



The Record



Spring/Summer 2022



Volume 49, Issue 1



EMAHS.org

Membership Renewal

With this newsletter, you are being reminded to renew your membership. **Your membership ends on July 1, 2022.**

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT MORE THAN EVER. We are asking you to renew online this year by going to EMAHSColorado.org and paying your dues using Pay Pal or credit card or by printing the renewal form (included) and sending in a check to EMAHS P.O. Box 703, Evergreen, Colorado 80437. Please print the form and include with your check any changes in your address, phone number, or e-mail. You may also write the changes on an additional sheet of paper and please be sure to identify yourself. Diane Fuchs: Membership Chair, 303-674-9639 or HDFuchs@msn.com.

The Bergen School – Stories of the Builders and the First Teacher

By Mark Joyce

The one-room school house has a long history in Jefferson County. The first free-standing school in the county was started in a rented log cabin in Golden in 1860. The second school was the Bergen School (or Bergen Park School) in Bergen Park in 1862. The Bergen School was the earliest school erected in the Conifer-Evergreen area and the only one for miles around. The school was built by Thomas ("T. C.") Bergen, his son-in-law Amos ("A. F.") Post, and a neighbor, George Eugene Kerr, who went on to teach at the school. These are their stories.

In the spring of 1859, Bergen joined a wagon train bound for the gold diggings in Colorado and when he arrived, he described the area as "the most beautiful spot my eye ever rested upon." He visualized there would be a city here one day. By the fourth of July he completed a log cabin with clapboard siding. In 1860, he returned to Illinois for his wife, Judith, and their children: Sarah, the oldest, was eighteen; William was sixteen; and the youngest, Martha Ann was three. Their family became the first permanent settlers in the area then known as Elk Park. By 1862, Bergen decided to build a school since his youngest was turning six and she needed schooling, as well as other children in the rapidly growing area. Another of the builders, A. F. Post, was a talented wood worker who had been one of 10 men who accompanied Bergen from Illinois. Bergen put Post to work building the school.



The Bergen School in its later years and Bergen School class, Photos Courtesy of Evergreen Mountain Area Historical Society.

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REFLECTIONS: President's Pen

By Elaine Hayden

EMAHS has been stirred to action with forward movement in all positive ways. Notably, in recent months, Board member, Stuart Collins, has helped to create a new public face for the Society in his tireless work that has resulted in our new and definitely improved web site. While not everyone in our world relies on the internet, our web site is another tool by which we spread the word of our preservation and presentation of mountain area history.

Society members were fortunate to enjoy a presentation by Jennee Hancock, Hiwan Educational Specialist, entitled, 'Historical Perspectives on Cultivation in the Foothills'. Those who attended the April 30th event were gifted with an interesting and educational sense of selections and varieties of food grown in early gardens in our area. As a bonus, we were enlightened as Hank Fuchs entertained us with remembrances of his youth while growing up on a San Luis Valley potato farming operation. This was a spontaneous and welcomed surprise.

The Journey to Jeffco and Pueblo to Plains educational programs were successful this school year despite a dwindling number of volunteer teachers. Thanks to those who have given so freely and often of their time. Medlen School Days and Discovery Days programs will once again be in full swing beginning in June. We welcome Robin as the new Discovery Days coordinator and we welcome back many volunteers who make these programs possible, including JoAnn Dunn, director of Medlen School Days. There is an ongoing need for volunteers. Contact Jennee at jhancock@jeffco.us

The Society has revived an interest in helping to restore and preserve the Buffalo Park School. We are in the beginning stages of working with

HistoryJeffco, JCHC and Wilmot School to raise funding to facilitate restoration of this one room school house that holds historic significance in our area. A further indication of activity is the preliminary discussions to organize an oral history project. Everyone has a story to tell and we are planning to involve everyone, young and old, to be recorded and become a part of our Evergreen historic record. More will be reported as we finalize details, strategies and prepare for interviews.

Beginning July 8th, EMAHS is hosting a History Happy Hour x 2 where we will facilitate an open discussion on any and all aspects of history. Join us at Hiwan Museum on Friday, July 8th from 4:30 to 6:30 pm. This will be an ongoing event with scheduled gatherings once every month to discuss topics driven by attendees. As weather permits we will meet on the side porch at Hiwan Museum.

July 1st signals the beginning of a new membership year. Renewals are anticipated and new memberships are appreciated and welcome. Our members are the backbone of our Society; without whose support we would not have thrived over the past 50 years. As always, your dues are used to cover costs of insuring Medlen School, our artifact and photo collections and expanding our oral history archives as well as presenting Society specific events. Membership dues can be paid on our web site or by mailing the form seen in this newsletter.

As our Board seats span a two year term, it is once again time to voice your selection as we hold elections at our annual membership meeting on June 26th at the Timbervale Barn, behind Hiwan Museum. This year's meeting will include elections of

officers, a light summer brunch and guest speaker, John Ellis, who will regale us with his remembrances of growing up in and with Evergreen. Reservations are required to attend the brunch and payment can be made at the door. (see inset) We currently have two Board seats available; the President Elect position and a Director at Large position. Two members have stepped forward to fill these positions that will be voted on by membership on July 26th. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor on the day of elections.

As always, I offer many thanks to those members of our Society who are generous with their time and expertise. As we become more comfortable in moving about and gathering, I look to our members to support programs, events and volunteer opportunities that will arise in coming months.

EMAHS Annual Peach Sale is BACK!

FANTASTIC WESTERN SLOPE PEACHES

\$40 Per box (prepaid)

Order by July 22nd

Delivery in August

Will contact by e-mail or phone

Pay with credit card or check

Go to: EMAHS.org for online payment

Make checks out to EMAHS or JCHS and mail to:

Mark Joyce - EMAHS Treasurer

P.O. Box 938

Kittredge, Colorado 804357



Bergen School article continued from page 1.

Bergen also recruited a neighbor to help, George E. Kerr. A few years earlier, Kerr had come to Colorado also caught up in the gold fever of the time. He was born in Pennsylvania, attended and taught school in Ohio, and then went on to Kansas where he taught school and worked as a carpenter. In Colorado, after prospecting for some time, he settled in Creswell.

Work was started in 1862 and classes began the same year.

After helping Bergen and Post build the school, Kerr went on to be one, if not the first, teacher at the Bergen School. *The Colorado Transcript*, August 21, 1958, in his daughter's Minnie's obituary, reported:

*Minnie Kerr Downes was born April 9, 1870, at Creswell, Jefferson County, now known as Bergen Park. She was the daughter of George Eugene Kerr and Athey Miller Kerr, pioneers of Jefferson County, who crossed the plains in a covered wagon in 1859. Mr. Kerr was a miner, rancher and educator' and **built the first school at Bergen Park and was also the first teacher in the school.** (Emphasis by the author.)*

The school operated between 1862 until sometime in the 1930s. The County Superintendent records of the Bergen School started in 1878 where teacher pay is recorded at between \$20 and \$40 dollars a month. In 1882 the school year was extended from three-months to an exhausting six-month schedule and teachers were receiving up to \$50 a month.

After 1910 the school population began to fluctuate. In the 1920s the county invested funds to stabilize the property but by the 1930s, the Bergen School was finally closed due to lack of students. The building was used as a school

administrative office for some time but fell into disrepair and the remains of the structure were taken down about 1989. The outline of the foundation can still be found along the Evergreen Wah Run trail directly across the gulch from 2051 Interlocken Road in Evergreen. The area can be viewed as you travel down Interlocken Road.

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Evergreen Mountain Area Historical Society
2021-2022 Officers

President	Elaine Hayden
Recording Secretary	Juanita Weare
Treasurer	Mark Joyce
Corresponding Secretary	Diane Fuchs
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Director	Bill Bottoms
Director	Stuart Collins
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Director	Hank Fuchs
Director	Bud Weare

NON-BOARD POSITIONS

Oral History Chairman	Bud O'Leary
Newsletter Editor	Laurie Romberg



Thomas C. Bergman. Established the first squatter's claim in Bergen Park, June 1859. Bergen's Ranch became a famous way station to the mines. Photo Courtesy of Evergreen Mountain Area Historical Society.



Amos F., Sarah Bergen Post and family. Established "The Post" in Evergreen. Photo Courtesy of Evergreen Mountain Area Historical Society.

Bergen School article continued from page 3.

And what became of the builders

T. C. Bergen and his wife, Judith, continued to operate Bergen's Ranch, a now famous stopping place to the Clear Creek mining camps. Bergen was instrumental in laying out the Idaho Cutoff which allowed loggers to haul timber and sawed lumber to Denver. Bergen went on to serve on the convention which petitioned Congress to establish Colorado as a state. He was also a member of the first state legislature and one of the first commissioners of Jefferson County. There are several excellent biographies of Bergen. (See the sources section below).

A. F. Post wooed and eventually married Bergen's daughter Sarah in late 1862. They built and operated a general store in Bergen Park near the Bergen's lodging house. After relocating to Evergreen,

they built the largest building in town that included a second floor used as a dance hall and community center. As the first ever general store in Evergreen, it was known simply as "The Post". Post went on to be the owner and part-owner of a number of businesses including a mine on Bear Creek.

George E. Kerr married Athey Miller in 1864 and built a cabin in Creswell. He went on to become a substantial property owner in the area, held office, and helped establish St. Mark's in the Wilderness, a church built in 1874 near the present Evergreen Cemetery. The altar of St. Marks was salvaged and is now in use at the Church of the Transfiguration in Evergreen. In 1874, George was one of the original trustees of the Bear Creek Wagon Road Company with George Morrison, Jerome Harrington, Dan Hicks (the last two were sawmill operators) and five others. That road eventually became Colorado HWY

74. Kerr homesteaded hundreds of acres in what is now the El Pinal neighborhood in Bergen Park. The home place property at Creswell he kept and later gave to his daughter Minnie. His nephew was the famous Sheriff Gary Kerr of Kerr Gulch. Interestingly, George was the first teacher at the Bergen School and his niece, Sylva Dora Kerr Boatright, was one of the last teachers at the school in the 1920's.

Sources:

- Phebe Granzella, *A Century of Jefferson County Schools*
- C. M. Hamilton, *Our Memories of Bergen Park*
- Linda Kirkpatrick, "Post, Amos," *The People of Evergreen, Colorado*, <https://justaroundhere.omeka.net/items/show/273>
- <https://morrisonhistory.org/people/thomas-c-bergen/>
- John Steinle, *Evergreen*

The Cecil H. Green Geophysical Observatory

Elaine Hayden EMAHS

Little could namesake and founder of Bergen Park, Thomas Bergen, have imagined that his c. 1859 mountain enclave would emerge over time into a thriving commercial center. Equally as implausible to Bergen would have been the idea that a scientific observatory would be established in Bergen Park not far from the route to the goldfields. Roughly 100 years after Thomas Bergen established his settlement and supply station for travelers bound for the gold fields in Idaho Springs and beyond, the Colorado School of Mines established a scientific observatory in the Bergen Park area. Located roughly a mile west of the junction of highway # 65 and highway #74, an unassuming structure was home to the Cecil H. Green Geophysical Observatory. While sensitive recording equipment was housed in the structure, precise monitoring equipment was located behind the building in an abandoned feldspar tunnel. The property is now privately held and inaccessible to the public.

The observatory was a seismic activity monitoring center for the Colorado School of Mines geophysics department. Beginning in 1963, Professor Maurice Major served as director as well as earthquake seismologist and professor of geophysics at Mines. The observatory was manned by a staff from Mines who were directed and tasked with reporting seismic activity to the main campus in Golden as the observatory was recognized as one of the first stations in the World Wide Standard Seismograph Network (WWSSN). According to the Colorado School of Mines Geophysics Newsletter, 2007, the National Earthquake Information Center at the School of Mines in Golden was transferred from NOAA to the USGS in 1973-74 and remains a vital reporting center for global earthquakes.

The Bergen Park observatory was named in honor of renowned geophysicist, Cecil Howard Green, who made a private donation to the Colorado School of Mines to insure the completion of the observatory and to enhance the geophysics department. Robert Weimer lectured that Green was not only an engineer; his philanthropy extended from science and medicine to the arts. In 1951, Green joined forces with Geophysical Services, Inc. (GSI) whose major focus was oil exploration throughout the world. Green later co-founded the company that became Texas Instruments.

During the 1960s the Cecil Green Geophysical Observatory was instrumental in recording and reporting on tremors that revealed an epicenter near the Rocky Mountain Arsenal (RMA), north of Denver. The production of chemical warfare products resulted in chemical waste water and the need for



House at Observatory c.1967, mountainscholar.org

disposal methods. Fearing open waste pits would contaminate groundwater, the waste was 'disposed' of in a well by a pressure injection process. In a 1966 article in *The Mountain Geologist*, David Evans reports that the RMA began disposing of chemical waste water in a deep injection well at a depth of 12,045' at the arsenal site in March, 1962; one month later, in April 1962, tremors were registered at the Green Observatory in Bergen Park from the tremor epicenter that was identified as being located in proximity to the RMA site. Evans reports that approximately 150 million gallons of wastewater was injected into the well. In the same timeframe as injections, between April 1962 and September 1965, 710 regional earthquakes had been registered at the Green Observatory and other seismic recording stations in the area, determining the epicenters were near the RMA. Lauren Beriekamp reports on *ecowatch.com* in reference to the RMA, "The earthquakes were prompted by the destabilization of a seismic fault line due to the drilling of the well and the pressure of materials being forced into the ground. The Arsenal stopped injection operations Nov. 26, 1967, after a 5.0 magnitude earthquake rocked the area a few months earlier". The RMA began to slowly remove fluid from the well in 1968 but slight tremors continued to occur. While some attributed the 1960s Denver-area earthquakes to a natural shifting of the inner layers of the earth, indications point to the injection wells at RMA as the source.

The interesting facts surrounding this observation site in Bergen Park rests in the truth that while much seismic activity

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Tunnel at Observatory c.1967, mountainscholar.org

Cecil Green article continued from page 5.

was recorded at the site, few folks were aware of the contributions that were made from this vital reporting station in Bergen Park in the realm of earthquake research and the link between RMA and recorded earth tremors. The dedication exhibited by the students and staff of the geophysics department at Colorado School of Mines and its vigilance in monitoring seismic activity in the region and in the global sphere is of historic significance and worthy of community pride.

Sources:

Robert Weimer. Senatel.lecture PDF, pg.6. www.mines.edu/faculty-senate
mountainscholar.org/discover/11124/174561 photo
Colorado School of Mines Geophysics Newsletter. Spring 2007, p. 22. csm.edu
David Evans. The Mountain Geologist , 1966. Denver Area Earthquakes and the Rocky Mountain Arsenal Disposal Well, p. 12. scits.stanford.edu/sites/g/files/sibiybj1375
Lauren Beriekamp. 'The Toxic Legacy of Waste Injection Wells', July 5, 2013. ecowatch.com/the-toxic-legacy-of-waste-injection-wells-1881772695.html

June 26 | 11AM – 1PM

Hiwan Heritage Museum



2022 EMAHS Membership and Board Elections Meeting & Brunch

June 26 • 11AM – 1PM

Timbervale barn

(behind Hiwan Heritage Museum)

Featuring

**A conversation with John Ellis on the topic
of “Remembrances: Historical Evergreen
Buildings” with photos by Ron Ruhoff.**

“Having a conversation with John Ellis is not unlike watching a documentary of Evergreen.”

– Colorado Serenity Magazine

Photo courtesy of Mille Fiori Favoriti

Cost of brunch per person is \$15.

Pay by check to P.O. Box 703 Evergreen, Colorado 80437 or pay at the door.

Please RSVP by June 22 to Elaine Hayden at (303) 674-6586.

Parking is available in the Hiwan Parking Lot. The Timbervale Barn is located directly behind the Hiwan Museum Building. Shuttle Services are provided for anyone requiring assistance.

Upcoming Events

June

- Western Slope Peach Sale begins
7th to 9th & 14th to 16th
- Medlen School Days:
7th to 10th & 14th to 17th
- Discovery Days:
26th Annual Membership Meeting and Brunch

July

- 1st EMAHS membership dues
- 8th History Happy Hour x 2: Hiwan Museum, ,
4:30 to 6:30 pm
- 19-21st & 26-28th
Hiwan Kids:

August

- Western Slope Peach delivery TBA
- History Happy Hour x 2 TBA



Picture provided by Laurie Romberg,
Elk at Evergreen Lake

The Record is published two times per year by the Evergreen Mountain Area Historical Society. Deadline for the Fall/Winter 2022 issue is November 1. Email your submissions to Laurie Romberg at laurie@rombergdesignsplus.com.

For More Information

For more information about the Evergreen Mountain Area Historical Society or Events happening at Hiwan Museum go to:

www.jchscolorado.org

Join Us! Support local history with your membership in EMAHS:

Benefits Include:

- A subscription to "The Record" the EMAHS newsletter.
- Special invitations for history programs and social events.
- Field trips to museums and historical sites
- A subscription to "Historically Jeffco," the annual publication of the Jefferson County Historical Commission.

Available at the Hiwan Museum

Evergreen Mountain Area Historical Society Membership Application

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email Address: _____

Enclosed is my check for annual membership (select the category that best suits you and your family):

- _____ \$25 Pioneer
- _____ \$50 Miner
- _____ \$100 Rancher
- _____ \$150 Mercantile (business membership)
- _____ \$ _____ (Donation)

Memberships are fully tax deductible, less the fair market value (fmv\$5.00) of benefits received.

Tell me more about: _____ **Volunteering opportunitis** _____ **Making a memorial gift**

Detach and mail to: **Evergreen Mountain Area Historical Society, P. O. Box 703, Evergreen, CO 80437**

Or go online to **EMAHSColorado.org** and click on **JOIN!**