



# LOUISVILLE HISTORIAN

A publication of the Louisville Historical Commission & Society  
Issue No. 20 November 1992

## MUSEUM CORNER

An open house was held at the museum buildings on Labor Day, September 7. Since the theme of the parade was "Honoring the past and creating a future," a display of old articles and their more modern counterparts was set up in the museum. An exhibit of school artifacts has been placed in the windows of the museum. Members of the Commission have begun work on the porcelain Christmas ornaments which we will be selling as a money raising project. The ornament chosen for this year is a "rag" angel in the shape of a bell and each will be dated. Marion (Dionigi) Junior is in charge of this project. A St. Nicholas which was crafted by Marion Junior, will be on display in the museum windows after the first week of November and will be raffled on December 17. Tickets may be purchased from any member of the Louisville Historical Commission. Marion and Virginia Caranci will also place a holiday exhibit in the windows soon.

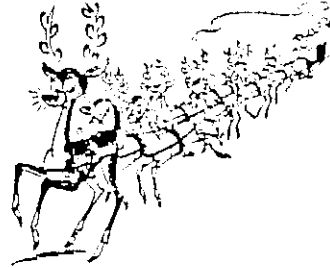
Pat Seader, Chairman of the Education Committee, with the help of other Commission members has conducted several tours through the buildings this summer and fall. Pat Scholes and Pat Seader have begun work preparing data which will be used when applying for grants. This grant money has become available from funds generated by the gambling in the state.

The foundation of the house has been repaired and a concrete apron was poured around the house to protect the foundation from further damage.

The following articles have been received from donors during the past few months:

- Rosemary Rippeth** Articles from the Owen Thirlaway family and Marian Thirlaway
- Arlee Lee** Photos and rental data from the First National Bank, Luigi's Restaurant, and the post office building located on Main Street
- Virginia Caranci** Musicians' Union Stamp No. 218
- Mildred Sirokman** Kitchen table

We have received other articles which will be added to our collection after they have been cataloged. If anyone has artifacts to donate, please call one of the Commission members or leave a message on the answering machine at the museum 665-9048. A generous gift made by Sylvia Kilker was donated in memory of her father, Steve Fotis. We are again enclosing a slip to remind anyone who wishes to join the society that dues are now due. Your continuing support is greatly appreciated.



## THE PARADE OF LIGHTS

The Parade of Lights will be held this year on Friday, December 4. Each entry is required to be lighted, and the parade will begin at 7:00 p.m. Many local groups have participated in the past. Activities have been planned at each of the shopping areas in the city. Most businesses in the downtown section will remain open until 9:00 p.m. and transportation to other areas will be available. Musical groups will be performing throughout the city; and, of course, there will be a visit from Santa Claus. The theme of this year's festivities will be "Christmas Around the World."

The members of the Louisville Historical Commission would like to invite everyone to visit our buildings from 6:30 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. Our Christmas ornaments will go on sale for the first time, and we will be serving wassail and cookies. Please plan to join us.

## LOUISVILLE HISTORICAL COMMISSION MEMBERS

<i>Virginia Caranci</i>	.....	666-6235
<i>Emajane Enrietto</i>	.....	666-4145
<i>Richard Franchini</i>	.....	666-6272
<i>John Garcia</i>	.....	666-7863
<i>Marion Junior</i>	.....	666-8283
<i>Donald Ross</i>	.....	666-6836
<i>Eileen Schmidt</i>	.....	666-6853
<i>Patricia Scholes</i>	.....	673-0311
<i>Patricia Seader</i>	.....	666-8385

## MEMORIAL DONATIONS

In Memory of  
Harold Williams  
Steve Fotis



## LOUISVILLE'S CHRISTMAS TREE

One of the more memorable traditions of our town was the distributing of treats to the children on Christmas Eve. The beginning of this custom has been traced back to the Methodist Church. The ladies of the church presented each child of the congregation a small bag of goodies at the Christmas Eve service. The year, 1910, was a particularly difficult one for the miners and their families because most of the men were on strike. There were no funds to provide Christmas treats for the children of the church. Mrs. Mae Goodhue and Mrs. Amelia Hancock canvassed the town for donations and enough money was collected to provide treats for all the children of the community. The goodies were packaged in sacks and all of the town's youngsters were invited to come to the church on Christmas Eve to receive their treat. It has been reported that men dressed in long white robes and pointed hats brought additional gifts to the children one year. This practice continued at the church until about 1929 when the church could no longer handle the number of people coming to participate.

It is reported that in 1929 a tall pine tree was placed in the center of the intersection of Spruce and Main. The tree was decorated and brilliantly lighted; all the children were invited to meet Santa Claus and to receive a bag of goodies. Authur Porta who was employed at the Hub Store which was located on the east corner of Spruce and Main (where Exquisite Enterprises now stands) recalls people bringing their children into the store to keep warm until Santa made his appearance.

After Mr. G.R. Henning moved to Louisville in 1923, he became active in the Methodist Church and took over this particular project and began playing the role of Santa Claus. In 1935, when the local Lion's Club was chartered, Mr. Henning, a charter member of the Club, persuaded this group to take over the collecting of funds to buy treats. At about this same time Mr. Henning and his wife also started a chapter of the Rainbow Girls and these girls assumed the task of filling paper bags with an apple, an orange, mixed nuts, hard candy, and a few chocolates. This tradition was especially important during the depression years for this treat was the only gift received by many of the children of our community. The beautifully decorated tree seemed to be something out of a storybook to these children during the lean years when there were not many good things happening in their young lives. After all the youngsters were taken care of at the Christmas tree, Santa visited the homes of the sick children to present their goodies to them.

Mr. Henning continued acting as Santa Claus until ill health forced him to retire. At the time of Mr. Henning's retirement, Mr. L.C. Graves, who worked at the local Public Service office downtown in Louisville, assumed the role of Santa. After Mr. Graves took over as Santa, Les Davis, a member of the Lion's Club, accepted the responsibility of soliciting funds for the Christmas treats and the Rainbow Girls and members of the local Lion's Club continued preparing the bags of goodies for distribution. Many times there were more children than there were bags of treats, but the Lion's Club members always tried hard to see that no child went away empty-handed.

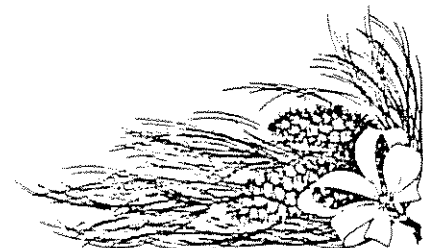
Sometime during the early 1950s, as the population of Louisville increased and traffic downtown became more of a problem, it was decided to move the Christmas festivities to a different location. The tall pine tree that is located in Pirate's Park was donated to the town by Mr. and Mrs. Jack Stout and planted with the idea that it would be used as the Christmas tree.

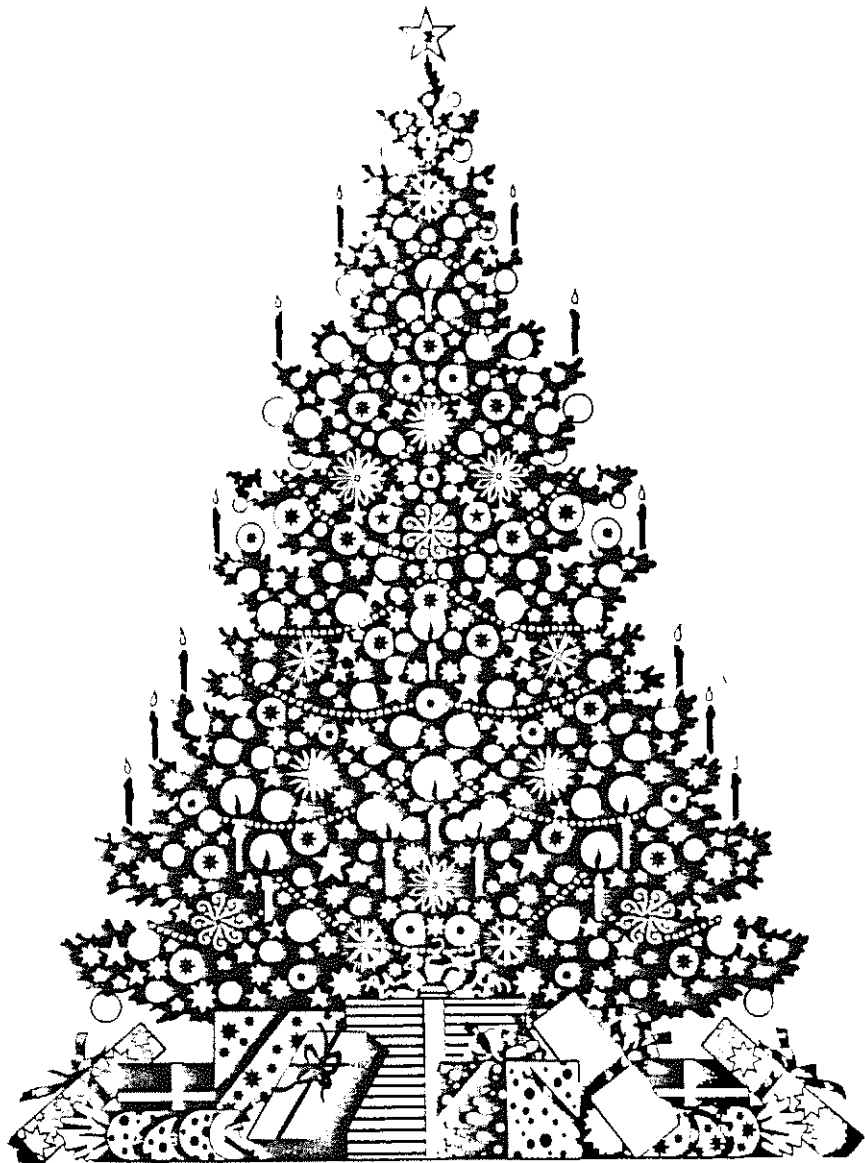
After just a couple of years, it was determined that this spot was too cold for the children to stand in line while waiting for the festivities to begin. A new city hall had been built and it was decided to plant a tall pine tree on the grounds to be decorated and used as the "town" Christmas tree. The children lined up on the sidewalk outside city hall and Santa was seated just inside the door of the building enabling people waiting, to keep warm.

Through the years Christmas music was played over a public address system and could be heard throughout the downtown area—lending a more festive air to the occasion.

Many men served as Santa through the years. Mr. Roy O'Neil, the local druggist, acted as Santa for several years after Mr. Graves was no longer able to carry on in the role. Also serving in this capacity were Leon Wurl, a former city administrator, and Ray Caranci, a local businessman, who acted as the last Santa before this activity was discontinued.

Many amusing incidents are remembered about the tree as it stood in the intersection of Spruce and Main streets. Several times people drove their cars into the tree and it had to be straightened and redecorated. Often the wind blew all the lights off the tree and they had to be replaced. One especially funny incident involved a young doctor who had moved to Louisville in 1935 to set up a practice and become a "mine doctor." During the week before Christmas, the doctor and his wife entertained at a party for a few





of their friends. One friend, who was a practicing physician in Denver, had a little too much Christmas "cheer" and decided to take a walk down Main Street. When he saw the Christmas tree all lit up he proceeded to climb to the top. The fire department had to be called out to remove him from the tree top. Many of the townspeople came out to watch and when the local Christmas tree is remembered they also recall the doctor "up the tree."

As the years passed and the townspeople became more prosperous, fewer and fewer children arrived to receive their Christmas treats. As a result, many of the bags that were prepared for distribution were left over each year after all the children had received their treats. Members of the local Lion's Club then visited the nearby nursing homes and presented the goodies to their residents. In 1988, the custom was discontinued by the Lion's Club due to the lack of interest on the part of the townspeople.

This tradition was truly a community affair and is one of the wonderful memories we have of growing up in Louisville. Receiving the goodies was a treat, but visiting with friends and neighbors while waiting for the arrival of Santa was probably one of the most enjoyable memories of the holiday season.

*Happy Holidays to All*

## CHRISTMAS IN LOUISVILLE

As Christmas approaches, memories of all the activities that took place in Louisville throughout the years celebrating this holiday, are remembered. Christmas was always very special for the miners and their families. The different ethnic groups that made up the population of the town had their own customs, but there were many activities shared by all.

Some items of interest regarding many of these activities were reported in *The Louisville Times* dated December 6, 1951.

Although the Garden Club had sponsored a home decoration and lighting contest for many years, it had been discontinued. In 1951 the Lions Club reinstated this custom and announced that prizes would be given out at the Christmas tree downtown on Christmas Eve. First prize was \$7.50; second prize—\$5.00; and third prize was \$2.50. The Garden Club chose to honor the oldest woman and man living in Louisville for their special Christmas project. Mrs. Marie Helart, who was 89 years old in August, was born in France and came to the United States with her husband about 1894. Toney Dilemma, who was 91 on June 31, 1951, was the oldest man. He was born in Italy and came to this country when he was 21 years of age. A small gift was presented to Mrs. Helart and Mr. Dilemma by the club.

In a copy of *The Louisville Times* dated December 11, 1952, an article appeared telling of the response to a plea for aid for the needy of our town made by Ring Dionigi. Many local groups contributed to this project. The Garden Club decided to make gifts of food and clothing to two families before Christmas since other groups would be presenting their gifts closer to Christmas Day. The Saturday Study Club made gifts of clothing for various ages. The Elks and other organizations, including some of the churches always made certain that everyone received something.

In an editorial by Art Hobson he noted, "Louisville certainly goes all out in the celebrations leading up to Christmas Day. No one needs to have been left out of the pre-Christmas preparations for there are programs and services available to all. So if anyone has been left out—unless he was unable to leave his home—it is his own fault."

During the week before Christmas, some activity was planned for each day. Programs by various classes of the schools were presented and parties with gift exchanges were held in each class. The churches all had some activity going on during this time, many musical programs were presented with small angels and shepherds playing their roles. A free movie was shown for the children of the town on the morning of December 24 by Carmen and Ann Romano, theater owners. They considered this their gift to the children.

The following news items showing how some families spent Christmas in 1952 were taken from an issue of *The Louisville Times*.

Dinner guests of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Enrietto for Christmas will be Mr. and Mrs. Joe Giorzelli, Mr. and Mrs. Barney Enrietto, Mr. and Mrs. Pete Enrietto, Mr. and Mrs. Dan DiFrancia, Marian DiFrancia and son, Tommy of Denver, and Tealie Bottinelli also of Denver.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hudson and children and Mr. and Mrs. Wilfred Thirlaway will spend the day at the home of their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Awra Park.

Mrs. Earl Pickett, Sr. hoped to be home from the Sanitarium at Boulder for Christmas with Mr. Pickett and their daughter, Marjorie, who will be home for Christmas Eve and morning.

Mr. and Mrs. Nick DiGiacomo will have a Christmas Eve dinner for Robert DiGiacomo, Mr. and Mrs. Joe Rizzi, Mrs. Louise Brown and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Sandy Domenico and children of Denver, Mr. and Mrs. Pasqual DiGiacomo and children, Mr. and Mrs. John Rizzi and children, Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Poydock and children, Mr. and Mrs. Fiori Tesone and children, Mrs. Netta Rappa, Mr. and Mrs. William Ulrich of Denver, and Father Raymond. They will exchange gifts, spend the evening together, and complete the day by going to Midnight Mass.

Mrs. Edward Affolter will go to Denver to spend Christmas with her daughter, Mrs. Colton Babcock and family.

PFC. Fred Tesone and wife and baby of Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. are home for the holidays. They and Mr. and Mrs. Pat McHugh and baby, Mr. and Mrs. Anthony LaSalle and daughters will be at the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Chiolino for Christmas dinner.

The annual Christmas day party this year will be given by Mrs. Hazel Harris and daughter, Joan. The party will include the following: Mr. and Mrs. Albert Schmidt and Chris, Mr. and Mrs. Ray Caranci and Deanie, Mr. and Mrs. Argyle Campbell, Mr. and Mrs. Al Horr and Susan, Mr. and Mrs. Ernie Zarini, Mr. and Mrs. Sandy Biella, Mr. and Mrs. Angelo Ferrari, and Mr. and Mrs. Ed Dake and Tim.

The Christmas dinner of Mr. and Mrs. John Dionigi and family will include Mr. and Mrs. Jack Dionigi and family, Mr. and Mrs. Rudy Dionigi, and Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Steinbaugh and son.

(Continued on back cover)



## ELECTION YEAR—1920

In view of all the publicity such as the presidential debates and the other news coverage of this year's election, hopefully, we are more well-informed about the political issues than at any other time in the history of our country. The following article found in a copy of *The Louisville Times* dated October 7, 1920, presents some of the issues that were to be considered in the 1920 election.

"There are so many amendments to the constitution to be voted for or against in November, that it is no wonder the average citizen passes them up and does not vote at all on them. We print here below the title of the first ten, all of which were put on the ballot by petition.

**No. 1** Act making it unlawful to require employees in any municipal fire department except one who may be at any time in command of such department, to remain on duty in any calendar month longer than an average of twelve hours per day for such month.

**No. 2** Act providing the creation, establishment and appointment of a Colorado State Board of chiropractic examiners and defining its powers and duties; defining the term practice of chiropractic; regulating the practice of chiropractic; providing for the licensing of chiropractors within the State of Colorado.

**No. 3** An act to establish the county of Limon and temporary county seat thereof; providing for the appointment of its county officers.

**No. 4** Providing for the contemporaneous construction of the Moffat, Monarch, and San Juan Tunnels through the Continental Divide and providing for the issuance of bonds thereof.

**No. 5** An act to establish the county of Flager and the temporary county seat thereof; providing for the appointment of its precinct and county officers.

**No. 6** An act to appropriate money for the purchase of a building site and the erection thereon of a psychopathic hospital and laboratory and to furnish and equip the same.

**No. 7** Amendment to Section 11 of Article X of the State Constitution providing that the General Assembly may authorize an additional levy never to exceed one mill for the support and betterment of the State Educational Institutions.

**No. 8** Is a House concurrent resolution submitting to the voters a change in Section 3 Article 1 of the State Constitution for the purpose of creating a \$5,000,000 bond issue to improve and build the roads of the state.

**No. 9** Is an amendment of Section 22 Article 6 of the State Constitution concerning county judges.

**No. 10** Is a Senate concurrent resolution changing Section 30 Article 5 concerning increase of salaries of the governor, supreme judges, district judges of the state."

Many of these issues seem to be the same ones we are facing this year, 1992.

## CHRISTMAS IN LOUISVILLE

*(Continued from page 3)*

Guests of Mr. and Mrs. Glen Steinbaugh for Christmas dinner will be Mr. and Mrs. Thomas DiGiallonardo and family.

CPL and Mrs. Derl Forbis of Barstow, Calif. will be home on a 10-day leave from the Marines over the Christmas holiday. They and his brother-in-law and sister, Mr. and Mrs. John Stout and Pamela will be at the home of their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Boyd Forbis for Christmas.

Mrs. Nellie Inama and daughters will entertain at a family Christmas eve dinner and party when they will open their gifts. This will be the same group to be at the Dagostino home Christmas day.

Mr. and Mrs. Louis Dagostino will have a big family gathering at their home for Christmas day and dinner. There will be her sisters, Mrs. Nellie Inama and daughters, and Miss Annetta Patete; her brothers, P.W. Lombardi of Denver and Dominic Patete and their wives and children; their daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Joe Blair and their baby; and Mrs. Bell Lombardi of Longmont.

Mr. and Mrs. Albert Biella and two children of Santa Rosa, Calif. arrived Sunday to visit his parents, Mr. and Mrs. S.G. Biella. After spending a few days here, they will go to Texas to spend Christmas with her parents.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank LaSalle and daughter, Rita Lou are planning to have for Christmas day, Mr. and Mrs. Albert Detrez, Mr. and Mrs. William Ferguson, Mr. and Mrs. David Ferguson, Miss Rose LaSalle. The last three will be home from CSCE at Greeley for the holidays.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Jacoe will have Christmas dinner for her father, Frank Jordinelli and Mrs. Minnie DeRose. Mr. and Mrs. E. Jacoe and Mr. and Mrs. Dick DeRose of Denver, Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Caranci and daughter, and Mrs. and Mrs. P.W. Jacoe and daughters will be with this group for supper.

As you can see Louisville did go all out for celebrations at this time of the year. Sometimes people needed a little help, but they were always there for each other and always willing to share what they had. The Christmas season was always considered to be the best time of the year and a special time for friends and relatives to be together to count their blessings.

Louisville Historical Commission  
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