

LOUISVILLE HISTORIAN

A publication of the Louisville Historical Commission & Society

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Eileen Schmidt-Editor

MUSEUM CORNER

Many visitors have toured our museums during the past few months. Several out-of-state guests have commented favorably on our collection of artifacts and the displays in the museums and in the windows.

Election of officers was held on February 9, 1994 and the following will serve this year:

Eileen Schmidt.....Chairperson
Pat Seader.....Vice Chairperson
Emajane Enrietto.....Secretary
Don Ross.....Treasurer

Various committees will be appointed to serve throughout the year at the next meeting.

Although we have not received the grant money as yet, Cassandra Volpe has placed the photographs in order so that the work of copying them can begin as soon as the money is received. This has been quite an undertaking, and we appreciate the work that has gone into this project.

Since the "Taste of Louisville" will be held on June 11 this year, we have not made final plans for this activity; however, the museum buildings will be open from 12:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m., and we would like to invite all to visit the museums. Since May has been designated as national History Preservation Month, this issue of the *Louisville Historian* will include some of the family histories of the early settlers who came to Louisville. Other historical items concerning our community will also be found in this issue. These family histories are on file in our museum, and we would like to encourage all who have not yet compiled their family's biographies to do so and to provide the Historical Commission with a copy. Maintaining the history of our town is very important to those of us who grew up here and to our families. We wish to have the people who are new to this area become familiar with the history that has taken place here. We also hope to inspire the future leaders of our community to maintain the city and look after the welfare of our citizens with as much consideration and determination as did our pioneer leaders.

1001 MAIN STREET TOMEIO HOUSE

The house was built in 1904 by Felix Tomeio, a coal miner, who raised six children--three sons, Gene, Dom, Joe, and two daughters--Rose and Irene. Another child passed away at the age of five.

The back room, the kitchen area, was added sometime after the two front rooms. This house was built to be practical and functional, as is evidenced by the lack of decorative moulding throughout. However, the front door is identical to the Petrelli-Ashe House, 1016 Main Street (across the street). The front door might have been replaced at some point, and since the Petrelli-Ashe is a Sears Catalogue House, this is quite possible.

The front steps were added when the house was renovated by the Louisville Historical Commission. It is interesting to note that there was no evidence on the facade of any steps existing before, even though the door is very high from the ground.

The original color of the interior was a brown stain, as we discovered during the renovation. The brown stain was typical of the era.

The house was bought by the City of Louisville in 1983 from the Ross family. The house is now operated as a museum by the Louisville Historical Commission.

The information on this house is very sketchy, should anyone have anything to contribute (i.e. memories of previous residents, appearance of the house at different times, etc.), please contact the Louisville Historical Museum--665-9048 or any member of the Historical Commission.

LOUISVILLE HISTORICAL COMMISSION MEMBERS

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JOHN PELLILLO FAMILY BIOGRAPHY

John Pellillo (1884-1971) came to America in 1912 from Bagnoli Del Trigno, Province of Campobasso, Region of Abruzzi, Italy. He left his wife Ersilia, and two children, Mansueto Joseph (M.J.) one year old, and Adalgisa Olga (Ada), one month old, in Bagnoli. His plans were to come to the new world to earn money, and then return to Italy within three years.

John first settled in West Virginia and worked for a short time in the coal mines. Subsequently he moved to Youngstown, Ohio, where he worked for some time in a glass factory and later in a shoe factory. In 1914 he was enticed to come to Louisville by his cousin Domenic Gabriele, and his friends Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Perrella, who thought that work was more plentiful in Colorado. Since he was a skilled shoemaker (taught by his stepfather), he decided to open a shoe repair shop at 1000 Main Street. This site was occupied later by Jacoe's grocery store, and is currently being used by the Historical Society as a museum. He and two friends, Archie (Carbone) Gabriele, and Alfonso Filacchione shared a room rented from Micehlina Tomeo who lived next door and who also furnished their board. Mrs. Tomeo was widowed; and, as was customary in those days, took in boarders to support her large family.

During the next few years John's dream to return to Italy was shattered by the Declaration of World War I. (Little did he realize that this event would keep his family separated for ten long years.) This led to his decision that it would be best to have his family join him in America. In anticipation of this event, in 1920, he bought the property at 828 Main Street from Jerry Sandy. The front part, where Mr. Sandy had operated a restaurant, was converted into the shoe shop, and the house in the rear became the family home.

In the meantime in Bagnoli, M.J. and Ada attended grade school while Ersilia operated a dry goods store, which incidentally she rented from Joseph Perrella's brother. She also engaged in sewing baby clothes and men's shirts, and in the evenings she taught some of the town's people to read and write.

The preparation to come to America took two years, and finally in 1922 everything was in order. However, the unexpected happened. Due to an illness, Ada could not come at that time. Rather than postponing the trip and going through another two years of paper work, it was decided to leave Ada in Rome with the maternal grandmother, and have her come the next year with an uncle who was also planning to come to America. Ersilia and M.J. (eleven years old at the time) made the boat trip to New York, and then arrived by rail in Louisville, without being able to communicate with John the fact of their arrival to New York. Ersilia wore a written note on her coat giving her destination address as Box 693, Louisville, Colorado.

In the meantime there was a change in the immigration laws. Each country was allowed a quota of immigrants. The only way for Ada to come outside of the quota was to have the parents become American citizens. John applied for citizenship and began to study the United States Constitution and its form of government.

In 1923 the family was blessed by the birth of another daughter, Evelyn Marie. John was well established in business. In addition to shoe repairing, he sold new merchandise such as mining supplies, hard-toe work shoes, mens' dress shoes, and shoes for children. He renamed his business as The Pellillo Shoe Shop.

He became an American citizen in 1926, and on January 27, 1927, Ada joined the family in Louisville. She started school on February 15th. Because of the language barrier, Mr. Alps, the school superintendent, placed her in Mrs. Wellington's fifth grade class. She remembers some humorous incidents during those first days. The teacher assigned Marie DiLemma, who knew some Italian, to be her interpreter. When she asked Ada to read she did not know the Italian word for "read," and so she used the word "read" which sounds like the Italian word "ride" which means to laugh. Ada found it strange that in the American schools the teacher would ask the students to laugh and without any reason! Another remembered incident was when she first heard the bell for recess, and everyone was going out, and Ada, thinking that school was over, went home. She found the American schools more lenient, and without the discipline she was accustomed to in the Italian schools. She also found kind and helpful classmates who never ridiculed her when she mispronounced a new word.

In the fall of 1926 as a result of a fire which destroyed the telephone building and a garage just south of the Pellillo Shoe Shop, John rented the two upstairs rooms of his house to the telephone company for the following two years.

The depression years (1929-1936) were a challenge, but through sheer economy (no car, no automatic appliances, and no entertainment) John managed to save his business.

In 1934 Ersilia also became an American citizen. She learned the American language and adjusted to the new life, but still missed her family in Rome. She became adept at baking beautiful angel food cakes (from scratch) and was often asked to bake them for friends. She became an active member of the Pythian Sisters, the foresters, and the St. Rita's Auxiliary of the St. Louis Catholic Church.

When M.J. started school in Louisville, he was placed in Miss Johnston's third grade class. He skipped a grade when he learned the language. He had wonderful teachers both in elementary and high school. He still corresponds with one of his English teachers. He graduated from high school in 1931, and attended a year of business school at Barnes Business College in Denver, much to his father's delight who hoped that someday he would carry on the family business. However, M.J. had other goals. He enrolled and worked his way through the University of Colorado. His parents helped as much as possible during this period of "the depression." He graduated in 1936 with a major in physics. With his degree and \$50.00 he hitch-hiked to find a job in geophysics, and wound up on a torsion balance crew in Mission, Texas. A year later he joined a seismic oil exploration company in Dallas, Texas, and after a few years of field work was transferred to its instrument laboratory. He later became a partner in another exploration company, and when it was sold in 1967, he retired and returned to live in Boulder.

On September 7, 1939 M.J. married Zelma Zimmer whom he met at the University a music major. They have three children: June Pellillo Warwick (James) is presently employed at Boulder Community Hospital, (registered nurse), Corrine Pellillo Brase (Charles) teaches mathematics at Arapahoe Community College in Littleton, and John Pellillo, owner-manager of a computer store (Computer Linkage) in Boulder. They also have two grandchildren, Walter and Julia Warwick who are students at the University of Colorado.

Ada graduated from high school in 1934. Even though she was the recipient of a four-year scholarship to any Colorado college, she chose to stay home and help in the shoe shop. She married Charles (Chelote) Bottinelli on September 3, 1939, and moved to Longmont on January 1, 1941. They have two sons: Charles A. (Ph.D.) who is an energy consultant for Public Service Co. and living in Littleton, Colorado, and Robert L. (Ph.D.), a clinical psychologist in Flint, Michigan. Ada and Charles have four grandchildren: Nick, Jed, Lia, and Gina.

Evelyn graduated from high school in 1941. She attended Colorado University graduating in 1945 with a degree in medical technology. She is currently working as a staff assistant in the biology department of the University of Colorado. She married Edmund Krohn on April 23, 1950. They have three daughters: Jeanne Krohn Wade (Robert) a graphic artist living in Washington, D.C., Lauren Krohn, a lawyer employed by McGraw Hill Publishing Co. in Colorado Springs, and Ann Krohn, an English teacher at Colorado University. Evelyn and Ed have one granddaughter, Kellyn Wade.

In 1955 John Pellillo sold his Louisville property to Toney LaSalle for \$10,000.00, and he and Ersilia moved to Longmont to be near their daughter, Ada. They adjusted to the move and to the advantages of a bigger city, but they left their hearts in Louisville where they had lifelong friends.

Toney LaSalle connected the Pellillo property to 800 Main, thus enlarging his furniture store. The house in the rear was left intact and was rented for many years. Then LaSalle sold the store to Jimmy Kelley who in turn sold it to Robert Sparks. In 1983 Warren Jackson and C. Raymond Sears purchased 820 and 828 Main and built the Main Street Market Place. Part of the Pellillo Shoe Shop is now the solar mall. The house was opened into the mall and transformed into many small shops. In the mall there is a picture of a young man working at his shoe bench. John Pellillo is back home!

-by Ada Bottinelli

TOM AND MARY MITCHELL FAMILY

I am Ethel (Mitchell) Lawrence, and was born in Louisville, Colorado on March 13, 1897 in a little house located where the George Morgan home is (currently Post Office parking lot).

The things I am about to tell you of Louisville were related to me by my mother and father, Thomas and Mary Mitchell.

My mother, Mary Smith, came to this country from Lancashire, England with her parents when she was twelve years old. Her father, Edward Smith, made a couple of trips to this country from England before he brought his family here and settled in Streeter, Illinois. He engaged in brick making and had two brick yards. One was run by the family. There were eleven boys and two girls. After a few years passed, the family moved on to Missouri.

My mother worked in a mine boarding house and that is where she met my father. The friendship blossomed into a romance and August 30, 1875, they were married in Moberley, Missouri. My father helped mother with the dishes. That was the way they did their courting.

In a few months, they came to Marshall, Colorado, where their first child was born. In 1877, they came to Louisville and were one of the first three families to settle here. I don't know too much about my father, but he was born in Wales. He was reared by his two brothers as his folks died when he was about four years old. As a young man, he worked his way coming over on the ship and landed in New York.

When they heard a vein of coal had been found, they came here from Marshall. My father got involved in drilling for coal. As years went by, coal began to be the issue all over. People began coming and the little town began to flourish.

Louis Newatny and C.C. Welsh had money to back them and in a few years there were companies that came and started drilling. Coal mines were cropping up all over the place. In fact, there were good times. My father got his citizenship papers March 20, 1883 in Boulder, Colorado. There were about fifteen mines here and in the surrounding territory.

So goes, the settlement was started on one street called 1st Street and is now Front Street. There were a couple of stores, a livery stable, about three boarding houses, and several little rough built houses that people lived in and about thirteen saloons on one street. My father owned one, where Camp's body shop (currently PK designs) is located. It was later destroyed by fire.

Mining was entirely different in those days. There was no electricity. Everything had to be done by hand. There was a tool called an auger about five feet long that had a drill on one end and a breast plate on the other. The iron rod was offset in a couple of places for each hand. It had to be worked by hand to drill a hole in the coal. Each miner had to use his own dynamite and make a roll out of newspaper. Then they rolled it up and put a squib, something like a broom straw, put a cap on it, place it in the hole and lit the squib. Everyone had to get out of the entry when it went off. The coal would come tumbling down and had to be shoveled with a broad blade shovel into the mine car. Sometimes the place was so low, a miner would have to get on his knees to shovel. When the car was loaded, they had a metal check with your number on it which was hung on the car. Then the mule drawn trip would come along and pick up the cars and they would go up on a cage. The check weighman on top would keep track by your number and on payday, you got the credit for cars loaded.

A coal miner never saw the sun in winter. He went to work in the dark and came home in the dark. I don't think there was a month that went by that someone didn't get hurt or killed and would be brought out on a stretcher. Many of them would get overcome from black damp and powder smoke. The only light they had was an oil can shaped like a small teapot and a wick that came out through the spout. It was fastened by a hook that was on the pit cap above the beak. The first mines were the Old Louisville and The Leader. Coal strikes for miners were very prevalent, as they fought for better conditions and more pay.

Different men formed companies and came here to invest. At one time, there were in the neighborhood of fifteen mines here: Acme, Hecla, Rex No. 1, Rex No. 3, Monarch, Centennial 1 and 2, Vulcan, Sunnyside, Watchless, Capitol, Standard, Brooks, Hi-Way, and Thomas Mine. The big companies were Rocky Mountain Fuel, National Fuel, Nesbit and Peltier, Boulder Valley and a few smaller companies.

Payday was every other Saturday and the miners celebrated! The women weren't allowed in the saloons.

In 1910, there was a whisper of a coal strike. It lasted five years and

all the support, such as it was, came from the N.M.N. of A. How well I remember the money that came in every Saturday and would be given out. The man of the family got \$3.00 a week. The woman \$1.50, and each child .75. Of course, people in those days were very conservative. They had to be. There was very little entertainment. Folks had to make it by having dances and picnics along the creek on the Mayhoffer farm which had a grove of trees and the old rock house by Klubert Warembourg's. Of course, everybody walked and took a basketful of food and kegs of beer.

There wasn't a doctor or a mortician to be had. My mother was a pretty good one and she would always go and do all she could with home remedies. If anyone passed away, they were never embalmed like they are today. The men would make a trough out of wood slabs and put the body in it and pack ice all around it. There were no doctors until C.B. Wolfer came and then Dr. Burns and Dr. Solan. Later on we had six, Wolfer, Crannell, Cassidy, Siverdferger, Snair, and Miller. Some of them were mine doctors and whoever wanted \$3.00 kept from their pay each month could have the doctor of their choice.

The first school was two rooms in a building where the Trophy store is. Then as the city was growing, there was a two-story building put up. Four rooms, two upstairs and two downstairs. This was at the corner of Spruce and Jefferson. Then in 1903, four more rooms were built on and the whole ten grades were in it. First and second being in the little red brick, which is now the Recreation Building (currently next to the Municipal Swimming Pool). When the four rooms were built, it was the activity place of the town. They held dances, box and ice cream socials and parties of all description.

The town kept getting larger and extending west. Then there were two streets. Second Street was what is now our Main Street and business was getting better all the time. There were grocery stores, drug stores, small restaurants, two more houses, the Rex and Isis movie theaters were going strong and showed pictures every night and sometimes held vaudeville shows. Tom Metz and Oti Todd were the owners. Every Thursday night was Ladies Night and they gave a dish to all the ladies, cup, saucer, or plate. In fact, I have a set of cups and saucers today.

Louisville was finally incorporated in 1882. We had a Red Man Hall, two stories, and had lodge rooms upstairs and a banquet room. It was made of red brick and the bricks were made on the site of the Catholic church. It was located where the Sister's Convent is located (currently the St. Louis Pre-School). The downstairs had a stage and wonderful dance floor. Some of the good shows that were held in Denver used to come, and the hall would be packed. Dances were held every two weeks. That was payday for the miners. Everybody in town would be there. A good orchestra from Denver was always hired, and the dance would go on from 9 p.m. until 2 a.m. and then we would pass the hat for more money to go on until 4 a.m. or maybe go to a hoedown at Jarose's barn and come home at 6:00 a.m. Those days were never forgotten.

We have had a lot of tragic things happen in our little town, but we all stuck together and helped to work things out. If the old pioneers could come back today, they would be amazed to see what a beautiful community has been born through all their hardships and perseverance.

My father, Tom Mitchell, was the first policeman and the first fire chief. A hand pumper and bucket brigade were all they had to fight against fires.

Water was a big problem. The ditch, now known as Mayhoffer's, ran straight down to 1st Street (Front St.) along the back of Steinbaugh's into the creek. Everyone had a rain barrel to catch water when it would rain. Drinking water had to be boiled. The ditch water was used to wash clothes and so forth.

Transportation was a big problem. If anyone wanted to go to Denver, they would have to ride in the caboose of the Bobtail freight that took the coal to Denver. Then it finally had a one passenger coach and as time went by, we had a passenger train that came through here at about 8:30 a.m. and came back around 10:30 p.m. It went to Graybull, Wyoming. In about 1907, the Denver and Interurban put on trolley cars that ran by electricity and transportation was wonderful. They ran every couple of hours and passed at the depot here. One would go to Boulder and one to Denver. There was a junction by the Monarch mine and the cars passed there, one going to Eldorado and the other one to Boulder by way of Marshall. The cars ran on electric Trolley's. In 1924, automobiles were coming in fast. The need for the D&I fell off and they were taken off. The company dissolved, and since that time we have had very poor ways to travel.

TOM METZ FAMILY

Mr. Thomas (Tom) Metz was born in Lonoconing, Maryland on June 5, 1866. He came to Colorado in 1892 from Iowa, and worked in the mines around Walsenburg and Trinidad, Colorado, then went back to Iowa where his parents were. While he was there he met Miss Sadie Burk and they were married on December 25, 1894. Mr Metz returned to Colorado, Mrs Metz stayed in Iowa and came through Mr Metz's folks who were on their way to Yuma, Colorado to homestead. They proved up on the land and later moved to Lafayette, Colorado. They all came through in a covered wagon.

Mrs. Lorn Metz came on to Denver, Colorado; that was in 1885. In 1897 the panic was on and no work was to be found. My folks had bought horse and buggy, and drove to Globeville--close to Denver--and both worked picking strawberries. My father heard of a job in Superior, Colorado, at the Industrial Mine so they moved to Superior on September 19, 1897. At 3:00 in the morning of September 19, 1897, their twin daughters were born. Their names were Nora and Felora.

While working in the mine, Mr. Metz heard of a barber who had passed away in Louisville and his widow wanted to sell his barber tools, so he traded the horse and buggy for the barber outfit and moved to Louisville in 1899.

The first house we lived in was back of where the Country Kitchen is now. The house was in the backyard. In years Mr Metz rented a building for a short time which later was run by Celeste Romano; and Mr. Metz had bought a home across the street which is in the north part of L.S. LaSalle building. Mr. Metz had a building built in front of the home and moved his business there.

My father had two barber chairs, a pool table, and two card tables. He fixed bike tires, sold phonographs, and candies, ice cream, soda pop, and tobacco. He called his place Temperance Hall. He didn't sell any liquor. He said he would leave that to the saloons on Saloon Street as it was called, now it is called Front Street. There were no saloons on Main Street, and there were thirteen saloons in three blocks on Saloon Street.

Then in 1906 a man came to Louisville with a picture show, which was in the Union Hall south of the Blue Parrot Cafe. He wanted to sell out, so my Dad bought the fixtures and had a two-story building built by Mr. Fischer and Sons and it set next to the liquor store and on the driveway next to the bank. The liquor store building when first opened was by a lawyer by the name of Mr. J. R. Gickman. Mrs. Edna Chambers (Hoyt) worked in his office. The picture of the man standing by the liquor store was Tony Romeo, who ran a second hand store on Front Street. My folks were in the picture business for seventeen years and then sold out to Sandy and Mary Biella.

--written by Mrs. Nora (Metz) Clark

SCHRIETER FAMILY

Curt and Grace Schreiter Family History -- Early 1900s

Hendrich and Anna Schreiter were strawberry producers along the St. Vrain River in Longmont, Colorado. (They are buried in the Louisville Cemetery.) Grace Elizabeth Allen (Allenspark named after her grandfather) was picking strawberries for the Schreiters when she met Curt Otto. When they were married, they moved to an eighty-acre farm south of Louisville. The land was originally owned by Peter Peltier. Grace was Curt's "right-hand man." All their farming was done by horses. At harvest time, men from the neighborhood and men from Louisville, who worked in the coal mines in the winter months, were hired for the threshing crew. Grace and a hired woman would prepare the noon meal for eighteen to twenty men. Many of them would say "she fed them well." Whenever Grace wanted a chicken for dinner, she would take her twenty-two, and with one shot she had her chicken. (Her father Alonzo Allen, had a shooting gallery in Louisville.)

In the early 1930s Curt and sons, Otto and Lin, decided to go from horses to mechanized machinery. The first Crawler-Catpillar tractor, in that part of the country was purchased by the Schreiters. the thrashing machine was replaced by a Holt Combine and several other pieces of heavy machinery were purchased. Bigger operations of farming were taking place. The land on both sides of Dillon Road east of the HiWay Coal Mine and Johnson's HiWay Filling Station (Highway 287) were changed from grassland to dryland crop farming. The land where C.T.C. is located was irrigated crop land, including other acreages.

Otto Curt married Mary P. Varra and had three children:

Alice (Bove)
Dorothy Ann (Hostetler)
Curt (wife Dolly Como)

Lin Max married Olga Warembourg

Phyllis M. (Steinbaugh)
Betty L. (Buffo)
David (wife Donna Rickman)
Larry (wife Delores Helgoth)
Dennis (wife Johanna Chavez)

Toots Elizabeth married Elmer R. Venette and Albert DiLorenzo

She and Elmer had three children:

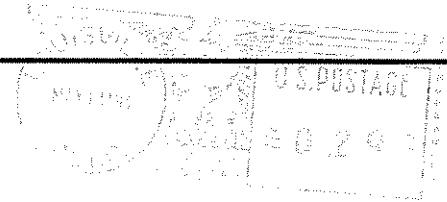
Janet E. (Posey)
James R. (wife Patricia Wiggett)
Paul E. (wife Debora Graham Casida)

James W. Schreiter (wife Margaret Bishop)

James still lives on the family farm.

The ledgers of Curt Schreiter are at the Louisville Historical Museum.

Louisville Historical Commission
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