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Historical Commission

# LOUISVILLE HISTORIAN

A publication of the Louisville Historical Commission & Society

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Issue No. 38, August, 1997  
Eileen Schmidt - Editor

## THE MUSEUM CORNER

Summer is always a very busy time at the museums, many visitors from out of town tour our buildings and we are involved in many activities. The Taste of Louisville which was held on June 14 was very successful this year due partly, to the beautiful weather. The museum was filled with visitors throughout the hours we chose to be open. Several former residents of Louisville visited our building. One well-remembered visitor was Judy Scarpella, daughter of Pasquale (Halo). Two daughters of Julia DiGiallanardo, Mary Jane and Barbara who are visiting their mother, spent some time in the museum renewing old acquaintances. Music was provided by the group, Pangea (Broken Sixpence), was enjoyed by all.

Our next important function will be on Labor Day, September 1, when we will again hold open house. We are planning to sponsor a silent auction on Sunday, August 31, at Memory Square Park. Elle Cabbage of the Downtown Business Association will be assisting us with this event.

Dick Franchini, a member of the Louisville Historical Commission, is recuperating from a hip replacement operation and is doing well. We all send our wishes for a speedy recovery to him. September begins a new year for our society membership so a renewal slip will be attached to this newsletter. Again, we wish to express our sincere gratitude for your continuing support.

The tape of the History of Louisville is still available for purchase at the museum for \$18.00. We continue to have the museum open on Thursday 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. or by appointment.

## MEMORIAL DONATIONS

In Memory of

Rita Lou (LaSalle) Beard

## 50TH CLASS REUNION

The 1947 graduating class of old Louisville High School will hold its 50th reunion on August 31 by having brunch at Karen's in the Country and they will spend the rest of the day recalling memories of their high school days. Several graduates

of that class reside in Louisville while others will be traveling long distances to participate in the event. The graduating class of 1946 has been invited to share in the celebration. The class colors were blue and silver and the class motto was a very original one "When they open the gates of heaven, they will see the class of 47." Dolores (Lasnik) Forbes was valedictorian of the class. The date for the reunion was chosen so that those attending from out of town could take part in the Labor Day festivities.

## LOUISVILLE HISTORICAL COMMISSION MEMBERS

Frank Domenico..... 666-6233  
Emajane Enrietto..... 666-4145  
Dave Ferguson..... 666-6000  
Richard Franchini..... 666-6272  
Marion Junior..... 666-8283  
Donald Ross..... 666-6836  
Eileen Schmidt..... 666-6853  
Patricia Seader..... 666-8385  
Cassandra Volpe..... 665-8542

## LYDIA MORGAN

The Lydia Morgan Senior Housing complex is now under construction in Louisville and is scheduled to be ready for occupancy in September. The complex, located on Lincoln Avenue just a few blocks south of South Boulder Road, was named for Lydia Morgan who taught first grade in Louisville for forty-three years. Her teaching career began in 1918 and she remained in Louisville all those years except one. In 1921 she went to Washington where she taught the same grade. Part of that time her classroom was located in the Methodist Church where the primary grades were housed due to overcrowding in the school building located across the street.

Her room was the first room on the left as you entered the building and many students visited her there long after they were no longer in grade school.

Miss Morgan was born on January 17, 1897, and died on August 15, 1972 and is buried at Green Mountain Cemetery in Boulder.

Many of us who grew up in Louisville remember being students in Miss Morgan's first grade room. The thought of her brings back many pleasant memories. The "surprise" party for her each year was an event eagerly anticipated by the children. There was always a visit from Santa on the last day before Christmas vacation began and everyone was presented a five-cent candy bar--what a treat! She loved poetry and often taught

her students to recite poems. Several poems that were learned in her first grade class come to mind--My Shadow, The Swing, Winkem, Blinken, and Nod, Jack Be Nimble, Sail, Baby, Sail are just a few of them.

Many of us remember the old "pump" organ sitting in the front of her room. Often she played songs as the students joined her in singing the words. The organ was also used as a place of punishment, if a child were naughty he or she was sent to sit behind the organ. It was particularly touching when a small boy who had broken his arm was made to sit behind the organ as a punishment after he had exhausted her patience by his mischievous deeds. That incident made quite an impression on everyone in the room. She was truly a "mother" figure to many of her students, always checking to see if they were wearing their coats, mittens, and boots if the weather was bad. Many of the Spanish speaking children who came to her first grade class not only did not speak English, they also did not understand it, but she was always patient and helpful to them.

Those were the days when the school was the center of many community activities and a teacher's job included taking part in those events.

When Miss Morgan retired in 1962, the following article was published in "The Louisville Times."

"Miss Lydia Morgan who for 43 years has been teaching the first grade at Louisville, tops the list of 553 Boulder Valley School teachers in classroom experience.

She began her career in 1918, leaving only one year, in 1921, to teach the same grade in Washington State. She has presided over her classes in the same room since then. Miss Morgan, who looks at least 10 years younger than she is, with sparkling blue eyes and blonde hair, will retire in June.

Not only is she young in appearance, but she feels that way too. 'I don't feel old around my children,' she said. 'Working around first graders most of my life makes me feel young.' She does not want to retire, but all teachers must do so at age 65 according to Boulder Valley policy.

#### TAUGHT THREE GENERATIONS

Even so, she can claim the teaching of three generations in Louisville. She now, has the children whose grandmother and parents she taught. Many of her pupils have achieved success and now have children of first grade or older. One of her former pupils is assistant superintendent of schools in Pueblo, another is a successful businessman in California who recently stopped to see her.

She distinctly remembers one boy who was one of the thinnest children she had seen. Today he is a stocky Colorado State Patrolman.

Although she has been offered teaching jobs in other grades, she has always favored first grade.

'When they come to you, they're just babies. I like older children, but not as well,' she said.

Miss Morgan has lived in Louisville since she was in the second grade, when her family moved here from Virginia. She is a graduate of Louisville High School.

She now lives with a widowed sister, and a brother.

Aside from being active in work for her church, Miss Morgan is a member of the Louisville Study Club, which she terms as being a wonderful opportunity for learning. The club meets every other week for study of various topics.

One of her recent jobs is her membership in the school district Facilities Committee that is composed of citizens from throughout the district who are determining needs of present and future schools.

#### REAL TRAVELER

A summer traveler in the past, Miss Morgan warns that she 'won't sit home' upon retirement but will travel extensively. Although she admits to not being 'much of a car driver,' she favors jet air travel.

First on her list of visits will be Mexico City, and travel abroad, where she has not been. One of her favorite places is the Seattle area where she visited a sister. Last summer she took a yacht cruise to the Bahamas from Florida.

What are some of the changes this teacher has observed in more than 40 years?

#### NEW METHODS NO BETTER

'I don't think the new teaching methods are really better, but I try to keep up with them.

The new books are wonderful, the instructions are so clear. The new readers in social studies and home idea--things a child is interested in.

The individualism taught in art today is good. They get to tear or cut paper to shapes rather than tracing them from a pattern. They would rather make their own pictures. They love to do people and animals.

They love pretty rocks. They bring in so many we get to the place where we have to dump them out. Rocks are the most interesting things to first graders.

Their pranks are just the same today as they used to be. There's no real reason for it, just cussedness.

They should only be allowed to stay up for television on Friday and Saturday nights. They watch lots of things they shouldn't. Parents don't know what they watch.

Kids are just as healthy as they used to be. They get milk and hot lunches. I have some big ones this year--almost as tall as I am.'

As a member of a family whose three generations were taught by Miss Morgan, I feel that the Senior Housing Complex will be a fitting memorial to a dedicated, hard-working lady who helped mold many of our finest citizens. Her teachings will be passed down to future generations of Louisville residents for many years to come.

#### MONARCH SCHOOL

As this area of Louisville and Superior has grown, the need for additional schools has become apparent. Since the construction of homes in the Rock Creek area of Superior and the growth to the south of Louisville, the existing schools have become very overcrowded. A new grade school was built in the

Rock Creek area to accommodate those families, but more schools are definitely needed. On August 25, 1997, the new Monarch School, located at Dillon Road and 88th, which will house students in kindergarten through eighth grade, will begin holding classes. In the fall of 1998, a new high school will assume classes on the same campus. The concept of having students from kindergarten through high school on the same campus is a fairly new one for this area. When asked the reason for such a complex, it was learned that the tremendous need was the most important factor in the construction of the schools. Although it is a more economical system using two buildings instead of three, it is emphasized that the different age groups will be kept separate at all times. Even though they will be sharing some of the same outdoor facilities, at no time will there be an intermingling of students.

The name Monarch for the new school was chosen by a policy which has been established by the school board. The following information was taken from a memo dated October 24, 1996, regarding the naming of schools. "The Board of Education policy for naming schools requires that schools be named for physical locations, geographical areas, distinguished local, state, or national leaders whose names will lend dignity and stature to the school, significant of pertinent events." A committee of representatives from the Louisville and Superior communities was formed to consider all suggestions and those options were submitted to the Superintendent and Board of Education for final approval. The name, Monarch K-8 was submitted by three different people. The committee agreed that it was important to pick a name which would historically tie the Louisville and Superior communities together since both communities will feed into the school. The committee liked Monarch because of its regal implications and because of its definition: "one that surpasses others in power or preeminence."

Regardless of how the name was chosen, it certainly is appropriate because the location of the school is so near the old Monarch coal mining camp. One very interesting fact about the Monarch mine was that it was one of the few mining "camps" in the northern Colorado coal fields. The miners lived at the camp with their families in small cottages. There was also a school to serve the children of the camp. Mrs. Mae Goodhue, daughter of Jessie (Niehoff) and William Austin, who were members of two of Louisville's pioneer families, taught in the school for many years. There was a bus which brought students attending high school to Louisville. A company store was also located at the camp so all the needs of the families were met at the site of the mine. On the morning of January 20, 1936, at approximately 6:30 a.m., an explosion deep within the interior of the mine shook the entire area. As workers of the day shift waited at the top of the mine for the fire boss, Steve Davis, to return and give word that the mine was safe to enter, the explosion was heard and felt.

Although the reason for the explosion has never been determined, the miners had been aware of the dangers and infractions of many safety regulations for sometime. 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. Eight men were trapped and killed in the mine, leaving twenty-three children of this small town fatherless. The bodies of most of the men were found by rescue crews, who volunteered for this task, within a few days following the explosion. Some hope was held out that Steve Davis, the fire boss, might be found alive, but this theory proved false when his body was discovered. The search for Joe Jaramillo was finally terminated on February 6th when it was determined that conditions in the mine were endangering the lives of the rescue workers. Several months later, a granite marker was placed over the part of the mine in which Jaramillo's body was believed to be buried. This marker still stands in a field along Highway 36--about two miles west of Broomfield and is visible from the road. A great deal of concern has been voiced about whether or not this monument will be allowed to remain standing. The following information was found recently in a copy of the Boulder Camera. The article was written by Silvia Pettem in answer to questions regarding the monument and its fate.

"The marker, which looks like a gravestone and is surrounded by a metal rail fence is in memory of Joe Jaramillo, who died on January 20, 1936, in an explosion in the Monarch mine. Methane gas was believed to have caused the explosion. Although the clogged mine corridors soon were abandoned, the fires continued for years, the Monarch remained open. Men and mules continued to mine coal in other levels of the mine until the whole mine closed in 1947.

Jaramillo left behind a widow and four children. Within five months of his death, both of his daughters died. His widow died three years later. Joe Jr. followed his father's career and began tending the mining company's mules at age 7. When he was 16, he began working underground and he died of black lung disease at age 57. The fate of the other son is unknown.

The inscription on the marker reads, 'A faithful employee who died in the performance of his duty.'

The marker is on the land that is to be developed into a shopping mall within the city limits of Broomfield. The City of Broomfield does not have landmarking procedures (as does Boulder and unincorporated Boulder County), so there is no legal way to ensure its preservation. However, I spoke with a Broomfield city official who talked with the developer and said that the developer is 'morally bound' to preserve the marker and 'wants it to mean something.' I have supplied both the city and the developer with historical information on the marker."

The construction of the Monarch K-8 school will be a reminder to all of us about the historical facts which surround this area and, in a way, will serve as a memorial to those brave, hard working miners and their families who contributed so much to our city.

## JUNE WEDDINGS

The following accounts of two unusual June weddings were reported in newspapers in this area and we thought they might be of interest to our readers.

Taken from the Denver Post, June 14, 1997  
**IN COLORADO --JUNE 14, 1897.** Sarah Harris of Louisville was Lynched at Boulder. The blushing groom was Thomas J. Lynch.

The following article was found in a copy of "The Louisville Times" dated September 9, 1920.

**NEWLYWEDS GIVEN RIDE  
 THROUGH STREETS OF BOULDER**

A wedding of much interest to a wide circle of Boulder people took place Monday afternoon at Brighton when Miss Doris Manchester of this city became the bride of Harry Jenkins of Louisville. The ceremony was performed by Rev. Bancroft of the Brighton Presbyterian Church and was witnessed by Mrs. Roy Nelson and Mrs. Frank Winkler of Cheyenne.

The bridal party returned last evening to the home of Mrs. J. E. Manchester of Valmont, where a very elaborate wedding dinner of sixteen covers was served. Later in the evening about thirty of their friends called and gave them an old fashioned charivari (shivaree). The noise makers were treated to ice cream and cigars. They were not to be bribed, however, by such gifts and capturing the bride and bridegroom placed them in a wagon which they later attached to an automobile. The newlyweds were brought to Boulder and given a joy ride through the streets. All the noise making appliances that the chaiviers could scrape up were used in calling attention to the newlyweds.

Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins will go to housekeeping in Louisville where he is employed as a miner.--The Camera

Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins moved into the large two-storied house in the 700 block of Grant Street where the hospital was formerly located and resided their until their deaths. They became the parents of two sets of girl twins: Marge Barday and Mildred Conway; Nettie Rooks and Nellie Hoedel. They also had two sons, Laverne and Harry.

**SLOVAKS IN LOUISVILLE**

The Slovaks who settled in Louisville and the surrounding area have made many important contributions to the community. Like other groups who fled the oppression of their native countries, the Slovaks came to the United States seeking better living conditions, hoping to gain political freedom, and to avoid being drafted into their countries' armies. Many first settled in Pennsylvania, but when Colorado became known in the East as a land of opportunity, where large deposits of both gold and silver had been found along with coal, many Slovaks began to move west into Colorado. The Slovaks were serious people who were well known as hard working, honest men and women. They were also ardent fraternalists and wherever they settled, they organized clubs and sick-and-death benefit associations to provide security insurance for their families. On January 19, 1896, the Slovak immigrants organized their first benefit society in Louisville--the Roman and Greek Catholic Slovak Association Lodge No. 30. In order to become a member of the association, proof of religious affiliation by a clergyman had to be presented. In that same year on December 26, the National Slovak Society was also organized, but this

group accepted any Slovak of good character, regardless of their religious or social standing. Some of the active members were John, Mike, George Sirokman, John Mudrak, John Hornak, George and Michael Bodnar. Under the directorship of the Bodnars and John Mudrak, Lodge No. 30 was in existence until 1962.

Information about a few of the Slavic families is contained in the historical files at our museum and some descendants of those early families remain in our community.

On June 29, 1896, Joseph (Hornak) Harney who was born in Hatkovce, Abauj, Czechoslovakia, arrived in Pueblo at the age of sixteen. A short time later, he traveled to Louisville where he lived for the rest of his life. He began work as a coal miner, but later became a weighman. Miners at that time were paid by the amount of coal they were able to dig so the weighman job was very important. Honest men with a great deal of integrity were usually candidates for this job. The Slovaks shared the work in the fourteen coal mines located in the Louisville-Lafayette area with other ethnic groups, primarily, French, Italians, and those from the British Isles. Although Joseph Harney's primary interest was mining precious metals, gold and silver, he eventually began working in coal mines. His work took him to many towns such as Black Hawk, Walden, Central City, Leadville, and Cripple Creek where important mineral discoveries had been made.

Since he owned many of the instruments and equipment needed to test ores and minerals in order to determine their value and quality, he also became a prospector. One of his instruments was a precision weighing scale which was enclosed in glass and so delicate that it could weigh a pencil mark on a cigarette paper.

Shortly after Louisville was incorporated as a town, Joseph Harney was elected a councilman in 1905. Joseph Harney and his brother, John Harnak, were two of the first and better known Slovak families in the Louisville area. When John Harnak first came to Louisville, he made shoes for the United States Army, but later joined his brother, Joseph, in the coal mines. The Harneys have always been remembered as a very prominent hard-working family in Louisville. After the death of his first wife in 1904, Joseph returned to Pennsylvania where he married a countrywoman who had been born in Czechoslovakia, a widow, named Anna Lipszak. He returned to Louisville with Anna and her two sons, Andy and John, who had also been born in Europe. Joseph raised Anna's sons as his own. John became known as "Sampson" because of his strength and stature. At first, both brothers worked in the coal mines, but later after the family purchased a farm northeast of Louisville, Andy worked on the farm with his mother while "Sampson" continued working in the mines to help pay for the farm land. Because of his strength and trustworthiness, Sampson, was chosen as a guard on paydays to bring the money from the railroad station to the company office at the mine. Joseph Harney and his wife Anna had six children--Steve, Susan, Michael, Frank, Peter, and Benedict. Michael became a well-known ham radio operator and during World War II taught at the United States Naval Radio School at the University of Colorado. Steven became a farmer

and Frank worked in the mines and hauled coal. The other two sons died at an early age. Susan married James Lastoka who came to Louisville from Czechoslovakia at the age of eighteen months. Susan and James still reside in Louisville. They have two sons, James and John, and one daughter Mariann.

James Lastoka worked as a safety man in the coal mines for many years. He was always an active member of the Union and served as secretary of the two local chapters of the United Mine Workers of America. The farm land owned by the family was purchased by Boulder County, Louisville, and Lafayette and has been designated open space. It will serve as a buffer between Louisville and Lafayette.

In 1942, at the age of eighty-two years, Joseph Harney passed away and is buried near Louisville.

In 1893, the Hecla mine had listed several Slovak miners who were working there. Among them were Andy, Karol, and Edward Hazier who were born in Bardejov, Saris, Czechoslovakia. The Hazier brothers were employed as blacksmiths at the Hecla Mine and were responsible for keeping the mine equipment in good working order.

In 1892, when the miners in this area went on strike for better working conditions, higher wages, a shorter work week, and an eight-hour day, the Slovak miners participated in and supported the strike. At that time, miners worked a twelve-hour day, seven days a week, and didn't see daylight for months at a time.

In 1905, when he was seventeen years old, Steven Waschak migrated to the United States from Richmava, Hungary (now known as Czechoslovakia) so that he could better his life and to keep from serving in the Hungarian army. Shortly after his arrival, he traveled to Louisville where he worked most of his life in the coal mines. After the first world war (1913-1918), in 1923 Steven's brother, Paul, came to Louisville. Unfortunately, Steven Waschak died from black lung disease caused by coal dust in the mines when he was quite a young man. His son, Steven, Jr., lost his life on the beaches of Normandy during World War II, Paul Waschak and his wife, Maria, became the parents of three daughters, Helen, Pauline, and Marie. Maria still resides in Louisville with one of her daughters and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Howard Pollack.

In 1931, another brother, John Waschak, Sr., brought his wife, Mary, their ten year old son, John Jr. and their eight year old daughter, Marie from Czechoslovakia to Louisville. Another daughter, Anne, was born in Louisville. John Waschak, Sr., died in 1970 after working for many years as a coal miner. His son, John and daughters Mary (Marie) and Anne still reside in Louisville with their families.

In spite of the fact, that John Jr. quit school at sixteen years of age to work in the coal mines, he became quite successful at all his undertakings. He served in the United States marines during World War II. After his discharge from the service, John worked at various jobs and when the Rocky Flats Plant opened, John began work there as a security guard. He was later promoted to a building manager position. He also acted in several television commercials and motion pictures. In November 1973, he was elected mayor of Louisville and served

two terms.

Czechoslovakia has always been known for its Slovak folklore, dancing, and singing groups. It will always be remembered for the destruction and suffering inflicted on its people by the Nazis and for the uprising against Hitler's occupation of their county during the second World War. Many Slovaks of second and third generations still live in Louisville and the surrounding area. They have made very important contributions to the history of Louisville by bringing their culture and customs to our city and they continue to enrich our society with their dedication.

Information contained in the above article was found in a booklet "History of Czechs and Slovaks in the State of Colorado 1876-1976--by Andres Kutes, Denver, Colorado

## MEMORIES

### DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN?--

It cost 10¢ for children and 25¢ for adults to attend the movies.

A loaf of bread cost 10¢ at the grocery store.

Enough steak for an entire family could be purchased for 15¢.

The Louisville High School was located on Garfield Street.

The Louisville Grade School was located on Jefferson and Spruce Street and Louisville had its own school district.

Billy Austin had a small store across the street from the grade school where you could buy a sackful of candy for a few pennies.

A grocery store was located in each neighborhood.

The old Redman Hall was the center of all the social activities held in town.

The old City Hall housed the city offices, the police station which had a jail cell, and the town library.

An amateur hour was held each year at the Rex theater during the fall festival.

The local Lions Club provided treats for all the children of the town on Christmas Eve at the local Christmas tree located in the intersection of Main and Spruce streets and everyone was there.

All the family's clothing from shoes to underwear could be purchased in one or two stores in Louisville.

Trees were planted by the grade school classes along the border of the grade school.

School plays were so well attended by people of the community there was often "standing room only."

You could buy a "coke" at the local drug store for 5¢ and a small ice cream sundae cost 10¢.

A "store bought" cookie was a rare treat.

Wonderful smells of the Ostrander Bakery permeated the whole downtown area.

A robbery of the First State Bank took place during the daylight hours.

Town Marshall Helburg was shot to death in a dispute

over a \$1.50 license for a vendor.

There was an explosion at the Monarch Mine and everyone rallied around to help the families of the victims and to take part in rescue operations.

All the kids were reading books like the Bobbsey Twins, Nancy Drew, and The Hardy Boys.

Guy Kibbee and Mary Dressler were paired in movies and became one of the most popular couples of motion pictures.

The local bars provided their customers with "free" dutch lunches.

Most of the local taverns frowned upon serving women.

Dinner was served by the Methodist Church ladies on

Election Day at the cost of \$1.50.

Girls wore dresses to school and there were no blue jeans.

The city clerk was also the day time "cop."

A "Milk Nickel" cost just that and often the word "free" printed on the stick entitled you to another treat.

A bag of popcorn (battered or caramel) at the Rex cost 5¢.

A large candy bar also cost 5¢.

The only school supplies expected to be provided by the parents of the students was a "Big Chief" tablet and a No. 2 lead pencil.

There were music and art appreciation classes, but there were no gym classes held in the local schools.

Doctors made house calls and even provided medication from their "little black bags."

Mass vaccination of all school children was held to prevent the dreaded disease, small pox.

You could take the train in Louisville to Boulder in the morning and return in the afternoon.

Telephone calls were placed by ringing an operator who connected you to the phone of the person with whom you wished to speak.

Everyone went to the post office each day to collect their mail and the cost of mailing a letter was 3¢ and a postcard cost 1¢.

Everyone had their favorite radio programs and Kate Smith andays Morton Downey were two very popular singers.

"Ma Perkins," "Pepper Young's Family," and "Our Gal Sunday," were favorite radio serials of the ladies of our town.

Shirley Temple was the "darling" of the child movie stars.

A whole sack of hamburgers could be bought for \$1.00 at Rocky Bilt's Drive-In.

New sidewalks were put in most of the town by the PWA.

It was considered "bad" luck for women to go underground in the mines.

Most of the kids attending a senior prom walked to the school where the dance was held.

Maybe those were the "good old days" and maybe not.

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