
LOUISVILLE HISTORIAN

A publication of the Louisville Historical Commission & Society

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Eileen Schmidt - Editor

THE MUSEUM CORNER

As Fall approaches, the members of the Historical Commission have begun to make plans for our winter projects. The museum buildings were open on Labor Day, September 4, and we received many visitors. Cookies and punch were served. We raffled an overnight stay at Harvey's Hotel in Central City – two dinners and two brunches were included. Richard Biella of Louisville was the winner.

September 1 is the beginning of the year for our Historical Society and dues of \$5.00 are now due. A slip to be used in renewing membership or joining the society for the first time is attached to this newsletter. Thanks to those of you who have renewed your membership and to others who have just joined our group. Without your support we would be unable to continue the work of preservation of the buildings, collecting artifacts, and maintaining the written history of Louisville. On August 23, several members of the Commission met with the Mayor, some of the city council members, and the City Administrator to discuss the needs of the Historical Commission. Our main concern at the present is the basement of the museum which will require extensive repairs. Due to the heavy rains this past spring and the work done on the streets around the museum, water has seeped into the basement. The city arranged for an inspection of this damage by a structural engineer and repairs will be made in the near future. Block walls, reinforced with cement, and a cement floor will be constructed. This will allow us to use this area for much needed storage space. The city has asked the Commission to submit our projected plans for the next five years including a list of priorities for repairs and maintenance of the buildings.

Sara Godshalk has been appointed as Executive Director replacing Steve Basinger who has worked with us for several years. Steve and his office staff were a great deal of help to us and we thank them for their assistance.

The following artifacts have been donated to the Museum in the past few months and we would like to thank the donors:
Items from the Knights of Pythias – Ed and Beth Smith
Manual Lawnmower – John Waschak
Pictures, child's dress, various certificates, pillow shams, paper fan – Betty and Bill Buffo
Scrapbooks containing information about mining, the history of the town, etc. – Frank Domenico

We would like to remind everyone that we will accept artifacts that have been a part of the history of the City and if anyone has such items, please call the museum at 666-9048 and leave a message or call 666-6853.

The scrapbooks donated by Frank Domenico contain a great deal of information about the history of Louisville and they are a convenient source of this material. They will be available for use by the public.

PARADE OF LIGHTS

The annual Parade of Lights will be held on Friday, December 1, 1995. This event is one of the most popular activities which takes place in the City throughout the year. Most of the businesses remain open during the evening and special events are planned at various locations. In addition to the Parade, which is to be held at 7:00 p.m., there are bus and carriage rides which provide transportation to the other areas of business throughout the City. For the children, there will be a visit from Santa Claus and several musical groups will perform in various locations.

Our museums will be open and we will be serving wassail and cookies. "The Broken Sixpence," a musical group, which plays antique instruments will return this year to provide traditional music. This music has added a great deal to the festivities and everyone enjoys it.

This year our porcelain Christmas ornaments are an old-fashioned "roly-poly" Santa Claus. These ornaments are hand crafted by members of the Historical Commission, are dated, and will be sold for \$5.00 each. We also plan to raffle a traditional porcelain nativity set crafted by Marion Junior. This nativity set will be on exhibit in our windows during the month of November with the drawing to be held towards the end of the evening.

Please plan to come by and spend some time with us on December 1. We feel sure you will enjoy your visit.

FALL FESTIVALS

Autumn feasts to celebrate the gathering of crops have taken place since the beginning of recorded time. Harvesting of food was observed as a pagan holiday throughout the world. People in many parts of the world still observe these festivals, although they have included religion in their festivities as an expression of thanks to God for nature's bountiful crops.

Thousands of years ago the Chinese celebrated feast days as the crops were gathered in the fall of each year. The Jews observed an eight-day celebration known as the Feast of the Tabernacles thousands of years ago and this festival continues to be an important part of their culture today. The ancient Greeks honored, Demeter, who was the goddess of their harvest. In Rome, the autumn festival was known as Carella, and honored Ceres, their harvest goddess. In England, the autumn ceremonies were known as Harvest Home and were derived from a Druid harvest feast.

Halloween was first observed as a harvest festival dating back to the old Druidic customs and old Roman celebrations which honored the goddess of fruit.

Governor Bradford of the Plymouth Colony proclaimed the first Thanksgiving as a feast day on July 30, 1623, two years after the first Thanksgiving was instituted by the Puritan settlers. Since the

Puritans didn't permit themselves humorous celebrations, their observance was one in which they thanked God for the plentiful harvest which would enable them to survive the fierce New England winter. It was not until 1863, that Sarah Josepha Hale persuaded President Lincoln to proclaim the last Thursday of November as a national holiday. Thanksgiving Day is celebrated as a time for families to gather and give thanks for their blessings.

On the local level, our Fall Festival has played an important role in the community since the early 1930's when the ladies of the Methodist Church instituted this festivity as a means of raising funds to support their church during the depression. Since Labor Day was celebrated by the miners in commemoration of being granted the eight-hour work day as part of negotiations by their union, it was decided to hold the Fall Festival celebration during the first week-end of September each year.

Other communities observe special festivals during this fall season. Lafayette, Broomfield, and Arvada are some of the neighboring towns who hold fall celebrations. Several cities celebrate by participating in an Octoberfest which originated in Germany.

As summer ends, it seems as though the Fall Festival is an appropriate celebration which signifies the beginning of the school year, the harvest of crops, and the change to cooler weather. With the changing of the colors, this has become a favorite time of year for many and all the festivities which take place add special meaning to this change of seasons.

CHRISTMAS LEGENDS

There are various legends told in different parts of the world concerning Christmas. Many of these stories have been heard for years, but a few new legends were found recently in the Reader's Digest "Book of Christmas."

"A Spanish legend tells that the Three Kings cross Spain each year on their way to Bethlehem and leave gifts for children who have been good. On Epiphany Eve, the children put out shoes filled with hay and carrots for the camels of the King.

In Syria, it is said that the youngest camel of the Wise Men was so tired when they reached the Manger, that he fell down. In sympathy, the Infant Christ blessed him. Syrian children believe that this animal brings their gifts on Epiphany. They call him "the Camel of Jesus."

It was the custom in several European countries to paint nuts silver or gold and hang them on the Christmas tree. Sometimes a verse or a tiny manger scene would be put in a hollowed-out walnut that had been broken in half and hinged on one side so that it would open and close.

In Ireland, candles are set in the windows on Christmas Eve to light the Christ child on his way. Only a woman named Mary may snuff out the church candles on Christmas Day.

The Yule candles used long ago in France and England were so huge that holes had to be chiseled in the stone floors to serve as holders. Christmas dinner lasted as long as the candles burned.

Holly hung on the door at Christmas time was once believed to repel evil spirits and protect the house from lightning.

In old England, sprays of holly were placed on the hives to wish the bees a Merry Christmas. The bees were said to hum a carol in honor of the Christ Child.

The ceremonial Christmas drink in England was once lamb's wool: a mixture of hot ale, sugar, spices, eggs, and roasted apples. Thick cream was sometimes added. It was served in a wassail bowl with pieces of toast floating on top. Hence, the origin of the drinking toast.

Don't wash and press a Christmas present before giving it, or you will wash out the good luck and press in the bad.

Make a start on your year's work between Christmas and January fifth — a bit of ditching, a little plowing — to "show your intentions." But never fix your roof between Christmas and New Year's or the holes will come right back.

Leave a loaf of bread on the table after Christmas Eve supper and you will have a full supply until the next Christmas.

If you let a fire go out on Christmas morning, spirits will come to you then and later in the seasons. To improve your luck, wear something new on Christmas Day. But not new shoes. They will hurt, and may even walk you into a catastrophe."

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS CARDS

Historians have never been able to agree when the custom of sending cards at Christmas time to friends and relatives was first initiated, but most believe the custom began in England. During the reign of Queen Ann (about 1700) at Christmas time, the children bought sheets of paper on which fancy borders or outline sketches were engraved. They would color these borders and in the center of the sheets of paper they wrote Christmas messages or poems in their best handwriting. These sheets of paper were used for this purpose until the 1840's and became the forerunner of Christmas cards as we know them today.

The first Christmas cards most similar to those which we use today appeared during the late 1840's. Many claim to have originated the first holiday greeting cards. Some believe that the first cards were sent in 1845 by W. C. Dobson who was one of Queen Victoria's favorite painters. Others give the credit to William Egley, a 16 year old engraver's apprentice, who printed 100 copies of a card designed in black and white and sent them to his friends during the holiday season. A descendant of Mr. Egley found a diary of his which indicated that he began this practice of sending cards in 1848. The strongest claim for first place in this field, however, goes to Sir Henry Cole. Sir Cole had many friends whom he wished to contact during the holiday season, but felt that this task would be too time consuming. So he commissioned John Horsley, a Royal Academy artist, to design a card for him. One thousand copies were lithographed and colored by hand. Although some believe the date of this card was 1843, the actual date was probably 1846. Cards older than the Cole or Egley cards have been found in both Europe and America. So far as we know, the Cole card was the first to be ordered and sent out in large numbers to friends and relatives, thus, was the beginning of the custom of exchanging Christmas greetings as we know it today. In America, a dry goods merchant in Albany, New York, was probably the first to use Christmas greeting cards in a general way. Sometime during the period between 1834 and 1856, Mr. R. H. Pease had an artist named Forbis design a greeting card which was lithographed and sent to his customers and friends.

Louis Prang, a German emigrant, was considered to be a "true father of the American Christmas card." Mr. Prang was a very skillful and patient lithographer. In 1874, he produced several Christmas cards which were done in as many as 20 different colors. They were far in advance of any other cards made at that time and for 20 years, they led the field in artistry and beauty. Mr. Prang reproduced copies of the originals of many great artists and his cards were of many shapes and sizes. They often sold for several dollars because they were usually trimmed in beautiful silk or lace. Flowers, birds, and nature scenes were more common on his cards than the traditional Christmas scenes.

The early cards were adorned with fancy cords, ribbons, and lace and since they were flat, many had illustrations on both sides. The folded cards which we use today, were unknown at that

time. The post card style Christmas cards became popular in the late 1890's and early 1900's. About 1908, the folded cards which are widely used today made their appearance.

Because the public felt the folded cards were much more attractive, the post card style lost favor.

The use of famous paintings for reproduction on Christmas cards was revived in the 1930's and this type has become more popular each year. Many cards are framed to be hung on the walls of our homes, while others are filed in scrapbooks to be enjoyed in the future. Many collections depict the customs and costumes of foreign countries and some cards have become collector's items. Although the price of Christmas cards and postage have increased through the years, many still use Christmas cards as a means of keeping in touch with friends and relatives. The custom of sending holiday greeting cards has become big business for the card manufacturers and the post office, but for most of us it is just a pleasant way of maintaining friendships and keeping in touch with relatives and former neighbors.

SYMBOLS OF CHRISTMAS

Many symbols are associated with Christmas and are used in decorating our homes and Christmas trees. Some of these symbols are connected to the religious celebration of the holiday, while others have come to us as legends which have been handed down through the ages.

Evergreens are symbolic of eternal life and have been used as Christmas decorations since very early times.

Holly wreaths had a religious beginning. It is believed that Christ's crown of thorns was actually made of holly and the red berries symbolized Christ's blood.

According to one legend, the first Christmas tree was used more than 1200 years ago. A missionary named Winfried, later known as St. Boniface, was in Germany teaching Christianity to the people. While walking through the woods, he reportedly, found a group of pagans about to sacrifice a young man to one of their gods.

Winfried was able to prevent them from carrying out their task. He cut down an oak tree and as it fell to the ground, a young fir tree sprang up from its roots. As he began to explain to the group of pagans about the birth of Jesus, he told them that the fir tree was the tree of Christ and was to be taken into their homes and used as a symbol of good.

The poinsettia is one of the most popular Christmas flowers and each year as this plant begins to appear in the shops, everyone is reminded that Christmas is drawing near. According to an old Mexican legend, a poor girl with no gift to present to Mary, the mother of Christ, picked a bouquet of flowering weeds which were growing beside the road. She took the weeds to the church where she placed them at the feet of Mary. The weeds immediately turned to beautiful plants with red flowers which we have come to know as poinsettia plants today. Dr. Joel Poinsett, the first United States ambassador to Mexico brought the first plants to our country more than 100 years ago and the Americans began calling them poinsettias after the man who brought them here.

Of course, there are many, many legends about the figure we know as Santa Claus. One story goes back several thousand years before the birth of Christ. Legends tell of a Scandinavian god who rode through the world in midwinter delivering rewards or punishment to the children. Perhaps this story grew out of the need to bring a little cheer and happiness during the long, severe winters in this part of the world. As the conversion to Christianity took place, this pagan belief died out, but was replaced by the winter gift bearer, St. Nicholas, who was a Catholic bishop, well known for his love of children. St. Nicholas was said to have brought three children back to life with his love and prayers. He was also known for his

generosity and anyone who received an unexpected gift thanked St. Nicholas.

HOLIDAY VISITS 1944

As preparations for Christmas were begun in 1944, the townspeople seemed a little more quiet and serious than they usually were at this time of year. This was the fourth Christmas that many of the young men and women were away from home serving in the armed forces during World War II. Their families, relatives, and friends were sorry to have to face another Christmas without them. In a copy of the "Lookout" (December 22, 1944), the school paper which was published by members of the staff attending Louisville High School, the following news of some visits home for the holidays were found:

Bill Knill S 2/c arrived home on a six day leave Saturday. On his return to Farragut, he will be placed in an outgoing unit.

Leland Ross arrived home Thanksgiving Day and will be here until December 17. He will then go to California to get his assignment. He has been stationed in India.

John Madonna MM 1/c was home on a thirty day furlough. He has been in the South Pacific.

Richard Merciez arrived home on a two week furlough from the Merchant Marines. He brought an Australian soldier home with him. While in Saipan, he saw his brother, Alex, and brought some of his souvenirs home with him.

Frances Winkler of the WAC's has been home visiting her parents. She had delayed orders while on her way to Texas.

Laverne Jenkins is home on leave visiting his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Jenkins.

Jimmy Buffo is home on an emergency furlough from the Navy.

Stanley Berry is home on a ten-day leave from the Navy.

Clarence Martella arrived home on a 15-day leave. He is stationed in Norman, Oklahoma.

Gene Barday is home on a 30-day leave. He arrived here a week ago Monday after duty in the South Pacific.

James McDaniel arrived home on a 30-day leave.

Art Thompson is home on a convalescent leave. He arrived home Saturday.

Cpl. R. J. Fenolia has recovered from the injuries received in action in France and has returned to his company.

Denny LePenski arrived home on a 30-day leave. He was stationed in the South West Pacific. He will return to Old Mexico to take up night flying.

Ed Martella arrived home on a 30-day leave. He was stationed on a ship in the Pacific.

Jack Dionigi arrived home on a 30-day furlough. He was stationed in Alaska.

Glen Dionigi arrived home on a 15-day leave from the navy.

Wendell Winkler is home on a furlough from Camp Campbell, Kentucky.

Edward Frause arrived home on a twelve-day leave from the Navy. He has been in the Pacific area.

Robert Dirkes was home on a six-day leave visiting his folks. He left Wednesday for San Diego where he is going to visit his sister for a few days before he returns to Las Vegas, Nevada, to take a test before entering gunnery school.

Sam Dusenberry RM 3/c visited in Louisville a short time while enroute to Rock Springs, Wyoming. He has been stationed in the Aleutians.

Pat McHugh F 2/c arrived home Sunday afternoon on a five-day leave. He has been stationed in New York.

Harley Fletcher arrived home on leave from the Navy. This is his first leave in two years. He will return to California.

Lewis Romano, Yeomen, who hasn't been home for 18 months arrived home on a 21-day furlough. He will go back to his ship in San Francisco.

Jack Stout S 2/c was home on a five-day leave in December.

Marty Rotar arrived home on a thirty-day furlough from the Army. He was one of the first boys to leave Louisville after Pearl Harbor. He has been stationed in Australia.

Bert Urban was home on a 15-day embarkation leave. He returned to North Carolina.

Dominic Ferrera and Jack Cliff were home during the week.

Louis Gutfelder is home on a thirty-day survivor's leave. He was aboard a merchant ship which was sunk in the South Pacific.

The homecoming of loved ones certainly helped brighten the holiday season for everyone in town during those trying times.

CHRISTMAS STORIES

The following stories were found in an edition of the "Lookout" dated December 8, 1947.

CHRISTMAS IS GIVING, HELPING (A Christmas Story)

"It was on Christmas Eve and John Dubarry was hurrying down Fourth Avenue towards the busy part of Coleman. He was all dressed up and excited, for he had a date with his best girl and they were attending a gala event at her aunt's home -- a Christmas party.

As he crosses Atterbury Street, he saw a slim figure huddled beside the big bank building. As he looked closer, he saw a fragile little woman trying to carry a load of boxes and packages. She was almost in tears for she was afraid her five small children would think Santa was not coming to see them this year.

She explained to John that she lived over on Lincoln Street, more than a mile away. She had come to buy a few things for her children and their Christmas dinner. After missing her bus, she was going to try to walk out to her home with all her heavy packages.

John thought of Mary and the party; then he looked at this small woman and all of her bundles. What if Mary was impatient because she had to wait -- he was going to help this woman. He did not care if it took him all night -- he was going to help her carry those things to her home. He knew that Mary would understand why he had to help this family have their Christmas. -- Don George

CHRISTMAS IN LOUISVILLE

Christmas in Louisville -- is it like Christmas everywhere? Do people think about the same things here as they do in other towns, states, or countries? What about you. What gives you the Christmas spirit? It is the huge Christmas tree, lit up in red and green lights, standing erect in the middle of the town, the school productions depicting the Holy scenes, the occasional trips to the city for last minute shopping, the rehearsing of carols, Midnight Mass at Church? Would it be Christmas without these things? Would you get the same feeling in another community? It doesn't take just the material things to give the Christmas spirit. It can be had in any part of the world, as long as there is peace in your heart, the satisfaction of spreading good will, and a knowledge that all around you, are friends that you can comfort, that you can make happier, and who will be around to make your living truly reflect the spirit of the Yuletide.
--Author Unknown

CONSUMER PRICES --1909

There is on file in the museum a publication called a "Consumer's Guide" from Sears, Roebuck, and Company. The date on it is 1909 and it boasts of capital and surplus of over one million dollars. A short paragraph explains the purpose of the book. It reads, "This book tells just what your storekeeper at home pays for everything he buys and will prevent him from overcharging you on anything you buy from him." The following list of merchandise shows the prices of different items in the book.

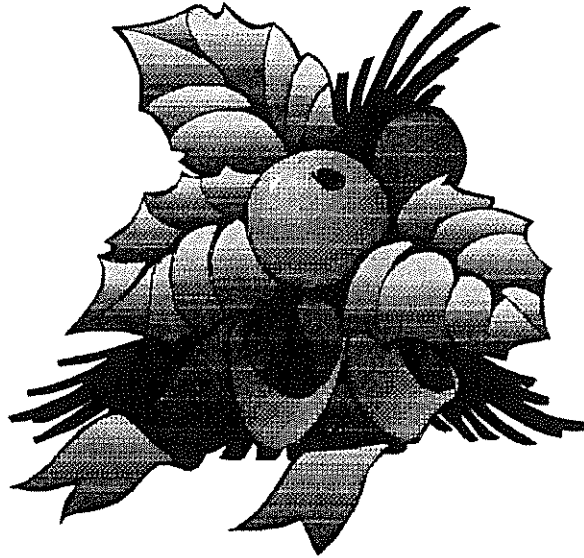
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| Waterbury 8-day clock | \$ 1.85 |
| Luminous Dial Alarm Clock | \$.85 |
| Solid gold ring with 1/4 carat diamond | \$27.50 |
| Solid gold band ring | \$ 3.37 |
| Solid gold pen with holder | \$ 1.15 |
| Elite Bavarian China Dinner Set for 12 | \$16.85 |
| Beckwith Palace Grand Piano | \$115.00 |
| Special Stradivarius Model Violin | \$ 9.95 |
| Empress Professional Accordion. | \$ 6.40 |
| B-flat Coronet-Nickel plated | \$ 6.95 |
| 1906 Runabout Buggy. | \$39.95 |
| Full leather saddle. | \$11.69 |
| Double barrel shotgun | \$18.95 |
| Professional catcher's baseball mitt | \$ 4.00 |
| Baseball shoes (calfskin) | \$ 1.85 |
| Fishing reel | \$ 5.40 |
| Steel fishing boat | \$21.00 |
| Fishing tackle-box | \$.84 |
| Complete fishing net | \$ 1.24 |
| Anso camera | \$ 4.10 |
| Binoculars | \$23.00 |
| Solid Oak Rocking Chair | \$ 3.95 |
| Solid Oak Sideboard | \$14.45 |
| Solid Oak Library table | \$ 4.45 |
| Red Cross Brand mattress | \$ 9.95 |
| Complete set of blacksmith's tools | \$39.95 |
| Enameled steel kitchen range | \$25.00 |
| Men's neckties | \$.27 |
| Men's leather belts | \$.22 |
| Ladies' Kid Lace Shoes | \$ 1.50 |
| Ladies' silver and gray patent oxfords | \$ 1.95 |
| Men's single breasted all-wool suit | \$ 6.98 |
| Men's double breasted blue serge suit | \$ 8.64 |
| Ladies hand made fashionable hat | \$ 1.95 |
| An exclusive fashion hat | \$ 2.70 |
| Lawn underskirt with three rows lace | \$ 1.48 |
| Ladies' medium-long coat | \$ 1.15 |
| Ladies' washable skirt | \$.75 |
| Ladies' shirtwaist blouse | \$.55 |
| Ladies' shirtwaist suits (skirt & top) | \$ 1.48 |
| Girls' white lawn dresses | \$ 1.15 |
| Girls' dress trimmed with lace | \$ 2.25 |
| Girl's fine made organdy dress | \$ 4.95 |
| Porcelain enameled kitchen sink | \$12.52 |

prices!

**LOUISVILLE HISTORICAL
COMMISSION MEMBERS**

| | |
|------------------------|----------|
| Emajane Enrietto..... | 666-4145 |
| Dave Ferguson..... | 666-6000 |
| Richard Franchini..... | 666-6272 |
| Marion Junior..... | 666-8283 |
| Donald Ross..... | 666-6836 |
| Eileen Schmidt..... | 666-6853 |
| Patricia Scholes..... | unlisted |
| Patricia Seader..... | 666-8385 |
| Cassandra Volpe..... | 665-8542 |

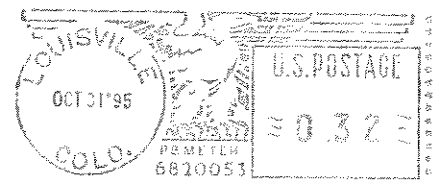
HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL





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