift will be the one remembered throughout the year. A yearly membership is \$15.00 for an individual, \$25.00 for a family, and \$100.00 for a business. Membership means receiving our newsletters and an invitation to our Annual Historical Society Meeting. Membership also helps to ensure the preservation of Louisville's unique history and cultural character.

You will find a membership form on our web site at museum@ci.louisville.co.us/museum.htm or you may call the museum at 303.665.9048. You may also write to us at Louisville Historical Museum, 749 Main Street, Louisville, Colorado, 80027. Please remember to communicate your name, address, and telephone number as well as the name, address, and telephone number of the person(s) to whom you wish to give the gift of membership. We accept cash or checks. Please make checks payable to Louisville Historical Society.

DONATIONS

The Louisville Historical Museum has accessioned the following donations during the months of November through January. We sincerely appreciate these recent donations.

Jack Putney and Donald Ross - 1941 photo of Louisville's Centennial Mine baseball team, the state semi-professional baseball champions

Nancy Nelson - 1966 Cargo Yearbook and Commencement Program for Louisville High School

Larella Stout - Original abstracts of title for two downtown Louisville properties

Rebecca Harney - Photo of Louisville resident Jean Baessler

Suzanne Grosso - Collection of photos relating to the Niehoff-Austin-Goodhue-Mall family of Louisville

Louisville Historical Commission Members

Sally Burlingame

Elle Cabbage

Viginia Caranci

Robert Enrietto

David Ferguson

Donna Hauswald

Alice Koerner

Diane Marino

Daniel Mellish

Stuart Pritchard

Donald Ross

Patricia Seader

Aline Steinbaugh

William Unrau



UPDATE ON the Jordinelli House Renovations

*Bob Enrietto
Historical Commission Member*

The flooring and base board trim has been installed and painted. All major interior work has been completed. Remaining items include space utilization, display cases and storage units, gallery molding, window coverings, and the completion of a ramp to the back door, stairs to the porches, and screening of the front porch.

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

*In Memory of:
Edith Chiolino &
Bill Schoser, Sr.*

MUSEUM WISH LIST

The Louisville Historical Museum would like to add to its collection the yearbooks and photographs described below. If you would be willing to donate any of the described items, please contact the Louisville Historical Museum and let us know. A reproduction of an original photograph would be acceptable. All donations to the museum, a non-profit institution, are tax deductible. Thank you for your support!

Louisville High School Yearbooks (Cargos):
1954, 1961, 1964, 1965, 1968, 1969, 1970,
1971, & 1972

Photographs of Louisville High School's graduating classes:
1939, 1954, 1955, 1956, 1958, 1960, 1961,
1962, and 1964 through 1971

Centaurus High School Yearbooks:
1973 to 2000

THE MUSEUM CORNER

Bridget Bacon
Museum Coordinator

As we start 2005, there are a lot of things going on at the Museum!

The Holiday Home Tour provided a welcome opportunity to research the history of the Louisville Center for the Arts, which was one of the buildings on the tour. It was built in 1903 as a grade school for first and second graders and has continued to serve Louisville as a community center in many different ways, including as the town's library in the 1940s. It was painted white for many years and its bell tower has long been gone. Last fall, it was appropriately fitted with a replica of its original bell tower. Over the years, the Museum has received donations of some class pictures with "the little red brick school house" in the background. We have these interesting photos in a binder for viewing at the Museum.

The DVD of WWII servicemen and women from Louisville, *Our Boys and Girls in the Armed Forces, 1943-44*, has been receiving enthusiastic compliments from residents and former residents (including some who themselves appear in the film) as a unique record of our local history. It shows about 200 members of the Armed Forces while they were home on leave, typically in front of their Louisville homes or on Main Street. Many were filmed with their parents. A copy was recently donated to the Louisville Public Library so that it can be borrowed. The DVD can also be purchased at the Museum for \$25. For those of you Historical Society members who have moved away from Louisville and would be interested in purchasing a copy, you may order one by sending a check to the Museum for \$28 (\$25 plus \$3 for shipping and handling) made out to the Louisville Historical Society.

The Museum has many resources for researching local history, and now Melanie Muckle has added to our research collection with her donation of copies of fifteen Louisville directories over the years from 1892 to 1942. Many of these directories of individuals who lived and worked in the town include their occupations and addresses, so they would be valuable tools if one is researching family history or looking for who lived in a particular home over the years. Thank you, Melanie!

The Museum is now selling copies of the children's book *Pigs Over Louisville* for \$5.00. It was written and illustrated by Lori Winslow and her students at Louisville Elementary School in the style of Kerry Lee MacLean's book *Pigs Over Boulder*. The book goes through the alphabet, colorfully highlighting such Louisville landmarks as the Blue Parrot, the Historical Museum, and Memory Square while showing flying pigs in every picture. The Historical Commission greatly appreciates the thoughtfulness of Lori Winslow in donating the books and permitting the proceeds to benefit the Commission. If you are interested in purchasing a copy, please stop by the Museum or any of the Commission's fundraising events this year!

LOUISVILLE HISTORICAL MUSEUM
1001 MAIN STREET
LOUISVILLE CO 80027
303.665.9048

HOURS:

**TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY & THE
FIRST SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH**
10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Group tours available upon request

museum@ci.louisville.co.us
www.ci.louisville.co.us/museum.htm

THANKS TO NEW AND RENEWING SOCIETY MEMBERS!

New Members

Stuart Pritchard
Becky Velthoen
Eric & Liz Swanson
Karen Watts
Bonnie McCormick
Susan Spaulding
Rebecca Harney
Mimi Wilson

Complimentary Members

The following residents were given complimentary memberships in appreciation for opening their homes for the Holiday Home Tour.

Connie & Jim Green
Heather & Dan Mellish
Todd & Ann Peyok
Kim Saloney

These names consist of recent memberships and renewals in the Louisville Historical Society during the months of November through January. We apologize for any omissions or misspellings. Please contact the museum with corrections to the above list of names.

Renewing Members

Sally Burlingame	Isabelle Hudson
Gloria Brandt	Marjorie Nell Pickett
Mrs. Charles Bottinelli	Beulah Caldwell
Martin Buffo	Erin & Alex
Bridget Bacon & Andrew Calabrese	Robertson
Joyce Hyslop	Delbert McNally
Melvin M. DiLorenzo	Dominic & Rita Ferrera
Eileen Hogg	Clemma Wiggett
Wallace & Donna Hauswald	Alicia Mahoney & Jon Skinner
Diane Marino	Meredyth Muth
Barbara Leichty St. John	Eugene & Virginia Caranci
Don & Joyce Ross	June Enrietto
Mary & Frank Patete	Eugene & Palmena DiCarlo
William Unrau	Gail Khasawneh
Thomas Scannell & Lois Kershner	Robert
Phyllis Hawkins	DiGiallonardo
Kevin & Sue Sessa	

2004 HOLIDAY PARADE OF HOMES

Elle Cabbage

Historical Commission Member

On Saturday, December 4th, the Commission hosted its Third Annual Holiday Parade of Homes. This year we had four Louisville homes, the Louisville Center for the Arts, the United Methodist Church, and the Louisville Museum and Miners House participating in the tour. Tickets were sold for \$10 if purchased in advance, or \$12 the day of event. We were very fortunate to have local businesses host locations to purchase tickets prior to the tour.

The day was filled with much sunshine and an abundance of happy faces walking the streets as they went from one home to another. This year was a first to have Santa Claus located at the Methodist Church, handing out bags of fruit and candies to the children. The Commission also contracted with the Methodist Youth Group to provide free child care during the Home Tour.

The Commission would like to recognize and extend thanks to the many individuals and organizations who helped in the success of our annual event: Todd and Ann Peyok, Jim and Connie Green, Dan and Heather Mellish, Kim Saloney, Terry Nothnagle, Donna Rogers, Judy Barkley, Jeanne Dondelinger, Karen Squire, Ruth Warkenton, Jim Traut, Lisa Capano, Heather Lewis, Gine Wagner, David Wyman, Tri City Elks Lodge, Louisville 2004 Young Artists Exhibit (Louisville Arts & Humanities Council and the Louisville Art Association), United Methodist Church, United Methodist Youth Group, Louisville Chamber of Commerce, Heritage Bank, Marketplace Bakery, and the Birds of Prey Thrift Shop.

On behalf of the Commission's fundraising committee, we would like to thank all the Commission members and Museum Coordinator, Bridget Bacon, for all their hard work prior to and during the tour!

Answers to the Quiz on Page Three

1. Main Street used to be called Second Street.
2. The Austin-Niehoff House, 717 Main Street, is next to City Hall and houses the Land Management offices for the City of Louisville. Bert Niehoff (1884-1974), a member of one of Louisville's founding families, played for the Phillies when they lost to the Red Sox in the 1915 World Series. The Museum currently has a front window display about Bert Niehoff and his family.
3. The year of the last graduating class of Louisville High School was 1972.



Louisville Historical Society
749 Main Street
Louisville CO 80027