

LOUISVILLE HISTORIAN

A Publication of the Louisville Historical Commission & Society
Issue No. 15 August 1991

THE MUSEUM CORNER

The annual 4th of July auction was held in Memory Square Park. Due to the generosity of the business people as well as those who bid on the items being auctioned, this event proved to be very profitable again this year. This auction is our main fund-raising project and a lot of time and effort on the part of the members of the Historical Commission go into making it successful. A special "thank-you" goes out to everyone who participated.

Since August 11-18 has been designated as Italian Heritage week our museums will be open on Thursday, August 15, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. During the Italian Festival which is to be held on August 18, we will have artifacts pertaining to mining and the Italian Heritage of some of our residents on display. This exhibit will be held in the Arts and Humanities building, adjoining the swimming pool in Memory Square Park, from 11:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.

Several groups of school children toured the museums during the month of May. Reservations have been made by several groups who want to visit our buildings this fall.

The museums continue to be open on Thursdays 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. and special tours can be arranged by calling the museum, at 665-9048 or any commission member.

The following artifacts have been donated to the museum from April 1 through July 25:

Pete Madonna: Lard can (Thirlaway Grocery Store)

Guy Ross, Jr.: Aerial Photograph of Louisville - early 1930's

Mary Brown: Wooden Shipping Crate

Mary Johnson: Fairbanks scale with weights;
U.S. Army sewing kit (World War II)

Violet & Michael DiFrancia: The Louisville Sanitation District Publication; The Louisville Times dated June 28, 1951; Ribbon-Societa DiMutuo Soccorso Minatori Gari baldini, Louisville, Colorado

Marie Kasik: Record of Redman's Lodge

LABOR DAY

The museums will be open on Labor Day, September 2, 1991, immediately following the parade until 2:00 p.m. Memorabilia of the Korean Conflict which has been loaned to us by veterans of this war will be on exhibit at this time. A short recognition ceremony in honor of these veterans will be held immediately following the parade. Punch and cookies will be served outside in the area between the two buildings. We will be selling raffle tickets for a beautiful stained glass clock crafted by Bill Junior. Other items will be sold at this time also. We would like to extend an invitation to everyone to visit us on Labor Day.

SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

Dues of \$5.00 for membership in the Louisville Historical Society for the 1991-1992 year are due September 1. This society is very important in maintaining the buildings and preserving our historical artifacts. Many society members who reside in Louisville donate much of their time to our efforts and this is greatly appreciated. We hope to enlist the aid of more volunteers in the coming year. This membership fee entitles you to receive a copy of the newsletter which is published quarterly. Thank-you for sending your membership dues promptly.

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

In Memory of:

Mattie Thompson

Louis Varra

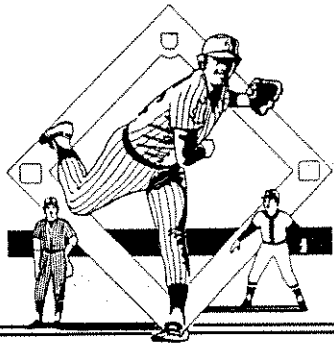
Marie DeSaille

Steve Sullivan

Eric and Bob Brimble

Katie Rosser

William Madonna



BASEBALL IN OUR TOWN

For many months we have been hearing about Denver's efforts to acquire a professional baseball franchise and now it has become a reality. With all the talk of baseball going around, many residents of early Louisville recall what a big part baseball played in our town. Almost every Sunday afternoon during the season a baseball game was played in the park across the railroad tracks (Miner's Field) and when the game was over a band concert was held there.

Louisville also made its own contribution to professional baseball. Bert Neihoff played ball from 1913 to 1918 in the major leagues. Many interesting facts about him were found in a newspaper article written by Gary Mortenson.

Bert Neihoff was born in the mining town of Louisville and was a member of one of the first families to settle here. His father sent him to Denver to become an electrician instead of allowing him to become a coal miner. Although he was successful at his trade, a strike soon put him out of work. A family friend came to the rescue by offering Bert a job in Trinidad where he began playing on the town's baseball team.

He soon found himself battling his way up through the minor leagues, impressing the Cincinnati Club by having a great year while playing in Louisville, Kentucky.

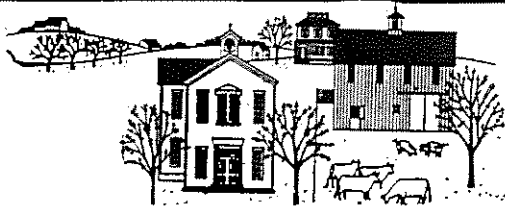
Bert stole 60 bases or more in three consecutive minor-league years and by 1914 he had become Cincinnati's regular third baseman. He was traded to the Phillies the following year and played second base behind Grover Cleveland Alexander when Alexander pitched 31 victories. In 1915, the Phillies met Boston in the World Series which was attended by President Woodrow Wilson. That series was Neihoff's biggest thrill during his baseball career, even though Boston won it in five games with four consecutive one-run decisions. In 1918, he played for St. Louis and was later traded to the New York Giants. He barely began playing with the Giants when he collided with Giant outfielder, Ross Young, his leg was badly broken and his baseball playing career came to an abrupt end. Neihoff went on to enjoy a successful career as a minor league manager and in 1929 was a coach under John McGraw for the New York Giants. After 35 years of managing teams, he became a scout for the newly-formed Los Angeles Angels franchise. He scouted in an area that included Bakersfield, Santa Barbara and the San Fernando Valley. He signed many well-known players to various teams in that area of California. While reminiscing about Bert Neihoff, Mortenson made the following observation, "Bert Neihoff didn't talk of the past very often, but he could easily have filled volumes of books with his experiences as a baseball player, coach, manager, and scout."

Another young man from Louisville became quite well known as a baseball player in the 1920's, in fact he and Bert Neihoff were very good friends, Toney William (T.W.) LaSalle was a native of Louisville and grew up playing baseball in the streets or wherever he could find a game in progress. He not only played in the minor leagues for the M & O Cigar team of Phoenix, Arizona, but he also managed the team. Toney had been spotted by the major league scouts and was slated to report for a try-out. One rainy night, while driving home from Denver with his wife, Kitty, there was an automobile accident. Toney's leg was badly broken and his baseball career came to an end. He became the western distributor for the Magtag Company with stores located in Colorado Springs, Greeley and Denver. Later, he added furniture to his inventory and many young married couples furnished their first homes with furniture from his store, paying for it "on-time".

The American Legion sponsored baseball teams in the 1930's and in the Louisville Times dated July 9, 1936, the following article was printed: *"Fifteen of the best players for the American Legion received their contracts last week from their manager. The Players that received contracts were: Bill Dewey (Dhieux), Charlie Scarpella, Carl Keeter, Bennie LaSalle, Pete Samac, Tom Seklich, Edmund D'Haillicort, Orville Weathers, Elmer James, Frank Beranek, Joseph Romano and Frank German - Pete Madonna was named mascot of the Louisville Team."*

On August 17, 1936 the American Legion team won the Regional tournament when they beat the Albuquerque, New Mexico team in the final game of a three-game series. One of the sports writers for a Denver Newspaper praised John Tavado for his hitting record even though he was better known for his pitching ability. Other key men mentioned in this article were Darrell Webster, Joe Schoser, Frank German, and Wilbur Kasinga. These boys were coached by George Mathis. Busses were chartered to transport the fans on to the regional championship game. Louisville fans have always been very supportive of their local teams. The Parks and Recreation Department provides coaches and fields for the young players today. Those too young to participate in baseball or softball are taught the basic batting and pitching skills in a game called T-Ball. Since major league baseball has come to Denver, perhaps someday, Louisville may again provide some players for this team, but in the meantime the local fans will be there cheering their boys and girls on to victory.





THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The history of the United Methodist Church dates back to the early days of Louisville when there was no church building and no ordained preacher to conduct services. In the beginning before the present church was built, the congregation met in various homes where the services were led by Tom Carlton who was not an ordained minister. Mr. Carlton worked as a coal miner, but officiated as a preacher for the group of worshippers, many of whom were former members of the Episcopalian church. As the congregation grew, the group started plans to build the Community-Methodist Church which is located at the corner of Spruce and Jefferson streets. Original notes for the money borrowed to build were signed by John Hutchinson, R.M. Beardsley, and John Whitehead. The building was completed and the first services held there took place during the first week of August in 1892. Mr. Whitehead died in September 1892 and his was the first funeral conducted in the church building. Amelia Clarkson (Hancock) was baptized there August 23, 1892 and this was the first baptism held in the church. R.M. Beardsley was the first ordained preacher to serve the church. Many others followed.

Mrs. Priscella Clarkson started the birthday collection which was held in the Sunday School on each person's birthday. The purpose of this collection was to purchase a bell for the bell tower. After several years \$32.00 had been collected and the bell was installed. In compliance with her instructions, the bell tolled for Mrs. Clarkson's funeral which took place on February 28, 1938.

The social life of the young people revolved around the church and many pleasant events took place. An ice cream social could be arranged and given within a few days. Box socials and neck-tie socials were enjoyed by all even though a young girl was occasionally disappointed when an older man bought her box lunch. Most of the times the boys knew which lunch belonged to their special girl.

At one time a choir of thirty-six voices sang for services. The choir performed at concerts and one year presented a minstrel show which became an annual affair. Members of the choir often rode a hayrack to neighboring towns where they serenaded the residents. One minister, Jesse Dean, a violinist, started an orchestra. That winter the church would be filled to capacity quite some time before services were to begin, causing the preacher to wonder if it was his preaching or the orchestra drawing the crowd.

Due to the coal strike, the year of 1910 was a very difficult one for the community. Very few members of the church were working and there was no money in the fund for the usual Christmas treats for the children of the church. Mrs. Mae Goodhue and Mrs. Amelia Hancock canvassed the town for donations and collected enough money to supply treats for all the children of the town. The sacks were carried to the church in tubs and every child in Louisville was invited to receive one. It is believed that was the beginning of the tradition of distributing treats to the town's children on Christmas Eve. Many of the older members of the congregation recall one Christmas Eve when members of the Ku Klux Klan dressed in their long white robes visited the church and passed out treats to all the children.

The inside of the church building was remodeled in 1937, when the seats were changed to face the west instead of the south and the old pulpit converted to a choir loft. A new pulpit was built on the west wall of the structure. The next major building program was begun in July 14, 1941, when the first load of lumber was delivered for the construction of a recreation room which was added to the building.

The addition was completed on September 5, 1941, and the Ladies Aid met there for the first time. The total cost of the addition was \$2,200.00. All materials were purchased from J.J. Steinbaugh and labor was paid to Glen Fischer and Elmer Hilton. The church began its 50th year debt free as the expenses for this project were completely paid in September, 1942. This was accomplished through the efforts of the congregation, especially those who were members of the Ladies' Aid Group.

One of the events celebrating the 50th anniversary of the church was the baptism, of Carolyn Lynn Allan on September 13, 1942. The infant was the great-great granddaughter of Tom Carlton, the first preacher of the church. Mr. and Mrs. Sheldon Allan, parents of the child, were married in the church and three generations of the family were present at the baptism.

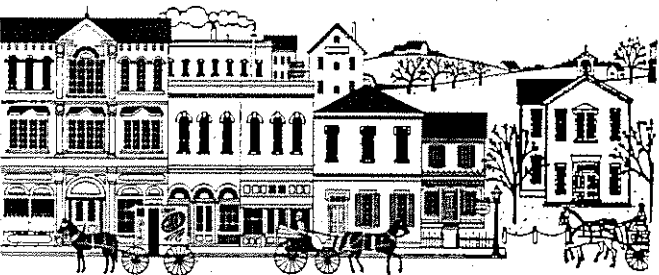
During the depression and World War II, the church continued to be the center of social life for the young people. Most of the members of the "Youth Fellowship" in Louisville were girls while the majority of members in Lafayette were male so the two groups often combined their activities. One minister often served both communities at this time so this was quite a convenient arrangement. District meetings were attended by the groups and many long-lasting friendships were formed. Louisville was always well represented when the summer camp, Pine Crest located at Monument, Colorado was in session. Many pleasant memories and experiences are cherished by those who attended Pine Crest. Although there was an ordained minister in residence during the early 1900's, the church was staffed for many years by students at the Iliff School of Theology in Denver. Many of these young men were very dedicated and inspired the congregation

to continue even though the money was very scarce. Special money-raising projects had to be held from time to time to keep the church operating. The Ladies Aid group always seemed to come through with a bake-sale, ice cream social or some other fund-raising scheme when there was a special need. For many years these dedicated women cooked and served dinner to the local residents on election day. This practice continued until the early 1960's. Each October the Ladies Aid hosted a reception honoring all the teachers in the Louisville schools. The "Fall Festival" was started by the Ladies Aid in the early 1930's, when the church needed funds to operate. The first minister who was not a student took over the pulpit in 1982 and Reverend Lloyd McLaughlin remained in this position for twelve years.

Remodeling and refurbishing the inside of the church began during the 1970's and was completed in the 1980's. The funds for this extensive work were received from a foundation which was established when a church located in Denver decided to simply close its doors. The foundation was funded through the donation of this church's treasury which was divided among several churches with financial limitations. A new roof was put on the building. The walls inside were recovered. An old window which had been boarded over when the pulpit was changed to the west side of the church was opened and a new stained glass window was installed. Carpeting has been laid and all the pews have been refurbished. A new organ was purchased in the summer of 1990.

As the United Methodist Church begins its 100th year, an extension of the ministry has taken place and a new branch called "Celebration Community Church" has been established.

The first services of the Celebration Community Church which meets at the Fireside Elementary School were held on Palm Sunday, March 24, 1991 at 9:00 a.m. Reverend Jim Davis conducts services which feature contemporary worship and music each Sunday at 9:00 a.m. and Sunday school begins at 10:15 a.m. It is hoped that many more young adults will be attracted to the contemporary services. Approximately 109 people are in attendance each Sunday and it is believed that this number will increase as the Celebration Community Church becomes more widely known. The United Methodist Church continues to grow and serve not only its congregation, but the entire community.



A MIRACLE ON MAIN STREET

by John Garcia

The Louisville Historical Commission was chartered by the city in 1978. Its purpose was to collect, maintain, exhibit, and preserve information and materials which reflect the exploration, industry (particularly relevant to its mining heritage), settlement and development of the city of Louisville and its environs. The Commission of 1978 hoped that one day it would be able to have a museum that would enable them to collect and exhibit artifacts, highlighting the happenings in Louisville and present a vivid picture of what life was like in the early days of Louisville. In 1983, the city purchased the Tomeo house at 1013 Main street, which was built in 1904, from the Ross Family (Rose Ross is the former Rose Tomeo). They also purchased the Jacoe store which was built in 1903 from this family. Soon afterward work was started on the house to restore it, so that it could serve as a temporary museum. The initial work on the house was not extensive, it needed a lot of elbow grease, paint and minor repairs like replacing broken windows and patching here and there. The temporary museum was open in 1984. Work on the store was delayed for quite some time because it was in total disrepair. It contained wall to wall junk; it took more than 15 truckloads to remove what had been collected there over the years. The plaster was falling off the walls, the floors had deep ruts in them, and the ceiling was rusted and full of holes. It was quite a mess. As we looked around the store we wondered how we would ever be able to turn this mess into a museum and we also wondered where the money would come from to be able to get everything done. A number of fund-raising efforts were entered into to raise the money to accomplish our goals. Through the generosity of the people of Louisville the money started to accumulate and in about two years enough money was raised to begin the work. The store had been boarded up for a number of years and the first thing was to remove the boards, replace the broken windows and repair the window mouldings, this was accomplished in 1986. In 1986, we were also able to get a new roof on the house. At this time we were also busily shoring up the walls in the basement of the house. It was quite a job because all the dirt had collapsed and had to be dug out. Boards were installed to hold the dirt in place. The house floor was also jacked up and supports were added to provide more stability to the floor. 1987 was the year that work started on the interior of the store. All the plaster walls were torn out, seeing this work being done was quite a sight. The commission members, men and women, and a few volunteers appeared in their blue jeans, bearing hammers and crowbars and went to work.

The dust was flying. Framing for new walls and partitions was then installed. The crowning achievement of 1987 was when the Coca-Cola sign was repainted on the outside of the building, this was greeted with great acclaim by the old-timers of Louisville as it replaced an old Landmark. 1988 was the year of major accomplishments. A new roof was put on the store. New Plumbing and wiring were installed. The walls in the basement were shored up (more digging). The furnace in the basement which was probably put in when the building was built had to be replaced - this was a tremendous job. Thanks to the city's help in removing the old furnace this was accomplished. The perimeter walls of the building were insulated and then new drywall was installed. When it came time to work on the ceiling, a shower of dust came down on our heads. This meant that all the dust and dirt that had accumulated over the years had to be vacuummed out of the attic. The metal ceiling was then washed, primed, holes filled, painted and restored. At this point the attic was insulated. As 1988 drew to a close we knew that we were well on our way - so far everything looked great.

In 1988, we knew that we were drawing close to completion. We put down a new floor, finished the bathroom with new tile and fixtures which had been in the store originally. All the walls were painted and new wainscoting was installed. An air-conditioner was put in to maintain an even temperature that would insure a climate that would preserve the artifacts contained in the museum. New landscaping was put in by the city that gave the museum a park like setting. When this was accomplished in September of 1989 our job was done.

The completion of all this was truly a miracle for the Louisville Historical Commission, the many volunteers, and the city of Louisville. "Thanks" to the volunteers for their thousands of hours devoted to this project. "Thanks" for the financial support which made this all possible and "Thanks" again for contributing to a *Miracle on Main Street*. The museum opened March 31, 1990.

HAILSTORM DOES DAMAGE IN LOUISVILLE

On Thursday evening, June 21, 1952, a hail storm roared over Louisville causing approximately \$100,000 damage. The stones were the size of golf balls and when the storm had passed, the roofs all over town had been punched full of holes 1 1/2 inches to 2 inches in diameter. Cars that had taken the brunt of the storm looked as though they had been beaten with a ballpeen hammer.

A heavy rainstorm the following night added to the damage by leakage through the mutilated roofs. Less than one-third of the damage was covered and many people did not have insurance of any kind.

REMEMBER WHEN?

The following ads were run in the Louisville Times: June 28th, 1951

THE HUB

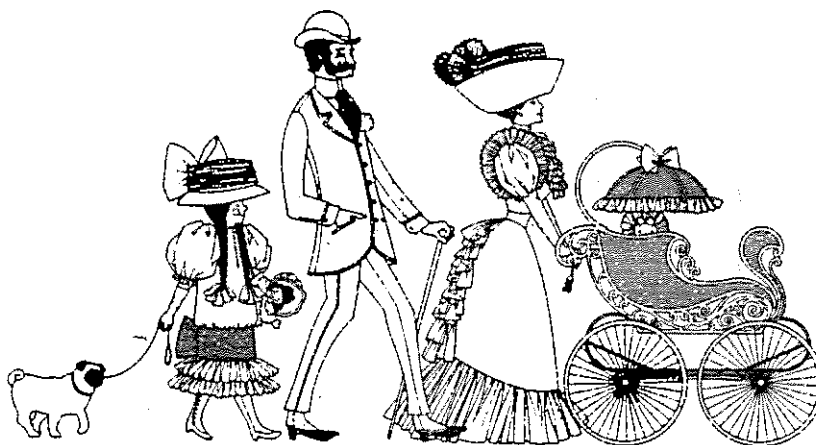
| | |
|-------------------------------|--------|
| 80 Square Percale | 49¢ |
| Nylon Hose | \$1.00 |
| Men's Dress Pants | \$3.98 |
| Ladies Percale Dresses | \$1.98 |
| Girls Print Skirts Sizes 3-6X | 98¢ |

ED SMITH GROCERY

| | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Solitaire French Dressing | 19¢ |
| Bacon (1 pound) | 49¢ |
| Solitaire Tea for Iced Tea | 49¢ |
| Solitaire Coffee | 88¢ |

LOUISVILLE HISTORICAL COMMISSION MEMBERS

| | |
|-------------------|----------|
| Virginia Carcanci | 666-6235 |
| Emejane 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 |



**LOUISVILLE HISTORICAL
COMMISSION
749 MAIN STREET
LOUISVILLE, COLORADO
80027**

Louisville Public Library
749 Main Street
Louisville, CO 80027