

*Museum Musings...*  
*YMCA of the Rockies*  
*Lula W. Dorsey Museum*  
*Fall 2009*



## View From the Museum Porch



We are both "morning people" to the extreme. We rarely arrive at work later than 7:30 a.m. and are brain dead by 4 p.m. We learned years ago that an hour or so at the desk while most folks are groveling over their first cup of coffee is more productive than

two or three hours after coworkers and guests show up at the museum.

Sometimes we spend a few minutes sitting on the museum porch enjoying the early morning sun and contemplating the day ahead. During those moments, we see and hear the Camp come awake. Infants cry for breakfast. Screen doors slam at nearby cabins. Children and parents begin packing the car for the day's activities. If the wind is right, we catch a whiff of bacon cooking. In these moments, the Y's Mission Statement is transformed from inanimate words on a page to something alive and vibrant.

As you know the title of this column is more than a bit of a misnomer, since our "view" extends well beyond what we see from the museum's porch. Our view of the Estes Park Center continues to evolve with all the new construction. The architectural renderings published in previous editions of *Musings* are finally being replaced with buildings and asphalt.

For us, it is heartening to see elements of Western Stick architecture in the new buildings. From a dis-

tance, the new Mootz Family Craft and Design Center looks like a miniature Administration Building. The new Longs Peak Lodge and Assembly Hall look like they belong in this mountain setting. In October, the Ruesch Auditorium will receive a complete new façade incorporating Western Stick. We've volunteered to help with the demolition.

Besides new buildings, the biggest changes have been in traffic patterns. Traditional roads are gone, and there are roads where there weren't any before. We christened this the summer of brake lights, reverse lights and u-turns. The situation wasn't helped by the fact that new signage was delayed awaiting approval by some governmental agency.

If you were at the Estes Park Center this summer, you no doubt noticed that Purple Finch, the newest addition to "Dorseyville," is sporting a fresh coat of paint and landscaping. Everyone says it looks like it's been there for years. Having Purple Finch as archive storage and workspace has been wonderful. We can't figure out how we got along without it for the previous 30 summers. We sincerely thank all the museum's supporters for making the relocation and rehabilitation of Purple Finch possible, especially during these tough economic times.



Purple Finch, the finished product.

### ***Our Mission:***

***To support the Mission of the YMCA of the Rockies through preservation and documentation of our corporate history by:***

***Collecting, preserving, and interpreting cultural artifacts related to the YMCA's history in a museum venue,***

***Offering interpretive programs to guests and members,***

***Identifying and participating in the preservation of historically significant buildings and sites,***

***Actively researching and publishing materials related to our history.***

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**Cover:** On the way to Miner Bill's mine, Rocky Mountain National Park by Jack Melton.

The number of visitors at the museum was substantially up this summer. Part of the uptick is the result of the proximity of the new Mootz Family Craft and Design Center. We had more than one guest tell us that they came to the museum rather than sit and watch paint dry on a craft project.

With increased traffic came a significant increase in contributions at the door. This was welcome since the already small budget support received from the YMCA of the Rockies was cut significantly. Projected cuts for 2010 are even deeper. Next year the museum will operate entirely through contributions with the exception of utilities, building maintenance and Jack's salary.

Because we've been pinching pennies like everybody else this year, the Dorsey Museum will carry a surplus into 2010. That excess revenue over expenses

combined with your contributions will see the Dorsey Museum through next year.

Our army of museum volunteers deserves recognition for their hundreds of hours of dedicated service cleaning, painting, pulling weeds, greeting guests and myriad other tasks. Our sincere thanks go out to Betty Balliet, Marlene Borneman, Ken Carlson, Carol and Earl Clark, John Cowan, Jeanne and Bruce Gorze, Marilyn Hawes, Lee Hutchins, Dee Johnson, Trina Knox, Helen Lefley, Pat Reineke, Chuck Rose, Jean Shelby, Rick Taylor and Nancy Vrooman.

Since our last visit, Mother Nature has given us a plethora of things to write about. Our last weather report ended in late February when the newsletter went to press. At that time, we were complaining about the possibility of a drought and hoping for a wet spring. Somebody upstairs must have been listening since we got a bit more moisture than we asked for.

To put this into perspective, February was the second driest on record in Denver while June was the second wettest! This included 12 straight weekends of snow or rain in April, May and June. On April 17, we received about 30 inches of the wettest snow we've ever seen. You could scoop up a handful and watch the water drip out. The moisture content was over five inches!

The mountains went from almost barren in February to 100-plus percent of normal snow in May. Slogging through knee deep snow in the high country was the order of the day well into June. Of course, Mother Nature responded to the moisture with a spectacular display of wildflowers. The cold and wet weather delayed the early flowers forcing them to bloom alongside later blooming ones.



Columbine on the way to Black Lake.

On a hike to Miner Bill's Mine, Jack captured the cover photograph of *rydbergia grandiflora* (Old Man of the Mountain) on the side of Mt. Chapin. Their yellow heads were all turned toward the sun in concert. The smell of tundra flowers was as pungent as any florist shop.

The abundant moisture apparently aided in an interesting archaeological discovery. On July 16, we accompanied a Y hike to interpret the game drive walls and butchering sites on Flattop Mountain. These archaeological sites date between 300 and 11,000 years ago.

Through the years, we've discovered numerous artifacts which we have left in place to aid us in our interpretation to guests. There is one archaeological site right at the apex of a switchback that is obviously a campsite or butchering area. We've pointed out numerous fire-blackened rocks and flakes from tool making.

On our way back down the mountain, we stopped at the campsite for a break. A nine-year-old on the hike pointed out a piece of worked material that turned out to be a partial projectile point.



Then another hiker pointed out a beautiful point fashioned from chalcedony. The projectile points must have turned up due to erosion. After photographing them, we replaced the points and covered them with dirt for our next trip up Flattop.

It was not until the first week of July that the "summer" arrived with clear, warm days. However, the weather remained unsettled most of the month with frequent showers. At the close of July, we were slammed with a couple of Canadian cold fronts that gave us several days of unseasonably cold, dreary weather. On July 30, Denver set an all time record for the lowest high temperature on that date with a chilly 64 degrees. If we had kept records on the number of days we wore shorts to work over the last 30 years, this summer would certainly rank among the least.

All summer long, visitors remarked how green everything was. The usual summer brownout that starts in July didn't arrive until mid August. Even then, it was not crunchy dry but a gradual shift from summer green to fall yellow.

As you might expect, the unusual weather had an effect on the avian population. In June, we saw eastern blue jays and gold finches on the feeder. White crowned sparrows hung around for longer than usual waiting for the snow to melt in their nesting areas near tree line. For the first time in years, there was an abundance of crossbills at the museum feeder.

The most unusual sighting occurred in mid-July when for the first time in 30 years there were three species of hummingbirds on the museum feeders at one time. The ever-present broadtails were joined by both calliope and rufous.

Another critter-first happened this summer when a badger paid us a visit. One of our staff called attention to a new hole in front of the museum. Jack thought they were talking about some new ground squirrel diggings. When he went out to look, he was surprised to find a dinner plate-size hole. Around it were rocks the size of softballs.

Only one animal is powerful enough to do that kind of excavating. Seems that a badger had dug up

a nest of ground squirrels for dinner. The next day it dug another hole behind the museum before moving on. We saw another badger about a half-mile past the Y entrance. It was displaying a badger's usual bad attitude by flattening itself out and showing some nasty teeth at passing cars.

The local wild turkey population continues to grow. The flock that includes the blonde hen pictured in *Musings* a couple of years ago ranges from the Y all the way to the Fall River entrance to the Park. Along Tunnel Road we've seen one hen with five chicks several times.

Sadly, the Colorado Division of Wildlife had to kill a healthy adult black bear that had lost its fear of humans. It had broken into six cabins at the Y and five others in the surrounding area.

The bear's death was not its fault. It was the result of uneducated or irresponsible humans who made people food and garbage available. People leave coolers on their decks and unsecure trash cans full of garbage. They leave food in their cars and leave doors and windows open when they leave.

Bears are extremely intelligent and quickly learn to associate humans with food. When they lose their fear of humans, they can become aggressive.

The local bear problem is not limited to the Y but includes the entire Estes Valley. According to the Colorado Division of Wildlife, there are several bears living in town that are on the verge of being killed due to their addiction to human garbage.

People's first reaction to killing a bear is usually, "Why can't you relocate them?" Until recently, guidelines called for cubs less than 20 months to be relocated. Unfortunately, even yearling cubs have become a serious problem. Relocating adult bears is useless. They will travel long distances in a short period of time to return to their original garbage foraging area, or stay in their new locale if there is a source of garbage.

Y staff member, Jim Boyd, is a volunteer with the Colorado Division of Wildlife's Bear Buster program. When a bear initially becomes a problem his job is to use negative reinforcement to condition the bear to stay away from humans.

This summer he was alerted to two cubs in a dumpster. First, Jim jumped up and down on top of the dumpster. Then he chased them away and pelted them with rocks. After they went up a nearby tree he used pepper spray. These actions sound extreme, but they are approved by the Division of Wildlife.

Do the bears a favor. Next time you visit the Y, please think and don't make food or garbage available to bears. If you see someone acting irresponsibly, call the Y switchboard.

If the professional weather prognosticators are correct about the upcoming winter, we may have some real tales to tell next spring. With an El Nino year comes a drier than usual winter in Colorado, but it also brings the high probability of major snow

events when it does precipitate.

Time to end our personal ramblings... We want to thank all of you who support the Dorsey Museum and the YMCA of the Rockies with your financial resources, prayers and words of encouragement. Fulfilling the Y's Mission would be impossible without your generosity.

Julie Jack

## Adventure with a Camera

Visualize riding a bicycle from Evanston, Illinois, to Cheyenne, Wyoming, and then to Magdalena, New Mexico, via Denver, Taos and Santa Fe in 60 days. That in itself is a feat, but imagine doing that in 1898. While on this adventure, bicyclist Fred Payne Clatworthy wrote detailed letters home and took photographs of what he experienced.

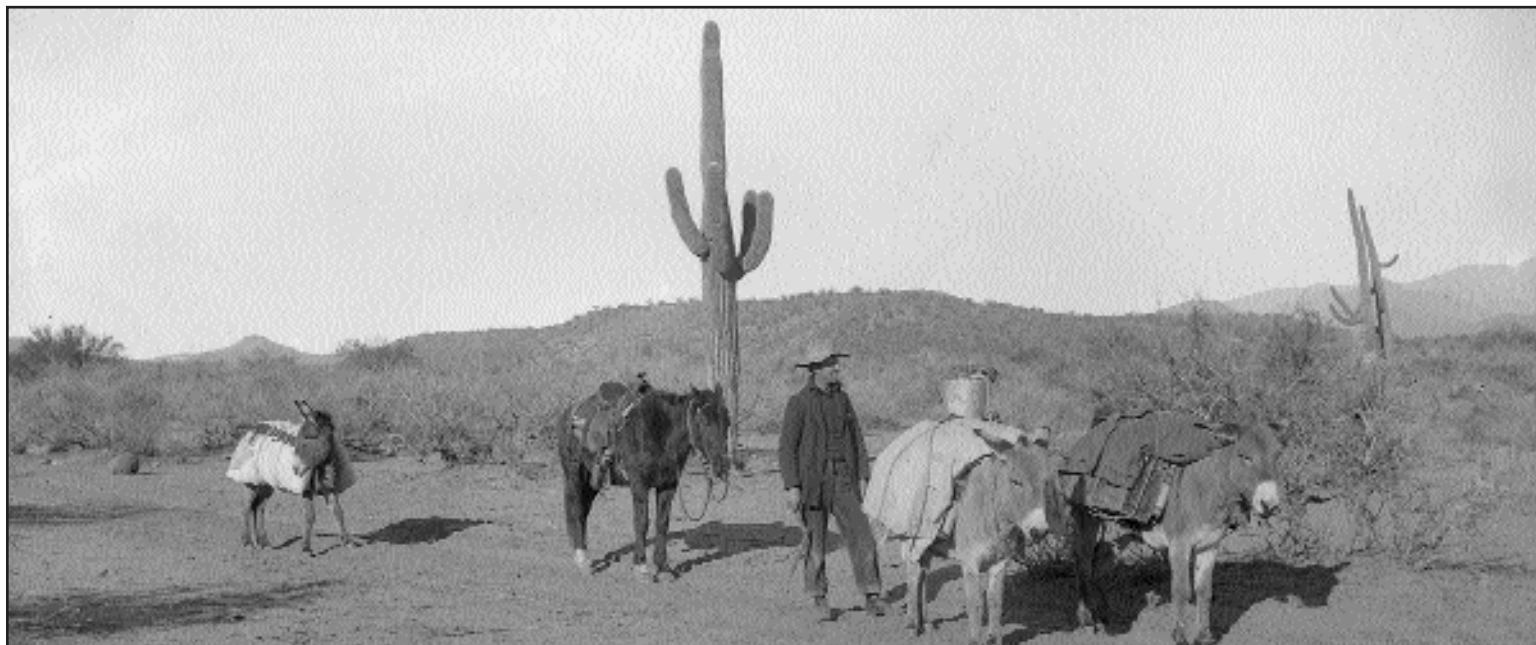


Fred Clatworthy (left) and Walter Johnson (right) enjoy breakfast near Cripple Creek, Colorado. Courtesy Colorado Historical Society 10036136.

Clatworthy's adventure didn't end in New Mexico. He and a traveling companion captured a couple of half-wild burros in Magdalena and walked 500 miles to the Grand Canyon. After spending the winter in Camp Verde, Arizona, they purchased a horse and burro and went to Los Angeles. There, Clatworthy purchased another bicycle and rode up the California coast to San Francisco. From there he took a steamer to Portland and a train back to Evanston. He arrived home almost one year later to the day.

In January 1900, Clatworthy and his friend return to Los Angeles where they purchase mules and a wagon. They made their way through southern California and northern Mexico across the Yuma Desert back to the Grand Canyon.

In the spring 2008 edition of *Musings*, we told you that a book recounting Clatworthy's adventure was due for publication in the fall of '08. Well, sometimes a book is like a good pot of chili. It has to simmer for a while.



Caravan in the Arizona desert. Courtesy Colorado Historical Society 1003654.

To refresh your memory, Clatworthy was the Y's official photographer from 1908 into the early 1950s. He even took a photograph of the Y's founders when they came to Estes Park in 1907.

Not only did Fred Clatworthy photograph conference groups at the Y and local sights, he traveled all over the world shooting photographs for *National Geographic*. It published over 100 of his images between 1923 and 1934.

Most of the images published in *National Geographic* were autochromes. The process was patented in 1903. It utilized a glass plate, microscopic grains of potato starch and carbonblack. Before the 1930s, this was the only acceptable method of capturing a color image. During his lifetime, Clatworthy shot over 10,000 autochromes.

Other than a short biographical sketch, we intentionally didn't write extensively about Clatworthy's professional career so as not to detract from his letters and photographs. To amplify his life, Gary Dill interviewed Clatworthy's daughter, Barbara Clatworthy Gish. The resulting DVD, edited by Brian Biggs, is included with the book.

*Adventure with a Camera* is published by Photos by Dill in Estes Park. Jack volunteered as researcher, biographer and editor.

Gary Dill is a longtime friend and photo concessionaire for the YMCA of the Rockies. As such, his company is a direct link to Clatworthy's ties with the Y and Estes Park.

*Adventure with a Camera* is bound to resemble an old photograph album. Its 111 pages

are printed on archival paper. The book and the accompanying DVD contain scores of previously unpublished photographs from the Colorado Historical Society and the Clatworthy family of the Grand Canyon, Petrified Forest, the Arizona desert and southern California.

Gary Dill is donating profits from the book to the Dorsey Museum to help preserve our Clatworthy photograph collection which is the second largest in the world. If you would like to purchase a copy, the price is \$39.95 plus shipping. To order a copy go to <http://photosbydill.com/fred.htm>, or call Photos by Dill at 970-586-8736.

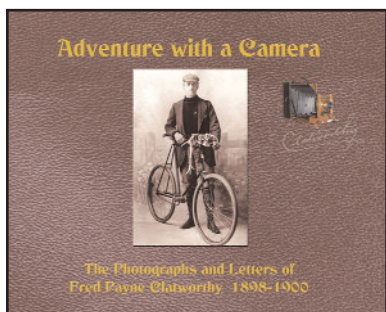
## **Stanley Hotel Celebrates 100th Birthday**

When historians recite the litany of names associated with Estes Park tourism, F. O. Stanley, builder of the stately Stanley Hotel, is always at or near the top of the list.

Stanley first visited Estes Park in 1903 while summering in Colorado to treat tuberculosis. Four years later, he built a summer home in Estes Park. Stanley recognized the potential for expanding area tourism. In his eyes, the town lacked a grand hotel and viable transportation system to bring tourists to Estes Park from the Loveland train station.

Two years before the Stanley Hotel opened in 1909, F. O. was operating a fleet of four Stanley Steamer automobiles serving local hotels. His twelve-passenger Stanley Steamer Mountain Wagon was well suited to the steep, rough Big Thompson Canyon road.

Delegates to the first YMCA gathering in 1908 were transported by Steamer to the Wind River





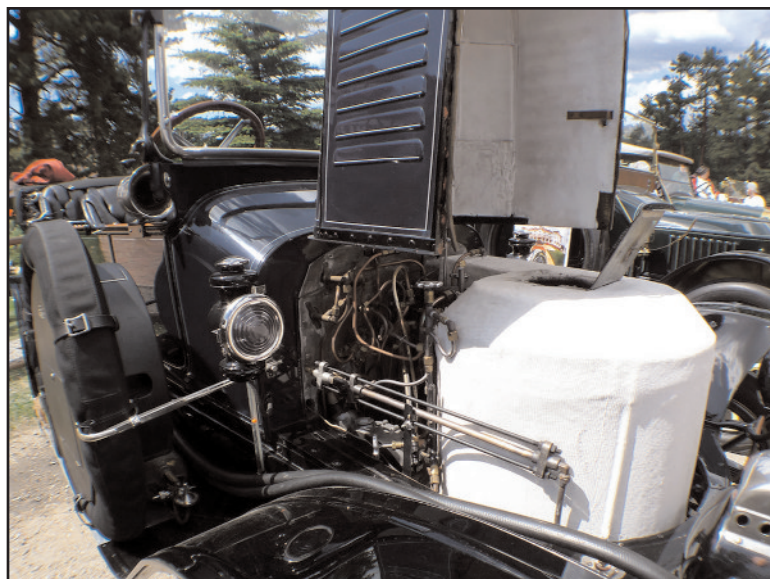
Stanley Steamer Mountain Wagons in downtown Estes Park, circa 1914.

Lodge. When the YMCA expanded its facilities in 1910, Stanley Steamers provided efficient transportation service for ever-increasing numbers of arriving and departing guests.

Operating a Stanley Steamer was a complex proposition. Getting a head of steam up from a cold start required at least 30 minutes. Maintaining a Steamer required the skills of both a mechanic and pipe fitter. When Stanley sold his Estes Park Transportation Company in 1916, the Stanley Steamers were soon replaced by gasoline powered stages. They were in turn replaced by busses and finally the family automobile.

To mark the 100th anniversary of the Stanley Hotel, 18 Stanley Steamers from around the nation converged on Estes Park for The Stanley Hotel Centennial Steam Tour. There were even four Mountain Wagons similar to the ones used to transport tourists to Estes Park.

You have to understand that these Steamers were not a bunch of "trailer queens" sitting on the lawn of the Stanley Hotel. Each day included a run or tour



Don't think that is a Hemi under the hood!

that followed some of the same routes plied by Steamers 100 years ago. Members of the Estes Park Steam Club tell us that it takes three hours of maintenance for every hour spent on the road. Keeping a Stanley Steamer running today is compounded by the fact that replacement parts must be handcrafted.

This summer, on Thursday, June 19, steam tour participants stopped by the Dorsey Museum to fill water tanks, tour the museum and pose for photographs. The site of so many Stanley Steamers on the grounds drew quite a crowd. Jack remarked that it had been over 90 years since so many Stanley Steamers had been on the YMCA grounds.



Stanley Hotel Centennial Steam Tour participants at the Dorsey Museum, June 2009.

## Renewing the Spirit of Fellowship

Fellowship Cabin and its companions, Mica, Onyx, Quartz, Agate, Granite and Crystal are tucked away on a dead end road along the north boundary of the Estes Park Center. These cabins are not architecturally significant by any stretch of the imagination. Yet, they are being targeted for renovation through the Y's Cabin Adoption program thus preserving an important part of our heritage.

Fellowship and its companion cabins embody a lesson in philanthropy that is as important today and it was when they were built in 1923. So, as with most of our stories, you'll have to indulge us in some historical digression.

In 1921, A. A. Hyde purchased 78 acres on the north side of the Y property from F. O. Stanley for \$5,000. Hyde formulated a plan to build a facility "where Christian workers with small incomes could find accommodations at little or moderate cost and have the advantages of the vacational and inspirational features of the Conference."

This was to be a place where "people of all faiths and from all parts of the country" had the opportunity of developing the true spirit of "fellowship and understanding by living together in mutual helpfulness and cooperation." The seven cabins Hyde built were known as Fellowship Park.



Fellowship Community House, 1922.

Hyde took special interest in making this Christian communal living experience in Fellowship Park a success. Arriving in early June 1922, he personally supervised the layout of Fellowship Park. First, he selected a spot for the Community House near a large glacial boulder, later named "Rock of Ages." As the hub of the community, Fellowship House had a large living room, showers, kitchen and manager's quarters.

Surrounding Fellowship House, Hyde selected locations for campsites and six sleeping cabins: Onyx, Agate, Granite, Crystal, Quartz and Mica. He asked



Interior of Fellowship Community House, 1922.

longtime friend Elizabeth Dean Fickett to manage Fellowship Park. She provided careful oversight of the community for over a decade.

From 1922 through 1934, meticulous photographic and written records were compiled by B.V. Edworthy. Four large scrapbooks detailed the comings and goings of families and groups. The scrapbooks provided continuity giving newcomers a better understanding of the spirit of Fellowship Park.

The governing principle of Fellowship Park stated that "each able bodied man ... will be expected to give ... one hour's labor each day in... the true spirit of Fellowship and for community betterment." Other rules were simple: use only approved camp sites; build fires in designated spots; do not harass birds or animals; do not pick wildflowers; conserve water; and clean up after yourselves, showing respect for the environment and fellow campers. Hyde's only request was that there was a prayer meeting in Fellowship House at 9:00 p.m. each evening.

Women were expected to give time to communal cooking, cleaning, making curtains and washing clothes.

Mrs. Baxter proved physical labor was not the sole providence of men when she cleared sagebrush. In 1922, over 300 people used Fellowship Park. During the ensuing years, a sense of community was developed out of hard work and fellowship.



Mr. and Mrs. A. A. Hyde.

To understand the motivation behind Hyde's philanthropy, you have to look at his life experiences. In 2006, Alex Taylor wrote *Amazing Mentholatum and the Commerce of Curing the Common Cold, 1889-1955*. He asked his uncle, Professor John M. Hyde to write an introduction to his book.

From that introduction, we learn that A. A. Hyde was born in 1848 and grew up in a small New England town. He moved to Wichita in 1872 to work in a bank. According to John Hyde, "He was an officer of the Kansas National Bank, a member of the Board of Education, a leader of the First Presbyterian Church, and the father of a growing family."

Wichita was a boomtown at the terminus of the Chisolm Trail. Hyde left banking and began speculating in land. He became very wealthy and built a large home. When the inevitable bust came, Hyde lost everything.

As John Hyde wrote, "It was the experience of the sudden loss of his wealth that was to have a profound influence on Hyde and on his subsequent conduct of personal and business affairs. His was a moral and ethical crisis as well as a financial one, for he felt responsible not only for his own losses but also for those of friends and family who had entrusted their money to him."

A. A. Hyde came to understand that the pursuit of wealth had not brought satisfaction "but brought instead anxiety and a distrust of fellow men," and "accumulated wealth was a source of worry, shortened life, and was deleterious to character."

Hyde sought guidance from the Bible specifically the Sermon on the Mount. There he found the foundation for his philanthropy.

*Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.*

By 1898, Hyde again found himself a wealthy man because of the Mentholatum Company. Remembering his previous experiences he began looking for ways to give away his accumulated wealth. He believed tithing was for those without accumulated wealth. He felt affluent men should give away all their surplus wealth. In his view, a person who died with vast estate was disgraced in the eyes of God.

Hyde took special interest in two organizations, the Presbyterian Church and the Wichita YMCA. When Hyde was introduced to the YMCA in Estes Park, he immediately saw the potential for using his resources to extend the Kingdom of God on earth. Hyde not only contributed unselfishly, but he actively raised funds from others.

Journalist William Allen White noted that Hyde's philosophy of philanthropy was very simple, "It was

**"May all who come behind us find us faithful"**

The words to this well know Christian song sums up well the mindset of A.A. Hyde and other early YMCA of the Rockies benefactors. The Y would not exist today if it were not for the faithfulness of those who came before us. The Lula W. Dorsey Museum was established to honor the memory of all those who sacrificed so unselfishly to ensure that our legacy would be passed down for future generations to enjoy.

The YMCA of the Rockies' Spirit Society was established to honor our friends who share the passion of those who came before them. The Spirit Society recognizes committed individuals who have made a provision for the YMCA of the Rockies in their will or estate plan. Through this meaningful act, they have chosen to leave a legacy for future generations whose lives will be touched by the Mission of the YMCA of the Rockies.

For information on how your estate gift can help preserve our heritage for others to enjoy, contact our Planned Giving Officer David Alexander. David can be reached by phone at 970-449-2577 or 800-777-9622 ext. 6019, or by email at [dalexander@ymcarockies.org](mailto:dalexander@ymcarockies.org)

to support any person, organization, or institution which Hyde felt would contribute to the Kingdom of God on earth."

John Hyde observed that, "With such a broad mandate, the results were predictably eclectic, ranging from the Piney Woods Country Life School for black youths in Mississippi to Oberlain College, from the Gilbert Street Mexican Mission in Wichita to a playground in Athens, Greece, for refugees from the war with Turkey; from the National Anti-Cigarette League to the American Friends Service Committee."

During the height of the Great Depression, the communal Christian living experience at Fellowship Park came to an end. The Community House and Mineral Group cabins were redesignated for use as guest cabins.

In the 1950s, the Fellowship Park cabins were updated with knotty pine paneling and furniture. By the 1980s, the cabins had fallen into disrepair which coincided with the beginning of the current cabin adoption program. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, Fellowship and the Mineral Group cabins were all adopted by donors.

When the cabin donor contracts recently began to expire, there was discussion of whether to put the cabins up for readoption or



Co-adopters of Fellowship, Kathy and Jim Adams.



schedule them for replacement. After a thorough inspection, it was determined that the cabins were sound because they were originally built as cabins. That is unlike the rustic cabins dotted around the grounds which were originally platform tent cabins.

Fellowship Cabin was the first to be readopted. Kathy and Jim Adams partnered with Michelle and Paul Tobias to co-adopt Fellowship. The result was a stunning transformation. Many of us agree that Fellowship is now one of the premier three bedroom cabins at Estes Park. It has a warm, cozy feel.

While the Adams and Tobias families have created a place where their families can find a few days or weeks of sanctuary, they also have provided a place for others. Fellowship cabin will bring families together and create a place of joy. Its walls will reverberate with the sounds of noisy children and fill with quiet prayer before meals or at bedtime.

Thanks Michelle and Paul and Kathy and Jim for following in the footsteps of A. A. Hyde's philanthropy and helping to preserve a significant piece of the YMCA's spiritual and physical legacy for future generations.



### ***New Facility Recycles Traditional Name***

As the Estes Park Center's new conference meeting facility neared completion, staff began struggling with what to name it. There was universal agreement that the word "center" should be excluded from the name. The Estes Park Center already has too many facilities with that word in it. President/CEO Kent Meyer decided to reach back into Y history and recycle a traditional name, Assembly Hall. Not only is that name traditional with the early history of the Y, it also has a nice ring to it when selling the facility to conference groups and meeting planners.

The use of the name Assembly Hall at the Estes Park Center dates back to 1913 when a small building that comprises the core structure of Hyde Chapel



Old Assembly Hall, circa 1916.

was constructed for meeting space. The building quickly proved inadequate. It was enlarged in 1917 and then again in the early 1920s.

The Assembly Hall served multiple purposes. On Sunday the conference meeting and program facility became a church. In 1956, the Assembly Hall was remodeled and renamed Hyde Memorial.

From the beginning of its construction, it was obvious that the new Assembly Hall was a humongous structure. As the building neared completion, we realized that the YMCA of the Rockies had built a world-class conference facility.

The foyer has two beautiful fireplaces with comfortable seating. The display space for conference groups alone would swallow the original Assembly Hall.

The Assembly Hall has theater style seating for 1,300 persons or banquet dining for 600+. The lower dining room can seat an additional 230 persons.

The sound, lighting and Internet systems are state-of-the-art. Surrounding the meeting space are storage areas for tables and chairs. There are green rooms for speakers and dignitaries awaiting their entrance.

The new Assembly Hall provides new opportunities to deliver the Y's Mission to a variety of conference groups. Next time you are at the Estes Park ask for a tour. You're not going to believe your eyes.



Foyer of the new Assembly Hall.



Folding partitions increase the flexibility of the Assembly Hall's meeting space. Each area has independent lighting, multimedia and Internet.

## **Longs Peak Lodge Redefines Lodging at the YMCA**

Y of the Rockies Board Chair Herb Willborn declared the new Alpen Inn "swank" after inspecting it in 1961. We have to agree it was pretty swank for the Y back then. Alpen Inn's \$250,000 construction price plus \$68,000 for furnishings represented a significant expenditure for the YMCA in 1961. Using the Consumer Price Index, this equates to 2.3 million of today's dollars.



Think that 1960s furniture will every be back in style?

Period advertising said Alpen Inn is "designed for those who prefer the latest in comfortable and convenient accommodations." Rooms had "two double beds and a divan that opens into a double bed." Each room had a private balcony, easy chairs, desk, telephone and full bath. The telephone and private bath were major upgrades for the YMCA.

After looking at the initial architectural renderings for Longs Peak Lodge, we knew that it would redefine lodge accommodations at the Y. During construction, we made occasional trips through Longs

Peak to get a feel for what the finished product would look like. What we immediately noticed were large expanses of open space, a beautiful stairway utilizing half-logs for treads and multiple fireplaces. One thing that caught our immediate attention was an elevator. This amenity like telephones in Alpen Inn represent a first at the Estes Park Center. We even joked about seeing how many people we could stuff in it as a stunt.

Besides the afore mentioned elevator Longs Peak Lodge features 100 rooms with 2 queen beds and futon, private bathrooms with granite countertops and Old Hickory furniture. The rooms have telephones but of course that is expected. Holding on to tradition, rooms do not have televisions! The lodge also has three meeting rooms with patios.



The Old Hickory furniture in the Longs Peak Lodge lobby is ageless.

Alpen Inn is waiting Phoenix like for a scheduled renovation. Its rooms are the largest at the Estes Park Center, and each room has a private deck. After its rehabilitation this winter, its accommodations will rival its much newer neighbor. We wonder what our old friend Herb Wellborn would have to say about Longs Peak Lodge.

## **CUNA Marks 75th Anniversary at Estes Park Center**

Seventy-five years ago, the Great Depression held the world in a death grip. By 1934, the YMCA of the Rockies was virtually bankrupt and facing foreclosure on its property.

The sea of red ink in 1934 was the result of a several year downward spiral. In 1929, the Y had \$62,650 in liabilities, \$3,300 in cash and a \$5,000 operating deficit. The next year the holder of a \$5,000 note refused to give an extension. Consequently, the Board considered swallowing a



CUNA founders, August 1934.

poison pill by selling the property to the National Park Service. Thankfully for future generations, the sale fell through.

During the summer of 1932, the laundry was closed, staffing was cut and only rented cabins were opened for the season. The bookstore and soda fountain were operated by concessionaires. With too little revenue to meet expenses, the grounds were closed on August 23.

In 1933, deeper cuts were made to curtail expenses. Half the Administration Building was closed as was part of Wind River Lodge. The Assembly Hall was open only on Sundays or when needed for conference groups. To cut employee expense, the Dining Hall was operated by a concessionaire serving limited meals. Conference groups occupying housekeeping cottages were required to cook their meals and clean the cabins. With services at bare minimum, the Camp was operated with only 15 employees.

In utter desperation, the Board dismissed the chief executive and hired Columbia University professor Herbert Evans. He was the first and only non-YMCA person to head the YMCA of the Rockies. He openly admitted to not knowing much about the YMCA, but he said he knew how to run a business. His solution was to promote the Y out of the Depression using his connections to business and academia.

With Evans came some eastern associates to head up the Y's departments. Their accents as well as "back east ways" immediately rubbed Camp regulars the wrong way. He also caught the attention of locals by dressing up in western attire including cowboy hat, boots and spurs. He always ordered the most expensive thing on the menu, steak and eggs. He also wooed local businessmen with tales of renewed

prosperity from his eastern connections.

While his tenure as executive was short, Herbert Evens did use his connection with wealthy Boston businessman and philanthropist Edward A. Filene to bring the founders of Credit Union National Association to Estes Park and the Y-Camp. The Y's accommodations were too run down for the group so they stayed at the Stanley Hotel. However, they

did hold their meetings in the Y's Assembly Hall.

This past September 15th through 17th, 150 officers of the Credit Union National Association and dignitaries gathered in Estes Park to commemorate its founding. CUNA is the trade association serving America's 7,905 Credit Unions with over 90 million members. It's easy to argue that CUNA's founding had perhaps the most far-reaching financial impact of any conference held at the YMCA of the Rockies.

In 1954, CUNA approached the Y Board of Directors asking to place a plaque on the grounds to commemorate the 20th anniversary of its founding. For some unknown reason, the Board turned them down. So, it was placed at the Stanley Hotel.

Sometime in the 1990s the plaque was taken down during hotel renovation. A few years ago, someone at the hotel contacted the Colorado-Wyoming CUNA office to tell them the plaque was in the basement. It was sent to Arvada, Colorado, and refurbished. CUNA contacted the Dorsey Museum three years ago and again asked to place the plaque on the Y grounds. You'll find it just outside the fence at the museum.

To observe the 75th anniversary, CUNA placed a bench and plaque at the location where the founders of CUNA had their photograph taken in 1934.



CUNA, September 16, 2009. Courtesy of Photos by Dill.



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