



# LOUISVILLE HISTORIAN

A publication of the Louisville Historical Commission & Society

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## MUSEUM CORNER

We are in the process of cataloging many artifacts that have been given to the museum during the past few months. The following articles have been added to our collection recently:

Mary Stead      Glass desk sign of Dr. H.R. Burns  
Jennie Milano      Button Kit—

issued to soldiers during World War II.

Many favorable comments have been made about the articles that are exhibited in the windows of the museum. Marion Junior, with the help of other commission members, is responsible for the displays and always has many new and interesting ideas for them. We are trying to find a way to prevent materials that are put in the windows from being damaged by the sun. Although the windows have been treated with an invisible coating to cut down damage done by ultra-violet rays, we have found that a certain amount of fading still occurs. We will be able to display many more artifacts if this problem can be solved.

The exhibit featuring the one-hundredth anniversary of the Steinbaugh Ace Hardware Company has been moved from the windows of the museum to the cases inside.

The trim on the outside of the store museum has been repainted this summer, and the sign will be restored some time soon. A contract has been let for the repairs to the foundation of the house, and it is hoped that this work will be completed soon.

Although we were not able to have our auction on July 4, this year, we are planning other fund-raising projects for the future. We are dependent upon fund-raising and donations for money to maintain our buildings.

We would like to remind all the high school classes who are planning reunions this year to please give any materials they are using for their reunions to the museums as these articles will become part of the history of Louisville.

Please plan to visit our museum buildings on Labor Day, September 7. Although we have not planned a special program for this occasion, we are hoping to change some of the exhibits using artifacts that have been received recently.

We are happy to welcome as a new member of our Commission, Richard Franchini. Dick is a native of Louisville and has been working as a volunteer at the museum for several years. We feel that he will be a real asset to our group.

The museums are open on Thursday afternoons from 1:00 p.m. until 3:00 p.m. and special tours can be arranged by calling the museum at 665-9048.

## SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

Since dues for membership in the Louisville Historical Society will be due on September 1, we are enclosing a form to be used in renewing your membership, in this newsletter. The following people paid dues twice last year so it will not be necessary for them to send payment this year.

Joe and JoAnn Petrelli  
Kathleen Crannell  
Elaine Jacoe  
Mrs. George Bosko  
Berta Zarini  
Charles and Iona Thomas  
Ruth (Affolter) Babcock  
Esther DeForge  
Eugene and Pal DiCarlo

We hope this list is complete, but if you feel that you have already paid your 1992-1993 dues, please notify us. We would also like to thank all of you for your continued support—without it we would be unable to maintain our buildings and collect the history of our city.

## 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  
Eileen Schmidt ..... 666-6853  
Patricia Scholes ..... 673-0311  
Patricia Seader ..... 666-8385

## MEMORIAL DONATIONS

In Memory of

Loretta Jacoe

Connie (Madonna) Mondragon

## A ONE-HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY

On June 6, 1992, a very important anniversary was celebrated as Steinbaugh Ace Hardware Company commemorated one hundred years of being in business in Louisville. Steinbaugh's has been owned and operated by members of the Steinbaugh family during this entire period. Through good times and bad Steinbaugh's has continued to play an important role in the history of Louisville.

It all began in the small village of Honef, Germany, where John Jacob Steinbaugh was born on January 22, 1868. His family emigrated to the United States when he was seventeen years of age. They first settled in Sheridan, Iowa, but after a few years J.J. struck out on his own. He spent some time in St. Joseph, Missouri, learning the blacksmithing trade. After working at his trade in Salt Lake City for a year and in Denver for several years, he settled in Louisville in 1890 and began working for Sam Lemon as a blacksmith. When Mr. Steinbaugh arrived here, the population of the town was approximately two hundred; and many businesses, including several saloons, a shoe shop, two grocery stores, and the blacksmith shop were located on Front Street. On June 6, 1892, he opened his own blacksmith shop in competition with his former employer.

He married Elizabeth Strietz in Louisville in 1891, and three children were born to them. A son, Herman, was born in 1892, and later two girls were born into the family—Gertrude who died at the age of ten—and Amelia. The family lived in a house which was located where the post office now stands on Front Street and Pine. Later they moved to a small building on the southwest corner of Front and South Streets. This building was eventually moved across the street, and a new home for them was built by Mike Fabrizio and his father. They continued residing in this house until 1935 when a brick house was constructed on the corner of McKinley and Pine. Mr. Steinbaugh resided there until his death on December 5, 1950, except for two years after his retirement in 1941 which he spent working on his ranch near Boulder Creek. During this time, he managed the ranch with the help of only one hired hand.

J.J. Steinbaugh was always very active in civic affairs. He served several terms on the town council, and when the fence was constructed at the ball park he donated all the posts and slabs.

Many of the entries made in his first sales book were written in German. His first credit entry was made on June 13, 1892, when John Taylor charged \$1.00 for a crossbar for a buggy and 50¢ for the welding of a buggy spring. Most of the work recorded in his early records was done on farm machinery such as mowers, cultivators, and binders. Other work performed in his shop included shoeing horses, repairing buggies, tire setting and putting spokes into wagon wheels. Bits and shovels were also sharpened, and the charge for sharpening a bit was 15¢. Since all the coal mines had their own blacksmith shops, the farmers and residents of the town were Steinbaugh's main source of business.

In 1904, after hardware supplies were added to his inventory, a room was built onto the original building. His plan was for his son, Herman, to take over the management of the hardware department. Herman stocked shelves in the new addition with hardware supplies and covered the rural area surrounding the town selling hardware and machinery. Even after he joined his father in the business in 1908, Herman continued selling merchandise traveling by horse and buggy around the country from the mountains to the farms in the area as far north as the town of Mead. Finally in 1911, a Model T Ford was purchased; and his traveling became somewhat easier except for the fact that no roads had been built in much of the territory he covered making it necessary for him to follow the wagon ruts.

More space was purchased and buildings were added as the business grew. When J.J. decided to discontinue the blacksmith business in 1935, the company acquired their first substantial stock of furniture although some furniture was sold as early as 1909.

The final expansion of the business was made in 1928 shortly after World War I, when the lumberyard and building supplies were added.

Many of the homes built in Louisville after the lumberyard was opened were constructed of materials purchased from Steinbaugh's. It was Steinbaugh's policy to provide all the materials used in the building of a home and to extend credit to the homeowner until a loan for the mortgage was received. At that time the homeowner paid for the building materials, and Herman Steinbaugh usually made a gift of a small appliance or lamp to formally close the deal—usually insuring the patronage of a life-long customer.

Although Herman had worked with his father for many years, he didn't take over the management of the business until 1941 when J.J. retired. Herman was married to Mae Abbott of Lafayette, and they became the parents of eight children—five sons, Herbert, Glenn, Jack, Bob, Jim, and three daughters Thelma, Betty, and Darlene. After serving in the armed forces during World War II, Herman's sons, Herbert, Glenn, and Jack joined him in the business. Bob Steinbaugh was killed in an airplane crash while serving in the armed forces in 1952. The youngest son, Jim, came into the business a few years after the others, and in 1951 the name of the company was changed from J.J. Steinbaugh to the Steinbaugh Lumber Company. In 1954, a brick front, picture windows, and a more modern facade were added to provide a more contemporary look to the Front Street building.

In 1957 when the company celebrated its 65th anniversary, many special events were held throughout the week. A chuck wagon dinner was held on Sunday to begin the celebration and another chuck wagon dinner ended the festivities the next Saturday. The employees all wore costumes depicting the 1880's era and many items from the early days were on display. The grand prize was a Speed Queen automatic washer. Several door prizes were given out to customers. One very interesting event which took place was a demonstration by representatives from Westinghouse of their new electronic oven. Other demonstrations of new products by various companies were held during the celebration.

The company discontinued selling lumber in 1967 when the lumber business became very competitive.

On September 5, 1974, a very destructive fire completely destroyed the Front Street store and the entire stock of merchandise. The loss from the fire was estimated to be \$350,000 and was described by some old-timers as "the worst fire they had ever seen in Louisville." The Colorado Bureau of Investigation reported that flammable liquid had been poured over the wooden floors, and the flames spread so quickly there was very little the Volunteer Fire Department could do to control the flames. A few charred and water-soaked records were recovered from a safe, but historical records, photographs of the family and business buildings, and a collection of mining equipment and other artifacts were destroyed. Although the investigation showed that the cause of the fire was arson, no arrests were ever made. Toward the end of September 1974, Steinbaugh's relocated to the building at 801 Main as a temporary location.

After Herman Steinbaugh's death Glenn took over the sole ownership of the business, since his brothers decided to retire. He purchased the building at 801 Main where business has continued as usual. Some of the previous occupants of the building

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## A ONE-HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY

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were the State Mercantile Store, Carveth Bros. and Dalby, and Joe Dalby's grocery store. When extensive remodeling of the building was undertaken, care was taken to insure that the building would retain its place on the National Register of historical buildings.

One of the big changes Glenn has made in the business is that the women of the family now take a very active part in the company. Glenn's wife, Aline, lends a helping hand occasionally, and his two daughters—Karen Scarpella and Mary Rizzuto—are both employees. When both J.J. and Herman were in charge none of the women of the family were on the payroll although they did work in the store on a temporary basis from time to time.

Glenn Steinbaugh married Aline DiGiallanardo in Louisville in 1950 and they have four children—Tom, Karen, Ron, and Mary. Although Glenn is not quite ready to retire, he plans to turn over more of the management duties to his sons, Tom and Ron.

The Steinbaugh store became an affiliate of the Ace Hardware Company about thirty-five years ago. As the discount stores have become so popular, the hardware business has become more and more competitive so their association with Ace Hardware has helped them become specialized and enabled to adapt to the changes that have occurred in the industry. Many of their customers agree that if you can't find an item at Steinbaugh's you probably won't find it anywhere. Since the Main Street store has only about half the space as the old store had, some of the inventory had to be cut back, but housewares, hardware, some sporting goods, products for gardens and lawns, electrical and plumbing supplies, as well as paint, wallpaper, and carpeting remain in stock. Future expansion remains a possibility.

J.J. Steinbaugh often boasted that his was the only store in Colorado which sold everything necessary to completely build and finish a home, and today the business continues to thrive as generation after generation of Louisville residents patronize the store. According to Glenn, much of the credit for their success is due to their slogan, "Where Service Counts."

Congratulations to an industrious, hard-working family, who has contributed so much to the well-being of our community. Many have expressed the hope that the Steinbaughs will be serving Louisville for another one hundred years.

(Some of the information found in this article was taken from "The Louisville Times" dated May 31, 1967, and from "The Louisville Times" dated May 27, 1992.)

## "A SPECIAL USE OF PAPER"

The following article was found on the front page of "The Louisville Times" dated May 31, 1957, which commemorated Steinbaugh's sixty-fifth year of business in Louisville. We thought it was especially interesting during this time of recycling and preserving paper.

### Special Uses — Ton of Paper

This is a special invitation to the people of this area to come to Louisville next week for Steinbaugh's anniversary celebration and sale, and to visit the other business houses of the town.

This edition of The Times is the biggest ever put out in Louisville. There are 6,000 copies. Its 42 pages contain 47 new and old pictures. It covers all of Boulder county except Boulder and Longmont.

Fifty pounds of news ink and over a ton of newsprint — 2,100 pounds — were used in its making. And no telling how many man-hours, but a pressman and five girls to fold and assemble the papers were added to the regular crew of The Times.

## THE FLOOD OF 1938

The severe weather that has hit some of our state in the past few weeks brings to mind the violent storm that began on September 2, 1938, and did so much damage in Boulder County. According to the moisture measuring instruments at the hydro-electric plant of Public Service .45 inch of rain had fallen by five o'clock Friday afternoon, by midnight 3.52 inches were recorded, with an additional .14 inch falling by eight o'clock Saturday morning—making a total 4.11 inches of rainfall in less than twenty-four hours.

The popular resort of Eldorado Springs was severely damaged by the flood which struck around seven o'clock on Friday evening and continued throughout the night. Heavy losses occurred as the pavilion, bath houses, part of the dance hall, and all of the bridges, including the swaying bridge which crossed the river, were carried away by the swift waters. Two houses were also carried away. The residents reported that the roar of the creek sounded like thunder and many left their homes to seek higher ground on the hillside where they spent the night in the open. The road east of Eldorado Springs was flooded and the bridges leading into the area were washed away.

The Matt Betton orchestra, which was made up of eleven University of Kansas students, was performing in the Eldorado Springs dance hall at that time. Two young men from the orchestra were able to make their way on foot to Boulder Saturday morning and reported the damage done during the night of terror. The music library of the orchestra, valued at \$1,000 including many arrangements which could not be replaced and all of the instruments except two saxophones were destroyed.

Water filled the Marshall and Community ditches as it flooded over the headgates which, surprisingly, did not give way. Many people living in Marshall climbed the hill to the Nick Conda home when the rising waters threatened their own houses.

Roads leading into Boulder were badly damaged by flooding and also by dirt and rock which was washed onto the roadbeds.

Arapahoe Road east of Boulder was covered by a foot or more of water. The new golf course located three miles east of Boulder on Arapahoe Road was covered by several feet of water which carried sand, rocks, wood, and other debris along with it. Several inches of water covered the floor of the club house, and many homes that faced the golf course were damaged by the flood.

The bridge east of Superior on the Denver highway and the approaches to it were destroyed by the flooding of Coal Creek which was normally dry.

The main line of Burlington, Colorado, and Southern Railroad was washed out south of Louisville. A roaring wall of water raced down Coal Creek Canyon, tearing out a forty foot section of the road a mile east of town although the bridge itself held; this proved to be disastrous. This damage resulted in the death of Mrs. Walter M. Boyd, and caused Dr. Walter Boyd to suffer very serious injuries. As Dr. and Mrs. Boyd were returning to Louisville from Denver on Friday night, their car sank into the waters where the road had been cut away. Dr. Boyd was thrown from the car and rose to the top of the water. In spite of his very serious injuries, he dived into the water several times attempting to free his wife who was trapped in the car. Realizing his attempts were futile, he ran into the town seeking help. When he reached the Public Service building, he found officers there who blew the town siren summoning aid for him. A physician was called to attend Dr. Boyd's injuries and rescue crews proceeded to the location where the car had disappeared into the water.

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# THE FLOOD OF 1938

(Continued from page 3)

Dr. Boyd suffered a fractured skull and other less serious injuries. A Public Service repair crew and practically the entire town began attempts to rescue Mrs. Boyd, but the water was too deep for them to succeed in their efforts. By five o'clock on Saturday morning the waters had receded and the top of the car was visible. Grappling hooks were used by sheriff's officers and Mrs. Boyd's body was recovered at approximately 5:30 a.m. Saturday. The entire town seemed to be in mourning for this popular young couple. Dr. Boyd underwent brain surgery at Boulder Community Hospital, and after recovering from his injuries, he resumed his medical practice in Louisville and remained here for a number of years.

Due to the heroism of a miner who worked at the Hi-Way Mine, many more accidents were averted. After having driven across the road at 10:30 p.m., he realized there was a soft spot in the road and it could be dangerous, so with a lantern in his hand he returned to the spot to warn others to turn back.

The wife of Dr. Jack Bartholomew, who was returning to town from Denver, saw the light of the lantern, turned around and proceeded to Lafayette where the water was several inches high over the pavement, and then drove into Louisville. The miner remained at the dangerous spot in the road for more than two hours, warning the miners who worked at the Hi-Way Mine of the dangerous road conditions. As Dr. Boyd's car traveled along the road at approximately 12:28 a.m., the rainfall was so heavy he could not see the light of the miner's lantern. Although the

miner's name is not known, he was commended for his actions which saved many lives that night.

Although a number of livestock were carried away by the swift waters and debris covered the surrounding fields, there were no other serious injuries or deaths other than Dr. and Mrs. Boyd.

The Red Cross stood by to assist victims of the flood in any way they could, and relief materials were obtained from the federal warehouse in Boulder.

It was noted that the Denver and Interurban busses were operating throughout the storm on Friday night and all day on Saturday. They were reported to be running close to their regular schedules. The busses traveling to Denver by way of Louisville had to go back to Boulder to proceed to Denver because of the road conditions caused by the flooding of Coal Creek.

Approximately 250 WPA workers were called out to work repairing flood damage to roads, bridges, and other property in the county. All county roads were opened to traffic by Saturday afternoon; although most of the mountain roads were still dangerous to travel, they were passable. Road damages were estimated to be many thousands of dollars.

Residents of Louisville and Superior recalled the flood that had struck their communities in 1935, and agreed that the storm of 1938 was much worse.

*(The information in the above article was taken from the edition of the Boulder Daily Camera dated Saturday, September 3, 1938.)*

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