

**Larimer County Genealogical Society
General Meeting Minutes
September 21, 2006
Harmony Library
Harmony and Shields Street
Fort Collins
Community Room**

After an absence of two months, President Ken Goldsberry used his trusty cowbell to call the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. Because he had been absent for the last meeting, he spent a few minutes describing his trip back East. He then welcomed member Jack Long, who has been ill, but is now recovered.

General Announcements

President Goldsberry then stated the Society is still in need of people to fill positions in membership, publicity and various other committees. If any members are interested in volunteering, Ken requested them to let the Board know. He reminded members that it is “your” Society and can only be successful with members’ help.

Cathi Smith explained the “Recycle Table” which is a program whereby members can donate unwanted or unused genealogy magazines, books, software, etc. These items are displayed at each meeting for members to purchase. This is a great way to build a genealogy library and help the Society at the same time. Treasurer Mary Joy Hauk stated that the program has only been in effect for two months and has already earned \$44.50.

Ginny Feagler, Fort Collins Library liaison, announced that the library has a number of donated genealogy books. She is preparing a list of them so that members and other interested persons can access them to help in their research. A suggestion was made that the list might be published on the Society website. Ginny further announced that the three periodicals that the Society recently voted to request the library to subscribe to have been ordered and will be available at the Main Library. Finally, Ginny stated that the Community Room at the Harmony Library has been reserved for Society meetings for 2007.

Marilyn Rudd, Colorado Council of Genealogical Societies Representative, announced that the October CCGS meeting will be held in Fort Collins. The meeting will be at 1:30 on October 14 at the Main Library. Although it is a business meeting for the Council, Society members are welcome to attend. Marilyn also requested volunteers to provide cookies and coffee for the participants.

Ken Goldsberry then explained, for any newcomers, the concept of the Q & A bucket. Forms are available near the entrance on which members may write genealogy questions. Other members will try to help answer these questions.

Bob Larson, Temporary Membership Chair, announced that the membership pins, which were mislaid, have been found and are available for purchase for \$5.

At this point a break for conversation and refreshments occurred.

Speaker Presentation

Vice President Len Ray introduced Rheba Massey, who is a Society member and Local Historian with the Fort Collins Public Library. She has spent several years researching and documenting the history of the Fort Collins Old Fort Site, which was her presentation topic.

Rheba's program followed the development of the Old Fort Site in Fort Collins from earliest settlement until the present. She stated that the fort in Fort Collins was originally built to protect emigrants traveling along the Overland Trail from the local Native Americans. It was first built in the LaPorte area in 1862, but due to flooding was moved to an area in the north section of current-day Fort Collins in 1864. The form of the fort was similar to that of Fort Laramie in Wyoming, although, unlike Fort Laramie, Camp Collins was constructed entirely of logs.

By 1866 the Indian threat had ended, and the fort was abandoned. The War Department ordered the land platted and sold. The original plat was parallel to the Poudre River and consisted of two streets named for presidents: Jefferson and Lincoln. Other streets were named for trees including Linden, Spruce, Pine, Chestnut and Willow.

By 1872 an agricultural colony was established in the area. Franklin Avery, who had helped survey Greeley, was enlisted to survey a larger town site. He set up a town site with a squared-off grid of streets, although the original platting parallel to the river was retained for that area. Fort Collins was not originally designed as a railroad town, although the squared-off grid was a typical railroad town design.

In 1877 the town fathers requested and secured a railroad connection with Cheyenne. Other railroad lines connected Stout, just west of Fort Collins. Stout was a red sandstone quarrying area whose stone was used to build many buildings in Fort Collins as well as many buildings for the 1893 Columbia Exposition in Chicago. During this period the population of Fort Collins grew from 500 in 1875 to 3000 in 1900.

The beginning of the 20th century was a period of rapid growth in Fort Collins. Sugar beets began to be raised in the area, and a sugar beet factory was built just north of the Poudre River. Mexicans and Germans from Russia entered the area to provide labor for the beet industry. Much residential construction occurred in the area. A trolley system was built to provide transportation for workers to the sugar beet factory; it even continued northward to Lindenmeier Lake, which was a popular recreation area.

The Union Pacific Railroad completely transformed the old fort area in 1910-1911 when it built a line through the area. A five-block swath of land was cleared for construction, and many of the earlier buildings were demolished or moved to other parts of town.

During the inter-war era, the area of the old fort became an area of mixed use including residential, industrial and commercial. The town's population grew from approximately 8000 to 12,000. After World War II, the agricultural era began to end. In 1955, the Great Western Sugar Factory closed. Since that time various plans have been developed for the old fort area including several historic preservation ideas. At present, the area remains much the same as it has for the past 50 years, with its future unclear.

After her presentation, Rheba answered questions. One interesting question involved a query about whether Main Street in Disneyland is based on Fort Collins' downtown area. Rheba stated that research has been done which indicates that Main Street is indeed based largely on Fort Collins' architecture because the designer of Main Street grew up in Fort Collins during the 1910s. Walt Disney himself grew up in Marceline, Iowa. He had hoped to base his amusement park Main Street on that town, but by the 1950s much of the historic character of that town had been demolished. Fort Collins, in contrast, still retained much of its earlier character.

Committee Reports

Treasurer

Treasurer Mary Joy Hauk reported that the Society bank balance is presently \$1760.91. The Budget and Finance Committee is presently preparing the 2007 budget, so committee chairs are asked for their input in this process.

Recording Secretary

Recording Secretary Carol Stetser stated that the Minutes from all meetings are available on the Society website. In addition, hard copies of Minutes can be viewed by any member at each general meeting.

Membership

Temporary Chair Bob Larson introduced new members and visitors. Greg O'Connell and Sandy Luna are new members. Ronald Ryder, Robbie Williams and Kelly Hamma were visitors. President Goldsberry welcomed them all to the Society.

Newsletter

Newsletter Editor Bob Larson queried whether everyone had received the most recent newsletter, either the paper or electronic version. No one indicated any problems with newsletter delivery.

Budget and Finance

Budget and Finance Committee Chair Bob Larson reminded committee chairpersons to submit budget requests for next year.

Hospitality

Hospitality Chairperson Marge Abrames indicated that volunteers are needed to provide treats for the November meeting.

Education and Outreach

Committee member Gwen Kelly stated that a seminar called "New Dimensions in Publishing" will be presented on November 11 from 10:00 to 1:00. Further information will be forthcoming. In addition, the committee is working on a repeat of the Girl Scout Program for next spring.

Nominating Committee

President Goldsberry indicated that several positions in the Society are up for election. Included are two at-large directors, as well as President and Corresponding Secretary. Dale Erickson and Kathy Patrick have agreed to be on the Nominating Committee. Ken urged any members who wish to run for office to contact them.

Genealogy Gems

Several people reported Genealogy Gems. Kathleen Renfroe described finding a program through the

Library of Congress to collect veterans' stories. Ken Goldsberry indicated he had received an email describing the preparations for dropping the first atomic bomb during World War II. Carol Stetser reported on the usefulness of snail mail to obtain information even in these days of electronic communications. Cathi Smith stated she had found distant family members on the internet. This year they even held a family reunion. Marge Abrames told of researching her common Smith name and finding a relative in Toronto who helped her increase her database of names from 20 to over 900. Finally Ken Goldsberry described an experience he had trying to find some original music from a longtime Fort Collins resident and musician. He used the internet to contact descendants of the musician; it turns out the music was donated to CSU. Unfortunately, CSU seems to have misplaced it.

More Announcements

Ginny Feagler announced that the Main Library is hosting a Hispanic Genealogy Open House on Saturday, September 23 from 1:00 to 3:00.

Robert Larson announced that Ceil Damschroder, Society member and expert genealogist, will be teaching classes in beginning genealogy in Loveland and Fort Collins beginning October 2 and 5, respectively. He further announced that the next Family Tree Maker Users' Group will be October 5. Finally, he reminded members of the Genealogy Jamboree in Cheyenne, Wyoming on October 20 and 21. Registration is available online.

Nancy Abrahams announced that the Palatines to America will be presenting their fall seminar on October 28. Members may contact Nancy for further information.

Hap Hazard announced that the Fort Collins Historic Society will be presenting a program on October 3 at the Webster House on a local family Centennial Farm.

Ken Goldsberry announced that on October 8, the Pioneer Society, as part of their centennial celebration, will be presenting an old-time songfest at the Lincoln Center.

Cathi Smith stated that she still has lots of magazines at the Recycle Table available for purchase. She encouraged members to stop by and shop.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm.