



Englewood Historic Preservation Society

Preserving Englewood Colorado History

NEWSLETTER VOL.1 NO.10 JUNE 2013
P.O. Box 11234 Englewood, Colorado 80151

Doug Cohn & Paul Skizinski - Editors
Lindsey Runyan - Graphic Design

EHPS Yard Sale A Success!!

On Friday & Saturday, May 3rd & 4th, we had a very successful yard sale. A large number of our members and friends sold items, greeted visitors and shared the story of the Society and its mission to create the Englewood Depot Museum. We took in \$829.

A special thanks to Beverly Cummins, who first came up with the idea, then organized the whole thing, and then made it happen. She was assisted by many other volunteers, all of whom were critical to the success of the yard sale, including Marilyn Anderson, Bev Palmer, Ida May Nichol, Anna Marie Kratzer, Jo Ellen Christian, Sharlene Barker, Bob Maestas, Lee Sanchez, Paul Skizinski, Joanne Brown, Joann Michaelis, Christine Seuss, Matt Crabtree, Jim Jordan, Stacy, Tami Deges, Weldon & Jan Moore, Lindsey Runyan, and Wendy, Adam & Tim Frasor.

The following businesses offered "in kind" contributions and support: Dress for Less, Kathy at Peg's Closet, Frank the Pizza King, Nixon's Coffee, Country Buffet, King Soopers and The Villager Newspaper. And thanks to the Englewood Police for providing increased security during our two day event, including overnight surveillance on Friday.

We could not have done it without the generosity of the many neighbors near the site of our yard sale. Thanks to the Burtons for allowing us to use the lot, and thanks to Pete, the neighbor for providing electricity during the days, and fencing to secure the lot overnight.

A special thanks to Joann Michaelis, who has graciously offered the use of her garage for us to store the unsold items until our next yard sale. Finally, we appreciate all the people who donated items for sale, and all who manned the booths, circulated the petitions and sold things, put up signs and told their neighbors about the sale, as well as all who came and made purchases.

Please patronize our Sponsors:

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ENGLEWOOD DEPOT RFP *Proposal Update*

During May, The City created a committee of five people to look at the proposals the two groups submitted to take ownership of the depot. On Thursday, May 23, both groups made presentations to the committee.

Thank you to the eleven people who spent a good portion of the month putting together our effort. We divided into groups taking different areas of responsibility in the presentation. We did hours of homework and did two practice sessions. Matt Crabtree participated from China by phone.

Special thanks to Jennifer Grannas representing Dana Crawford, Bret Johnson, an historic building architect, and Lara Allen our grant writer for taking time to talk at our meeting.

Thank you to all who helped prepare the group that went to the meeting. Jim Jordan, Dave Paschal, Jeff Barker, Sharlene Barker, Ida May Nichol, Christine Seuss and Doug Cohn actually did the presentation.

We will now wait for the City to decide whether a local history museum or a printing business should occupy the depot. We will keep you informed.

If you have an opinion about that, please call or write the City Council. Feel free to write to the Englewood Herald newspaper and the Villager. The TV and radio stations are also good places to express your opinions.

The main focus of the Englewood Historic Preservation Society since March 2012 has been to save and restore the depot, create a museum and have a community gathering place. We want to tell the amazing story of our local history.

At present, we are homeless. We really want a home. Will you help?

EHPS EVENTS & HAPPENINGS

May - June

May 31 - Friday

3-5 PM, Englewood Public Library
Sue Knous from Railroad Memories will share exciting and interesting railroad related items. The event is free and refreshments will be served.

June 12 - Wednesday

Monthly EHPS Study Session at 6 PM, General Meeting at 7 PM at the Englewood Library.

June 17 - Monday

City Council will discuss the presentations and perhaps accept one of the offers on the depot. This will be a closed meeting.

June 21, 22 - Friday & Saturday

The South Park Historical Society is hosting a big event in Fairplay Colorado. More details to follow. Upcoming Programming

June 28 - Friday

Speaker has yet to be determined, more details to follow.

Do you have any jokes, stories or ideas to share? Please share them.

Buy a train ride on the Royal Gorge Train and support the Englewood Historic Preservation Society.

Check out the website HistoricEnglewood.org or call 720-254-1897 for details.

Help Needed

Ida May would like more people to take petitions around to citizens. We have more than 800 signatures as of May 24. We would like to present to council a petition with at least 1000 signatures. Please give her a call. We need your help!

Member Birthdays

Each month at our meetings, we want to wish each person whose birthday occurs during that month a Happy Birthday. We may sing too. Please let us know the month of your birthday so we can include you.

Englewood Historic Preservation Society Mission

- To save and restore the Englewood Depot and make it into a Englewood History Museum and gathering place.
- To Preserve and share Englewood's history.

You can contact us any time:
HistoricEnglewood.org
historiclegacy@gmail.com
720-254-1897

*Beverly Cummins,
a member of our Society,
and her mother, Vesta Frank
owned the Mini Flea Market at
3441 South Broadway for years.
Their love was repairing dolls
that were broken and making
flower arrangements.*



Vesta Frank, Beverly's mother was born in Beaver Oklahoma in 1911. When she was five, her family moved to southeastern Colorado 50 miles south of Lamar. The trip was about 220 miles. Vesta's father George Walter Venn and her mother Effie loaded up the family of nine in covered wagons and their new Ford automobile and made the trip. Other family members helped drive the cattle and shared driving the covered wagons. They could drive the wagons about 10-12 miles a day. It took three weeks to get to their new place.

Her father came to Colorado first, found the land for the family farm and grocery store. He returned to get the family. They homesteaded 320 acres in 1915 and it was proved up in 1920. It was in Sec 35, t27s, r49w in Bent County. They arrived in Springfield, the big town nearby on April 1, 1916. There were dark clouds, a blizzard came up. There was no place to stay in

town, so they slept in the wagon. The hardware store owner allowed them to put their horses in his yard. A few days later, they headed for their new home. They arrived after dark. There was no lush green grass to greet them, it was early spring, the prairie was still gray from winter and the nights were still cold. Inside the dugout her father had built a fire in the stove and invited the family in from the covered wagon, only to be met by her mother's refusal to go 'down in that hole in the ground'. Effie was not impressed by the half dug out George proposed to be their new home. Nor was she impressed a few hours later by the wolves howling around the wagon where she slept alone, George was waiting at the entrance to the dugout where he and the kids were safe.

Even today, one can imagine the conversation as it might have been. "George Walter? Do you hear those wolves? You brought me here to the middle of nowhere and we'll be eaten by wolves before the morning." Effie might have said, straining to see in the darkness. "I'm here, Effie." George Walter might have answered, raising his gun in the air to shoot, intending to scare the wolves back from the wagon. "I'll send them away, stay low." The rifle would fire into the night and the wolves would leave.

Effie, with the help of her loving, attentive husband stepped over the railing, came down the wheel from the wagon, and safely walked into the home he'd provided. With the wooden door closed against the beasts of the night, Effie probably curled beside him on the feather tic to sleep the rest of the night away.

Her father started building a house the next day. They got settled in, got the house built and began farming. It was not quite as easy as it sounds.

There was no wood anywhere nearby. It was a three day journey each way to get to the timber stand to cut fence posts and beams. It took quite a while to get the house and barn built. When they needed supplies, Springfield was the closest town. It was a whole day ride to get there. The family would stay overnight and return at first light. They were a hardy and determined family and they worked together to get the job done. There was no electricity, so her father dug a hole in the prairie and filled it with ice each winter so the food in the "ice box" would stay cool. There was one time when the family got caught in a hail storm. They ran for the storm shelter and suffered no harm, though the crops were badly damaged. After the storm, they collected hail stones and used them in the hand crank ice cream maker to make a tasty snack.

School was a problem. Vesta had a hard time walking the five miles to the closest school, so her father built the Maverick School on Maverick Creek. This new school was less than a mile from their home. The children could attend a closer school! He served on the school board for many years after that as treasurer for the Maverick School District.

The Maverick School was a community gathering place. They had box suppers and community "literaries" (like modern book clubs) As the children got older, the family decided to move to Lamar, the "big city". The established a grocery store and did furniture repair.

Vesta Frank, Part Two
will appear in a later issue
of the newsletter.

GENERAL IRON WORKS

Not A Steel Mill

by Dave Paschal



In 1925 several companies joined in a partnership and established a manufacturing company in Pueblo, Colorado. The original partners for this venture were not household names, but were well known in the steel industry. Mine & Smelter, Dorr-Oliver, Vulcan Iron Works, Colorado Iron, and Stearns-Rodgers came together and created General Iron Works or GIW. The manufacturing company was originally a foundry specializing in pouring and machining iron castings weighing up to 100,000 pounds. The need to expand and to have access to the railroad and highways brought GIW to Englewood. Never a steel mill although some of the partner companies were involved in the steel mill industry, GIW was equipped with the capability of machining iron castings up to 25 feet in diameter.

The Stearns-Rogers operated facility created enormous products such as 200 ton pressure vessels for use in nuclear plants. The company also built the Boiling Circulating Water Pumps for nuclear reactors which would operate at a rate of 150,000 gallons per minute. GIW was well known throughout the industry for its manufacture of stainless steel nuclear fuel handling equipment that moved fuel rods to and from a reactor.

GIW also made its mark in the processing of sugar beets using Stearns' designed equipment such as their rotary dryer. This type of equipment found its way into related food industries such as sugar, corn, and food processing. The history of GIW is sometimes difficult to imagine. A combination of a foundry and machine shop sported equipment such as

a horizontal lathe over 40 feet in length which machined the propeller shafts for U.S. battleships during World War II. Another lathe used at GIW which was capable of making rings 14 feet in diameter the size of a ship's gun turret, a German made vertical mill so large that it was partially below ground by nearly 6 feet to fit in the machine shop building, and there were overhead cranes with capacities ranging from 15 tons to 100 tons. The size and the capability of GIW's equipment provided such versatility that the company was called on to manufacture equipment for mining, the energy industry, the military, pollution and waste management, and aerospace. It has been noted that GIW has probably been involved to some degree in almost every manufacturing industry. A railroad siding was built into the facility provided the ability to ship such large products. A dedicated yard locomotive or "donkey" managed the movement of the rail cars.

In 1982, Air Products & Chemicals a large engineering and construction services Denver based company purchased Stearns-Rogers. Neglected plant repair forced the plant's closure in the early 1990's. Internal company policies determined the need to upgrade the plant to meet new manufacturing industry standards was not cost effective and GIW's impressive manufacturing history for over 7 decades came to an end.

Barton Supply purchased a portion of the plant and briefly began repair on some of the buildings. Included in the purchase was an operation which restored rail cars, however, all operations ceased on the site by the late 1990's. In 2001, RTD acquired part of the original General Ironworks site for its light rail maintenance facility. Demolition of the GIW buildings began in 2002, seen by some as a tragedy.

To All My Friends,

Last month, I had the opportunity to reflect on the Society's past year and I am so amazed at the number of things we have accomplished in such a short period. I am humbled and proud to have been a part of those accomplishments. When our organization was formed, I agreed to taking on the position of Vice President. Having some insight into the future that lay ahead, I asked the position be that of "interim" Vice President and now that time in the future has become the present. Too quickly, I might add. On the 14th of May, I submitted my resignation to the Board of Directors to step down as Vice President, effective at the close of business on Friday, May 31, 2013.

Nothing has really changed except for a title and the amount of time and energy necessary to serve as a member of the board. This is merely an epilogue to my participation during the past year. I remain a proud member of the Englewood Historic Preservation Society and fully support its mission. And I shall continue to serve at the pleasure of the Board of Directors as Historian.

*Sincerely,
and Thanks to Everyone,*

Dave