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Commission

LOUISVILLE HISTORIAN

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Eileen Schmidt-Editor

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950 SPRUCE STREET

LOUISVILLE, KY 40227

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MUSEUM CORNER

Committee members are busy gathering information necessary for applying for grants. Money generated by gambling in our state for various projects including historical preservation is now available. Several groups have toured the buildings. A new display has been set up in the windows of the museum. Plans are being formulated to have our vertical file more accessible to our commission members thus enabling everyone to answer questions and requests for information more readily. Some old valentines have been placed on exhibit. We did not receive many artifacts during the holiday season, but would like to remind everyone that we are anxious to receive different items. Election of officers will be held at the February meeting; standing committees will also be appointed at this time. If anyone has an article they would like to donate please call the museum at 665-9048 and leave a message or call any commission member. The museum continues to be open on Thursday afternoons from 1:00 p.m. until 3:00 p.m. or by appointment.

The following items have been received in the past few weeks:

- Tony Romeo's union notes
- Various photos of the Romeo family and their home
- McClure magazine dated January 1896—
the advertisements are especially interesting

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

In Memory of
Daniel Arnold

LOOKING BACK

The members of the Louisville Historical Commission feel that 1992 was a very productive year and many projects were completed. The front step of the house was repaired and some painting was completed on the outside. The commission members agree that some major repairs will be necessary on the house in the near future. A fire-proof filing cabinet which will be used for the materials in our vertical file was purchased and prepared for use. The handicap entrance to the museum was completed and can be reached by parking in the lot on the west side of the building. A typewriter was purchased for use in the museum and has been a great help. Copies of the original cemetery deeds

when the ground was purchased by the town from Dave Kerr are now in our file. Eugene Caranci was selected to receive the pioneer award for 1991—the presentation was made at the Chamber of Commerce Awards banquet.

A proposal was presented to the developers of the Louisville Plaza shopping center to recognize the area as the site of the old "Hecla Mine," but the developers have not taken any action on the matter. At the opening ceremonies of the new K-Mart store in the Louisville Plaza, a check for \$500.00 was presented to the Historical Commission by the manager of the store. This money enabled us to complete some projects which had been delayed due to lack of funds.

Bob Junior installed a fire extinguisher in the museum. Don Ross had new signs for the museum hours made, and they are now in use. Students who were taking a class at the University of Colorado were provided information regarding certain historical buildings and homes in our city. The commission is to receive copies of their reports when they are completed.

Commission members voted not to hold our 4th of July auction because we had not received information regarding these activities soon enough to complete the work involved in preparing for this event. We also felt that because of the work being done on Main Street the businesses had suffered and it was not a proper time to seek donations from them. We did vote to set up a table at the park and sell books, pins, Christmas ornaments, and other items; but very little interest was shown.

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LOUISVILLE HISTORICAL COMMISSION MEMBERS

Virginia Caranci	666-6235
Emajane Enrietto	666-4145
Richard Franchini	666-6272
John Garcia	666-7863
Marion Junior	666-8283
Donald Ross	666-6836
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Patricia Scholes	673-0311
Patricia Seader	666-8385

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LOOKING BACK (continued)

Isabelle Hudson resigned as a member of the commission, and Dick Franchini was appointed by City Council to replace her. Pat Scholes worked very hard to get a volunteer program started, but few responded.

Don Ross researched materials for darkening the front windows of the museum, but nothing seems to be available at this time. A type of darkening has been applied to the windows, but some objects placed on exhibit there have been somewhat damaged by the sun.

May was designated as National History month, and exhibits were placed at the Recreation Center and the Library in recognition of this occasion.

We voted to begin copying the photos which are on file in the Library as funds become available for this project. Ed Helmstead, who painted the original sign on the false front of the store, repaired the sign. Tarps were purchased to cover the articles stored on the outside of the buildings, but we hope to have a permanent cover installed in the future. Several artifacts from the family of Owen Thirlaway whose daughter, Marian, taught piano in Louisville for many years were given to the museum and are on exhibit.

Pat Seader and Marian Junior escorted a group of students who are studying Museumology at the University of Colorado through the buildings. Nancy Markham, the instructor, made many favorable comments about the buildings and the exhibits. She was most impressed with the knowledge Pat and Marian displayed about the history of the area.

We have been pursuing new ideas for fund-raising projects for the future. An open house was held on Labor Day, but the number of people who visited the buildings was much lower than in previous years.

It is hoped that shelves will soon be constructed in the basement of the store to help alleviate our storage problems.

Our commission hosted an open house during the Parade of Lights which was held on December 4. Our handcrafted Christmas ornaments were bells made in the shape of a rag angel. A Saint Nicholas figure, crafted by Marian Junior, was also raffled that evening. Jennifer Warembourg was the winner of the raffle. Pizzelles and wassail were served to a large crowd of people. Our ornament sale was very successful this year. The members of the commission would like to thank you for your continuing support of our work.

Members of the Louisville Historical Commission devote many, many hours each year to the tasks involved in collecting, preserving, and exhibiting the history of our city and maintaining the buildings. Each member does his part in different ways. Emajane Enrietto, Dick Franchini, and Eileen Schmidt catalog the artifacts as they are given to the museum. Marian Junior and Virginia Caranci place exhibits in the windows of the store, changing them frequently. Marian is also responsible for the making of the Christmas ornaments with the aid of some other members. Pat Seader, Marian, Virginia, and Eileen do the soliciting for the auction when it is held. John Garcia and Don Ross have the responsibility of making needed repairs to the buildings. Pat Seader schedules tours through the museums. Pat Scholes and Pat Seader have also been gathering information needed to apply for grants. Eileen Schmidt edits the newsletter and is responsible for answering correspondence and keeping a record of the memorials. The members of this group deserve a great deal of credit for their efforts.

POLITICAL FORECASTS

"The next president of the United States will be regarded as a fat-head or worse by about forty percent of the population. The next congress will be accused of ignorance, greed, and extravagance.

It will be announced four years from now that what the country needs is a business administration.

Ninety percent of the pre-election promises will not be fulfilled, but then the greater majority of the voters will have forgotten what those promises were anyway.

Taxes will continue high. Talk continues cheap.

Hard times will be in vogue, no matter what the real situation is.

The Democrats will still be regarded as inefficient by the rank and file of the Republicans while the former will accuse the latter of everything rotten included in the political category.

The lobbyists will again be using the steps of the nation's capital as a roosting place, ever eager to thwart any move that tends to favor the best interests of the public at large."

The above article was found in a copy of the "Louisville Times" dated Thursday, February 18, 1921. It would appear that political forecasts have no time limits and that many of the observations made in 1921 are still applicable in 1993.

The following article was found in the same copy of the "Louisville Times," and deals with the State Legislature.

"The fact that over one thousand bills were introduced in the Colorado assembly last month furnishes food for reflection. Few if any of the men—except the senatorial holdovers—knew that they would be in Denver in January as a part of the law-making body. Yet after their election many of them seem to be driven by some invisible power to design and formulate a new law. The public knows nothing about it until it is sprung in the legislature. If it is not to create something then it is to abolish something.

Somebody wants teachers in the public schools subjected to boards of censorship, and if their opinions are "radical" they will be immediately cast into outer darkness. It might be supposed that the school authorities could be trusted to protect the young from such dangerous characters. If children are to be "protected" from false philosophies or questionable economic teachings the object will not be gained by the establishment of a board of official heresy hunters.

It is not truly unfortunate that so many measures are taken so seriously by their authors. It is also unfortunate that members of the legislature themselves so rarely take their own constituents into their confidence. Every Chamber of Commerce should be supplied with copies of such bills as are of general interest. It would certainly be most desirable if members of the legislature took the trouble to provide needful information to local Chambers of Commerce. It would create the impression in the home community that the representative believed his community was taking an intelligent interest in the affairs of the state."

PIONEER AWARD—1992

Susie Perrella DiGiacomo was born in Bagnoli, Italy, which is located in the Province of Campo Bosso. Her father, Joseph Perrella owned a spaghetti factory and wine and olive presses. Her mother, Florina Rossi Perrella, attended the University of Rome after her marriage to complete her education as a midwife. Her first child was born during the period when she was studying at the University, and he was cared for by his grandmother until his mother completed her education. When Florina came to the United States, she took the state board examination with the aid of an interpreter, and later delivered many babies in the Louisville area. Joseph Perrella became a coal miner.

The family emigrated to the United States when Susie was five years old. She attended St. Louis Catholic School, and when her mother was busy delivering a baby she took her younger brother to school with her to watch over him until their mother was finished with her work. Although Susie did not complete high school, she was a self-educated woman whose opinions and ideas were often sought by others.

During the strike of 1913-1914, she recalled how her family hid many of the miners and their families in the basement of the family home located at 1201 Main Street.

In May 1916, she married Peter DiGiacomo at the St. Louis Church, following a courtship in a buggy drawn by a horse named "Red." Adding to the excitement of the wedding, the horses pulling the wagon containing dishes which had been borrowed from neighbors for the occasion, ran away and the wagon hit a tree. Everyone agreed that it was a small miracle when no dishes were broken or even cracked.

Peter was a miner and a farmer, but had many other interests. Susie helped with the farming and delivered milk to families in Louisville. She also was a cook at the Blue Parrot Restaurant for many years—rising at 3:30 a.m. in order to be at the restaurant by 4:00 a.m. to begin making home-made spaghetti and sauce for the day.

Peter and Susie became the parents of a daughter, Lucille, who attended St. Louis Catholic School and Louisville High School. She received her Bachelor of Music Degree and also a Master of Music Education Degree from the University of Colorado. Lucille taught music in Lafayette, Montgomery County, Maryland, and Denver. She resides in Denver at the present time, but spends many hours each week with her mother at the family home.

Tony Rappa, Sam Carpenter, and Al MacDonald approached Susie requesting that she serve as committee woman for the Democratic Party in Louisville. Throughout the years, she became acquainted with many dignitaries of the Democratic party. Ted Kennedy, Adlai Stevenson, and Hubert Humphrey asked to meet Susie when they visited Colorado. Mrs. DiGiacomo received an invitation to the inauguration of John F. Kennedy. On one occasion when Senator Ed Johnson was paying a visit to Longmont, his helicopter landed at the DiGiacomo farm and Susie accompanied him. Governor Richard Lamm used to send a man to take her to Denver where they conferred about events taking place in our state. Supreme Court Justice Byron (Whizzer) White visited with Susie during his

visits to Boulder. Many times she was the only woman present among a group of men when important events were taking place. During those years women were not often active in public affairs, but Mrs. DiGiacomo was highly respected by all who were associated with her.

Susie, along with Mayor George Ellis, Joe Dolan, city attorney, and Joe Madonna, was present when Governor Steve McNichols signed the proclamation declaring Louisville a second class city. Mrs. DiGiacomo received many honors during her years of work with the Democratic party. In 1964, she was recognized as "Mrs. Democrat" of Boulder County and presented a silver tray. On January 20, 1973, she was honored at a party and given a charm bracelet. Each charm was inscribed with an office she had held within the party. She was Democratic Committee Woman during the period 1938-1989. In 1980, she was the recipient of the prestigious "Give 'em Hell, Harry" award which was created to honor Harry Truman.

When her husband became ill in 1972, she decided it was time to "retire," but after a few months she returned to her work. Some of the offices she held throughout the years, in addition to being the Democratic Committee Woman, were Vice-Chairman of the Democratic Executive Committee of Boulder County, a member of the State Democratic Central Committee, member of the Board of Directors for the Mental Health and Retardation Center of Boulder, a member of the Community Hospital Board, and many others. She never missed a State Democratic convention from the time she joined the party until her retirement. On October 27, 1978, the Board of Boulder County commissioners presented a plaque to her in appreciation for her efforts in behalf of their work.

Her family recalls that on her 80th birthday she went for her first motorcycle ride. In 1976, when Louisville celebrated its centennial, she was selected Senior Citizen Queen. Susie also served on the committee which planned events for the celebration of our centennial. When Susie and Pete celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in 1966, they visited Italy where they received the blessing of Pope Paul VI.

Mrs. DiGiacomo is a woman who has had a definite impact on our county as well as our community. She and her husband maintained an active interest in the St. Louis Church. They both sang in the choir. In 1935 when Father Benedict announced plans to build a new church, the bazaar, with the famous chicken dinner which was prepared and served by the ladies of the church, became the major activity to raise funds for the new building. The entire congregation took part in this project, but Susie and Mrs. Callahan were in charge of the dinner committee. They would go from farm to farm soliciting donations for the dinner and even went as far as Welby and Denver. Mrs. DiGiacomo told her family of one incident that occurred when she and Mrs. Callahan were soliciting donations—they crawled under railroad cars standing on tracks in order to reach a business on the other side of the tracks. Almost all of the food served was given by faithful members of the Catholic Church. After several hundred chickens had been collected, the women of the parish who did the cooking met at the Peter DiGiacomo farm where they prepared

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PIONEER AWARD (continued)

them for cooking. During this time our modern methods of refrigeration were not available so the work of killing and dressing the chickens had to be accomplished shortly before they were to be served. This proved to be no small task. The bazaars continued until 1957. Money to build the new church was raised, and it was opened and dedicated in 1942, fulfilling the dreams of the faithful parishioners including Susie and Pete DiGiacomo.

Susie DiGiacomo was a woman who not only served her community and her county, but also her country. She is admired and respected not just because of her many accomplishments, but because she is a good friend and neighbor who cares about others and always wanted to be of service. She is, indeed, deserving to be recipient of our Pioneer Award for 1992.

"GOOD LUCK" FOODS

As the New Year begins some superstitions regarding the foods eaten by people at this time of year were found to be very interesting. Whether you call it wishful thinking, superstition, or just fun, human beings began eating certain foods at certain times of the year in the hope that they would bring them good luck.

Southerners eat various types of greens (turnip, mustard, and others) on New Year's Day because of their green color. Since green is the color of our United States money they hope to prosper during the coming year.

In many of our Southern states the custom of eating black-eyed peas for good luck on New Year's Day is still observed after many generations have carried on this tradition. There is an old tale that black-eyed peas were originally eaten because they carried voo-doo magic.

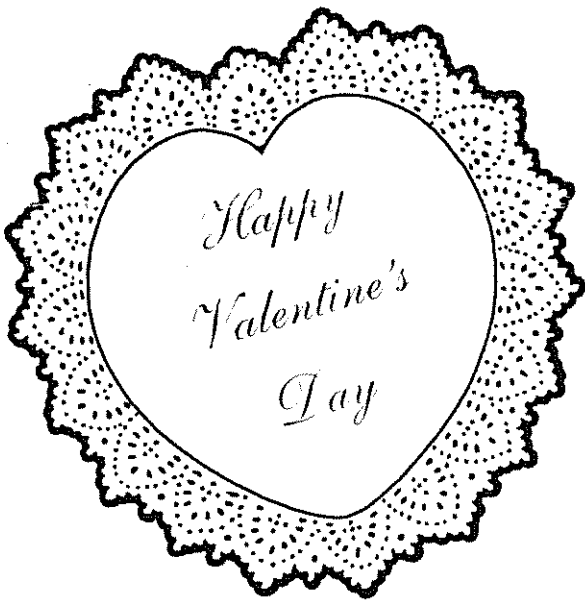
In Greece families bake a type of bread called St. Basil's which is to be consumed on the first day of the new year. A gold coin is baked into the loaf of bread, and the person who finds it is assured of good luck in the coming year.

One of the more practical food customs originated with the Dutch families who settled in Pennsylvania. Their custom of eating sauerkraut on New Year's probably began because by this time each year most of the vegetables stored in their root cellars had been used, but there was a plentiful supply of sauerkraut so they ate it and believed it would bring them good luck.

In Mexico sweet tamales are eaten on the first day of January to ensure a sweeter life for the next twelve months. Menudo, another traditional Mexican dish, is also eaten on this day. It is a very hearty dish consisting of tripe, hot pepper, and dry hominy. Since many callers are expected in Mexican homes on New Year's this soup will feed many for very little cost. Many believe that the real reason for serving this soup is that it is a sure cure for the ills suffered by many from too much food and drink during the holidays.

New Year's Day is also an important day for those of Japanese descent. Families gather to share their traditional foods many of which are thought to bring good fortune during the coming year.

Whether you celebrate the new year by making resolutions (which are quickly forgotten) or by eating "good luck" foods, the beginning of a new year seems to be a time for wishing each other good luck and good fortune during the coming twelve months.



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