



V.F. Louisville Historical Commission

# LOUISVILLE HISTORIAN

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## MUSEUM CORNER

We, the members of the Louisville Historical Commission, would like to express our gratitude to all who have supported us throughout the past year. Many have volunteered to assist us in the coming year and we will be contacting them soon. A new exhibit has been placed in our windows at the store and we also have on display inside a few old valentines. A blue velvet wedding dress and several wedding pictures, as well as a marriage certificate written in German and dated 1899 have also been added to our displays. Several old abstracts of property in Louisville will be ready for viewing in the near future.

The following articles have been added to our collection during the period November 15, 1991 to January 23, 1992:

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Marian DiGiacomo: | Documents from Foresters of America<br>Picture of the Royal Family of Italy |
| Beverly Clyncke:  | Wooden Ouiji Board  |
| Security Title:   | Abstracts of old Louisville Property  |



## Memorial Donations

In Memory of  
John (Jack) Thomas



## LOOKING BACK

Members of the Louisville Historical Commission and the Historical Society look back upon 1991 as a year of accomplishment and achievement.

During the month of February an exhibit of Valentines and "Kewpie" dolls were displayed in our windows and many favorable comments were received.

Many interesting artifacts were donated to us during the year. Some of those articles are a memorial program for the funeral of President McKinley, pictures taken underground in a coal mine depicting the use of various machines, several record books of the Redman Lodge and many of their ceremonial sashes were presented to our museum. The descriptions and uses of these sashes during their ceremonies are very interesting. An old balance scale with weights dated 1909, a wooden packing crate used during World War II, a marriage license dated 1899, and a picture of the royal family of Italy are just a few of the artifacts we received this past year. The Boulder Title Company presented several old abstracts of property located in Louisville to our museum. These abstracts are being prepared for the viewing public and will soon be available for this purpose. These gifts are greatly appreciated.

## LOUISVILLE HISTORICAL COMMISSION MEMBERS

- |                       |          |
|-----------------------|----------|
| Virginia Caranci..... | 666-6235 |
| Emajane Enrietto..... | 666-4145 |
| John Garcia.....      | 666-7863 |
| Isabelle Hudson.....  | 666-6630 |
| Marion Junior.....    | 666-8283 |
| Donald Ross.....      | 666-6836 |
| Eileen Schmidt.....   | 666-6853 |
| Patricia Scholes..... | 673-0311 |
| Patricia Seader.....  | 666-8385 |

Several improvements have been made to the buildings and their surroundings. The sign outside the house has been deteriorating quite badly so it was covered with plexiglass to preserve it. A glass shelf was added to one of our display cases enabling us to exhibit many more artifacts in the case. Wooden shelves were installed in the storage room to add much needed storage space. The air conditioner was serviced for the first time since it was installed. The city of Louisville approved funds for a handicap entrance to our store museum and improvements to the foundation of the house. Work on the handicap entrance has been completed and the foundation repairs on the house will be done as soon as the weather permits. Don Ross also repaired the front door of the house and it can be used more easily.

Throughout the year many groups of local school children, Boy Scout groups, Girl Scout groups and senior citizens have visited our museums. We are always happy to arrange tours through our buildings and arrangements for special tours can be made by calling the museum at 665-9048 or 666-6853. We are open each Thursday 1:00 pm until 3:00 pm.

The Society of Italian Americans requested that we set up an exhibit in the Arts and Humanities building located at Memory Park on August 18, 1991, when their annual Festa was held. The windows of the museum also exhibited artifacts from those of Italian heritage in our community.

On Labor Day, September 2, a display of Korean War artifacts was held at the store museum. The men who served in the Armed Forces during this time were recognized for their services. Many interesting artifacts were collected and the exhibit was very well done by the committee which was chaired by Pat Seader.

Our Commission members hand-crafted porcelain Christmas ornaments again this year. Since we had many requests for more of the ones we made last year we decided to use those again. The ornaments were sold during the Parade of Lights on December 6 at the museum and later moved to City Hall where they were on sale until Christmas. Both museums were decorated and cookies and wassail were served to several hundred people following the Parade of Lights. We always look forward to this special event and believe it is a very good way of ending each year.

We look forward to 1992 with a great deal of anticipation and know we will be receiving many interesting artifacts and will be participating in many special events.



## "REMEMBER PEARL HARBOR?"

Japanese war planes bombed military targets across Oahu, Hawaii at 7:55 am on December 7, 1941 ("A day that will live in infamy"), concentrating their raids in the areas of Pearl Harbor and Hickam Field. Many ships of the United States Pacific naval fleet were anchored at Pearl Harbor on that peaceful Sunday morning. The emblem of Japan, "The Rising Sun," was visible on the wing tips of the bombers as wave after wave of them streamed through the sky, dropping their missiles on designated targets. The attack came as a complete surprise as many of the military personnel were on week-end leave from their posts. There had been a "battle of the bands" in Honolulu on Saturday night and bands from the various ships in the harbor had participated in the event. Governor Poindexter immediately sent out a plea to every man, woman and child to do their part as citizens of the American territory of Hawaii in cooperating with the military.

On July 2, 1941, relations between Japan and the United States began to deteriorate when Congress authorized the President to prohibit the export of basic war materials, including scrap iron to Japan. President Roosevelt froze all Japanese assets in this country on July 26, 1941, thus creating more tension between the two powers. In late November 1941, the Japanese ambassador and a special envoy from Japan arrived in Washington, D.C. to discuss the problems facing the two nations. Both men were present in Washington when the attack on Pearl Harbor occurred.

On December 8, 1941, President Roosevelt declared that a state of war existed between the United States and Japan and on the same day Germany declared war on our country. Three days later (December 11) the United States declared war on Japan's European allies, Germany and Italy, beginning one of the longest, bloodiest conflicts in our nation's history.

As the residents of Louisville sat down to Sunday dinner, the news of the attack on Pearl Harbor was being reported on the Denver radio stations. The full impact of this event wasn't felt until sometime later when everyone began to realize that families would be uprooted and many of their loved ones would be separated from them. Life changed drastically for all of us living here in the next few months. Most of the young men, 17 years old or older, immediately enlisted in the branch of service they chose rather than waiting to be drafted. Rationing of meat, sugar, shoes and some other products began in order to distribute commodities more fairly. The people left at home supported the war effort in any way that they could. Rallies for the

selling of war bonds were held. Various civil groups organized paper drives and scrap metal drives. The women of the town joined Red Cross classes, learning first aid and preparing bandages, knitting warm socks, collecting warm blankets and supplying any other items which were needed. A mobile blood bank visited Louisville each month and people donated blood at the Louisville High School to be used in treatment of the sick and wounded at Fitzsimmons Army Hospital in Denver.

In the March 26, 1942 issue of the Louisville Times, many items of interest concerning the war effort were noted. Members of the Louisville Council of Defense made plans to give the boys entering the service some type of recognition as well as a "royal send-off". Father Benedict of the St. Louis Catholic Church was appointed to present a service flag to each family who had a boy in the armed forces. The Council of Defense sponsored a rally at the high school auditorium on Sunday, March 29, 1942 to acquaint the people of Louisville with plans to secure pledges for the buying of Defense Bonds and Stamps. The rally was held in conjunction with other meetings throughout the nation to discuss the war and present information on how civilians could aid in the war effort. A musical program was offered as entertainment for the occasion. It was also noted that all personnel in the armed forces would be sent the Louisville Times for 75¢ a year, which was half of the usual cost at that time. On Monday, April 6, 1942, a holiday was declared in Colorado and a big parade along with other types of entertainment was held. This day was known as the starting date of Colorado's state-wide campaign to enlist the aid of every resident to pledge an agreement to purchase defense bonds and stamps each week of the month to the best of their ability for the duration of the war. Although this was not a compulsory obligation, it was anticipated that the citizens of Louisville would maintain their fine record of patriotism shown through the years.

Although we were not able to find items concerning every man or woman who served their country during World War II, we have been able to find some interesting facts surrounding some of them.

Major Jack Bartholomew was with General Patch's Seventh Army when several cities in Germany which were vital to its defense were captured. Dr. Bartholomew, a former Louisville resident, was a member of the 70th Division Medical Corp and served in England and France before his transfer to the German front.

The three sons of Mr. and Mrs. August Dhieux of Louisville served in different branches of the service. Henry was with an Army unit. August (Billy) was a Gunner's mate in the Navy and served

in the South Pacific. Alfred was a Marine and died of injuries suffered during the invasion of the island, Pelilieu, in New Caledonia on October 5, 1944. He had previously received the Purple Heart for injuries which occurred during the battle of Cape Gloucester, New Britain, December 28, 1943. His body was the first to be returned to Boulder County for burial.

Sgt. Laird Rippeth was a left Waist Gunner on an Eighth Air Force B-17 bomber and was awarded the Air Medal for "meritorious achievement" while participating in bombing missions over Nazi Germany.

Pfc. Steve Vaschak was with the Fifth Army. After entering the Army in 1943, he was sent to Africa where he served at Casablanca and Oran. Later he was transferred to Italy and took part in the invasion of Southern France where he died on August 17, 1944.

Gerald Rosser, a Machinist in the Navy, served aboard the aircraft carrier Lexington.

Robert Morrison was granted the Petty Officer rating of Radioman Third Class after completing a course of study including the operation, function and maintenance of radio transmitting and receiving equipment. His training included enciphering and deciphering code, the sending and receiving of messages. Robert was reported missing in November 1944. A few months later it was learned that he had died in action off the Philippine Islands.

While serving with an American Infantry Division somewhere in the Southwest Pacific, Pfc. William J. Hutsell was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for meritorious performance under fire during his division's engagement in the Battle of Hill 260 at Bougainville. Hutsell volunteered to crawl through heavy fire to repair communication lines between the forward positions and headquarters after they were destroyed. His heroic act made it possible for the forward unions to maintain contact with their headquarters.

The parents of Marine Corp Pvt. Alex Merciez, were pleased when they learned that he had come through the bloody invasion of Tarawa in the Gilbert Islands entirely unscathed.

Pfc. Donald LePenske, U.S. Marine Corp, was awarded the Purple Heart after being injured by shrapnel which struck his leg during the battle for Tawara. He also served on Guam and lost his life somewhere in the South Pacific.

T/Sgt. Robert J. Vaughn was a First Engineering Gunner on a bomber and served in the European theater of war. On March 6 one of the most fierce battles over Europe was entered into when Nazi warplanes rose to meet the American planes as they crossed over Holland and fought

them all the way to Berlin and back.

T/Sgt. Vaughn was reported as being killed in action on this day. His father was the depot agent in Louisville at this time and received the telegram informing he and his wife of their son's death.

Mr. and Mrs. James Hindman, Sr. had three sons who also served in the armed forces during World War II. James was graduated as a third Class Petty Officer from the Navy Aviation Machinist's Mate school. Victor was a member of the crew of a U.S. destroyer. Richard served in the Army Signal Corps and received training at the radio school in Steamboat Springs. The father of these three young men also served as mayor of Louisville during this time.

Major Lloyd C. Mason, recipient of the Air Medal, had many interesting experiences during the time he spent in the U.S. Army Air Forces serving in Europe. One of his more pleasant assignments was to show the King of England through his airplane, "Panama Hattie", which had acquired quite a reputation in England. One of Major Mason's most memorable flights took place over the Ruhr Valley when four members of his crew were wounded and the controls of his plane badly damaged requiring him to make an emergency landing after he succeeded in nursing his Flying Fortress back to his base.

Harry A. (Hilton) Cable, Aviation Machinist's Mate, Second Class, was a member of the seaplane squadron which rescued the famous Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker and his party after they had been adrift in the southwest Pacific for 21 days. Cable was chosen to go with the patrol which carried food and medical supplies to the men.

Navy Pharmacist's Mate, Second Class, Robert Tavado was killed on April 2, 1945, during action against the Japanese forces at Okinawa. Robert was a hospital corpsman attached to a company of marines as they worked their way up a steep ravine in the mountains near the village of Ishikawa. From the many caves in the surrounding ridges, Japanese fired down on the Marines. Tavado went to work on the wounded and succeeded in reaching and attending thirteen severely wounded men, pulling them to safety. Doctors reported later that many of these men would have died without his immediate treatment of their wounds. As he leaned over to administer to the fourteenth man, he was killed by machine gun fire. Robert was awarded the Bronze Star, posthumously, for meritorious conduct.

We were all very proud of the 182 young people of our town who served our country so courageously during World War II and our thoughts and prayers were always with them.

Until World War II most of the young men

in Louisville could only look forward to a future working in the coal mines as their fathers and grandfathers had done before them. Once they returned from the war, many of them specially trained in technical fields, they did not wish to become miners. Many young people were able to find employment utilizing the training they had received in the service. A whole new world was opened to Louisville residents and their families. We are filled with pride when we look at how many third and fourth generation families live in Louisville. The young people who have grown old here have contributed so much of themselves to our community and to our "American way of life."

As we look back on the 50th anniversary of Pearl Harbor, the following statement by an unknown author was found in a booklet commemorating this occasion and it seems to "say it all."

"My heart cries for those who died in honor of their country. May God bless all of our servicemen and may he bless this country, that it will never happen again. Tears have filled my eyes. They, each one are heros. May they all rest in peace."

## THE MONARCH MINE EXPLOSION

On the morning of January 20, 1936, one of the most tragic mine accidents in this area occurred at 6:30 am. As workers waited at the "top" of Monarch Mine for fire boss Steve Davis to return from the interior of the mine and report that it was safe to enter and begin the "day shift," an explosion took place deep within. The reason for the explosion was never determined, but the miners had been aware of the dangers and infractions of many safety regulations for some time. The National Fuel Company, which operated the Monarch Mine, was found guilty of negligence and failure to eliminate the hazards of the coal dust which was present in the lower levels. One miner who was not working at the mine when the disaster occurred, but had worked there previously, reported to the Louisville Times that he had discovered a "large pocket" of gas there several years before this incident. He believed that this area of the mine had been sealed off with cement shortly after his discovery was made. Many miners reported on the lack of interest by the operators to improve safety conditions.

Eight men were trapped and killed in the mine thus leaving twenty-three children of this small town fatherless. The bodies of Kester Novinger and Leland Ward, the first to be located by the rescue teams, were found beside a fire wall where they had obviously been making repairs in the cement which sealed off the burning flames in the abandoned areas of the mine from the active workings. At 11:00 a.m., the body of Tom Stevens,



the night foreman, was located at a point 6100 feet into the mine. Nearby the bodies of Ray Bailey and Oscar Baird were sighted and Anthony DeSantis's body was spotted a short distance away. The search party which removed the bodies of Bailey, Baird, DeSantis, and Stevens was headed by State Mine Inspector Tom Allen. Some hope was held out that Steve Davis, the fire boss, might be found alive because if he had been following his daily routine he would have been at a point in the mine where he might have escaped the terrible blast and could have protected himself from the dangerous gases by taking refuge in a room and walling himself off. This theory was proved false when his body was discovered the following day, but tracks in the mine tunnel showed that he had run along a mine tunnel after the blast.

The search for the body of Joe Jarmillo was finally terminated on February 6th when it was determined that conditions in the mine were endangering the lives of the rescue teams. Several months later, a granite marker was placed over the part of the mine in which Jarmillo's body had been buried and a memorial service was held for him. This marker stands in a field along highway 36—about 2 miles west of Broomfield and is visible from the highway. Two men, William Jenkins, Jr. and Nick DelPizzo, escaped the deadly fumes by running 4000 feet down a series of tunnels and then climbing 300 feet up an air shaft. They came out of the shaft on the prairie about a mile away from the mine. William Jenkins, Jr. eventually left Louisville and now resides in Meeker, Colorado. Nick DelPizzo continues to live in Louisville and the Society of Italian Americans honored him as the only Italian survivor of the Monarch Mine disaster at their annual Festa which was held on August 18, 1991.

Nadine Caranci and Eileen Schmidt interviewed Mr. DelPizzo and his story follows:

Nicola Antonio DelPizzo was born January 22, 1902, in Tranda Palinja, Italy, which is located near the ankle of the boot, approximately 18 miles west of the Adriatic Sea. Mr. DelPizzo had one brother and two half sisters.

While in Italy he farmed, raising corn, wheat, potatoes and beans. He also worked at a summer resort located in the valley where he lived. Tourists came to the area to visit huge caves in the mountains there. Nick recalls taking tourists up the mountain on horse back and bringing them down on sleds. He was also employed at a power plant in Lombardine, Italy and worked as a plaster maker.

On January 2, 1921, he came to New York through Ellis Island, and traveled on to Greenberg, Pennsylvania, where he worked in the coal mines for four months. In April, 1921, he journeyed to Canon City, Colorado. After returning to New York

for a short time, in September 1923 he came to Louisville where he found work in the Black Diamond coal mine, located on South Boulder Road.

On July 27, 1925 he was married to Anna Romano in St. Louis Catholic Church in Louisville. The couple had three children, Annetta (Santilli) and Nick, both of Louisville, and Robert of Boulder. Mrs. DelPizzo died in 1963. His family consists of 10 grandchildren and 20 great-grandchildren. Mr. DelPizzo eventually went to work at the Monarch Mine, which was located near the spot where Storage Technology now stands.

Nick and Bill Jenkins, Jr. survived the explosion. They were knocked down by chunks of coal and pieces of timber that were blown through the tunnels of the mine. Concrete walls crumbled and timber supports split into millions of pieces of timber that were blown through the tunnels of the mine. Concrete walls crumbled and timber supports split into millions of pieces, allowing tons of sandstone into the mine tunnels. "Black Death" (carbon monoxide) literally crept after them as they made their way through an airshaft to the top. Nick compared their race from death to a "rat picking cheese from a trap." As they reached the surface, the workers were preparing to begin their shift. The mine boss and Mr. Jenkins attempted to go back down the mine shaft to rescue the miners, but the carbon monoxide filling the tunnels forced them back.

Mr. DelPizzo worked in several other mines in the area, including the Hiway, the Vulcan, the Black Diamond and the Columbine. After leaving the mines in 1952, Nick went to work at the Rocky Flats plant doing construction. He was injured when a cement bucket dropped from a crane, shattering his arm and preventing his return to work for three years.

After his recovery he was employed at Colacci's restaurant doing janitorial work and helping make sausage and spaghetti. He retired in 1973.

Nick still keeps busy doing his own cooking and cleaning his home. He tends a large garden where he grows many things, especially garlic—enough to supply his whole family. He is a member of St. Louis parish and attends mass regularly. One of his favorite pastimes is visiting with people and recalling his experiences.

(Some information in this article was found in *The Denver Post*, *The Boulder Camera*, and the *Louisville Times*.)



## PIONEER AWARD - 1992

Eugene Caranci, a native of Louisville and life-long resident, was the recipient of the 1992 Pioneer Award which is presented each year by the Louisville Historical Commission.

Eugene ("Chooch" the name by which he is known to his friends) was born in Louisville, attended the St. Louis Catholic School, and graduated from Louisville High School, where he was president of his class, in 1947. He earned his BA degree in business education and his MA in business administration from Colorado State Teachers College in Greeley (known as the University of Northern Colorado today).

He married Virginia DeRose in Louisville on February 3, 1951, and they became the parents of three daughters, Reggie, Jeanne, and Shelley who all reside in Louisville with their families. Eugene and Virginia have five grandchildren, Joshua, Jacob, Elizabeth, Joseph, and Katie.

Because of his strong desire to live in Louisville and to raise his family here, he commuted to Denver, where he taught in the Denver Public School system, for thirty-six years. In 1986, he retired as Administrator for Morey Middle School. Before he retired from the volunteer fire department of this city, he had completed thirty years of active duty as a fireman. He served as a director on the Board of Directors of the Louisville Fire Protection District from 1986 to 1988.

As founder of the Girls Softball League, he was able to persuade the city to purchase the equipment necessary for the girls of the town to participate in playing softball.

He was a member of the Louisville Police Commission and served as chairman of this board for four years.

During the time he was serving as a member of the first Planning Commission, the Commission formulated Louisville's first Comprehensive Plan. Later he became a member of the Planning Commission a second time and served for seven years.

In 1972 before the redistricting of the Boulder Valley Schools a final homecoming celebration for graduates of Louisville High School was held and Eugene was chairman of the group planning the activities.

He was co-chairman of the celebration which took place commemorating the bi-centennial of the United States and also co-chaired the activities which took place in 1978 when Louisville celebrated its centennial. One of the outstanding events of this celebration was the raising of the funds for the miners statue which stands in the grounds at City Hall. In 1983 Eugene helped reorganize the Spa-

ghetti Open Golf tournament which has continued to be a very successful event. As a member of a volunteer organization called St. Vincent De Paul, he spent several hours each week visiting and talking with shut-ins in Louisville. He is a member of the St. Louis parish and has served his church in many capacities - chairman of the one-hundred year celebration, chairman of church council for four years, and was one of the original commentators at mass. He continues to serve as commentator regularly.

Eugene also played a major role in keeping the Tri-City Elks lodge in Louisville and as an active member of this organization helps in raising funds for many charitable causes. Because of his desire to maintain and preserve the heritage of the Italian residents of Louisville, he was one of a group who founded the Society of Italian-Americans. He has served as chairman and co-chairman of the Italian Festa for the past four years. As a result of his interest in his Italian heritage, he was instrumental in starting the International Bocci Club and securing more Bocci courts.

Many children of our city have been tutored by him during the summer free of charge and he is presently a member of the Boulder Valley School Project 2000 Steering Committee. He has always been committed to the education of children.

Recently, a Louisville resident whose child is a victim of Down's Syndrome, called Eugene to ask his assistance in solving a problem. The young disabled woman who works in Boulder had been provided transportation to her work by the county, but this service was to be discontinued and she would have to use a public bus. He worked with the county to solve the problem and now a taxi will provide transportation to and from work for the young woman.

Eugene retired early from his position with the Denver Public schools to accept a position in Louisville which would permit him to promote the city for which he has always shown so much consideration and devotion. He presently serves as Director of the Louisville Chamber of Commerce.

