



The Record



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JULIA BREWSTER DOUGLAS EXPLORES THE WORLD THROUGH DOLLS

Julia Brewster Douglas was born in Oswego County, New York, in 1852, the oldest child of a school superintendent and a school teacher. She graduated from Oswego Normal School in 1886 and taught at schools in and around New York City for 37 years until her retirement at age 60. Not taking kindly to retirement, she went to work in the Newark, New Jersey, Free Public Library, headed by one of the most innovative librarians in the country, John Cotton Dana. One main feature of Dana's philosophy was to allow patrons to browse the "open stacks" where they could browse for themselves, instead of having a staff member retrieving every book. This method was something that Miss Julia would copy in future years. After four years there, she had a bout of pneumonia, and realizing that she probably would not survive another, she came West to say "goodbye" to her family. Charles Winfred Douglas, her younger half-brother and a younger sister, Helen Douglas Seamans, lived in Evergreen. Father Douglas had come to Colorado 25 years earlier for his health. Here he met and married Dr. Josepha Williams. It was not long before Julia began looking for something to occupy her time. As a former teacher and librarian, she saw the need for a library to fill a neglected need in the local school system where the only books were text books. Using her connections with the Newark Library, she obtained some discarded books and opened the Evergreen Public Library in April 1917 in a vacant storefront on Lower Main Street.

In 1921, the little stone building on the hill behind the Mission of the Transfiguration was built for her. The building, as well as the philosophy of library service which John Cotton Dana had introduced,

was patterned after the Children's Museum in Newark. Items in the Library were used to illustrate stories and bring children's attention to the world outside their little community. Thus began the Doll Collection.

Through the years, Julia Douglas served the community that had become her home. She was "Aunt Julia" to the children for whom she always had time to help them find a book or for a story hour, illustrated by one of the dolls in the collection. By 1935 the library contained 10,000 objects, including the Doll Collection with 140 dolls.

As we began developing a theme for this exhibit, we wanted to showcase Miss Julia's teaching technique of using the dolls as "Little Ambassadors." Having the dolls sitting in the display cases inside the library gave the children the opportunity to not only ask questions about where the dolls came from but also to look at a world map to "see" where the countries were in relationship to our Evergreen community.

Please drop by the Museum over the next few months to see how the exhibit committee has interpreted Miss Julie's vision of education. We have around 30 dolls from all over the world displayed with their country of origin identified on a world map.



Top picture: doll collection of Miss Julia. Bottom picture: Miss Julia on the stairs.

Evergreen Mountain Area Historical Society

Physical Address: 28743 Meadow Drive, Evergreen, CO

info@emaHS.org

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 703, Evergreen, CO 80437

EMAHS.org

President: Stuart Collins

Newsletter Editor: Laurie Romberg

NOTES FROM THE EXHIBIT COMMITTEE

By Rosemary Barenbrugge and Sue Knepley

As we were creating a new exhibit at the Hiwan Museum, there were many topics to choose from. The committee spoke to Society members about what they would like to see in the exhibit and several mentioned Miss Julia Douglas' doll collection. The most interesting fact about the doll collection was how Julia used it to enhance the learning of Evergreen children from 1917 to 1936. On the front page of this newsletter, we shared an overview of how Miss Julia came to Evergreen and started a local library. What made Miss Julia passionate about filling the library with interesting artifacts (including dolls) was her professional connection with John Cotton Dana of the Newark Public Library and Museum. Long before meeting Miss Julia on the east coast, Mr. Dana attended law school in Colorado and passed the Colorado bar. Through his contacts in Denver, he was appointed director of the Denver Public Library from 1889-1898. Dana envisioned libraries as vibrant community centers rather than collections of relics that only appealed to a small number of the people. Through his leadership, the first-ever collection of books devoted to children's literature was here in Colorado. In addition, Dana designed libraries with open floor plans and open, not restricted, stacks of books. Dana moved to New Jersey and founded and directed the Newark Public Library from 1902 until his death in 1929. It was at this time that Miss Julia Douglas was introduced to Dana and his philosophy of library science. The early pictures of Evergreen Library clearly show an open floor plan and open stacks of books. Miss Julia responded to Mr. Dana's philosophy by making the library a vibrant community center for all in the area. Interacting with these dolls

from all over the world captured the children's attention very quickly when they entered her small stone building.

Most of the dolls that are in the Hiwan Museum collection are in good condition considering how old they are. Today, we have about thirty of the Hiwan Doll Collection on exhibit with the emphasis on where these dolls originated shown on a large world map. Just like Miss Julia intended, the exhibit teaches geography.

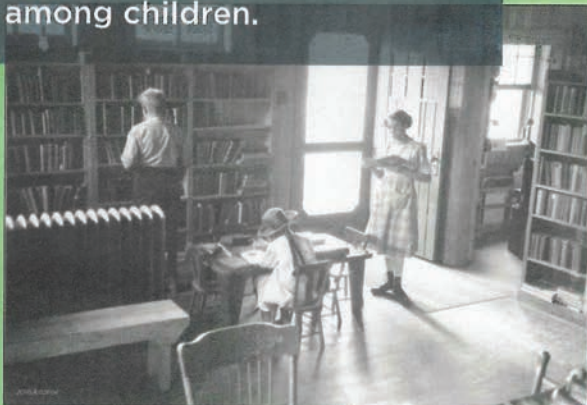
The exhibit committee would like to thank Laura Marques, Museum Collection Assistant for her expertise with these small treasures and the training she provided us on how to handle the dolls so we can enjoy them without harming them.

We would also like to thank Shaina Young, Graphic Designer, JSOS for creating the panels and map for the exhibit.

EMAHS invites you, your family, and friends to come to the Hiwan Museum soon to view and enjoy this new exhibit. The museum is open to the public Thursday – Sunday from Noon until 4pm. You do not need to take a tour but if you have not been on a tour for a while, please do so. Our docents are happy to show you & your friends the wonders of this historic home.

Miss Julia Explores The World Through DOLLS

Miss Julia had a special gift for growing a love of reading and learning among children.



Miss Julia loved books and loved people. She used her dolls, "Little Ambassadors", to help Evergreen children discover different parts of the world. Sitting in the display cases inside the library, the dolls' stories inspired children to connect to places far away from their mountain town.

Miss Julia's remarkable personality, and her ability to stimulate interest through storytelling using the dolls, was a wonderful way to teach global geography.

President's Pen

By Stuart Collins

The strength of our Historical Society rests on the shoulders of our dedicated volunteers and members. Many thanks to all who contribute their time and talents to EMAHS.

Thank you to Rosemary Barenbrugge and her team - Ron Belak, Pegg Linn, Ren Burke, Stuart Collins, Brian Hudson, Mary Ann Craft, JoAnn Dunn and Deb Cash for dismantling the Christmas decorations at Hiwan this January.

Our education programs are gearing up, with Jennee Hancock preparing for Discovery Days (June 2-5 and 9-12) and JoAnn Dunn organizing Medlen School Days (June 3-5 and 10-12).

John Steinle, Elaine Hayden, Stuart Collins, and Jennee Hancock are collaborating with local non-profits through the Evergreen Chamber of Commerce to plan Evergreen's 150th celebration, scheduled for August 2nd at Hiwan! Watch for more details about this milestone event.

Susan Knepley and Jennee Hancock and JoAnn Dunn joined Jefferson County Open Space staff members Liz Ricci, Mamie Hassell, Jade Martin and Talle Hogrefe at the recent Association of Northern Front Range Museums meeting. Their participation helps strengthen regional museum partnerships and brings fresh ideas to enhance Hiwan's programs and visitor experience.

JCOS recently completed an intensive three-day deep clean of Hiwan under the stewardship of Liz Ricci. Collections Volunteers Steve Beck and Joe Sullivan; EMAHS Volunteers Rosemary Barenbrugge, Deb Cash, and Gil Gulbrandson; Parks Service Dept. Staff and the Heritage Stewardship Team members Liz Ricci, Laura Marques, Mamie Hassell, Talle Hogrefe, Jade Martin, and Shannon Stage; along with Hiwan Museum Staff Jackie Murdock and Dianne Palaschak all contributed their time and effort to thoroughly clean every surface.

EMAHS has partnered with Evergreen Park & Recreation District (EPRD), with John Steinle's immense help, to relocate Buffalo Park School from Wilmot Elementary School to EPRD's Marshdale park in May-June 2025. This ~\$80,000 project involves careful moving and restoration of the historic schoolhouse, including replacing rotted logs, repairing windows, and weatherproofing. EMAHS will contribute \$25,000. EPRD will contribute ~\$20,000. As you can tell, the preceding numbers do not equal ~\$80,000! EMAHS will help spearhead this project. This effort will ensure the schoolhouse remains an educational resource for future generations. This project is in its tentative stages - much (much) more to come.

Mark your calendars for two upcoming events: John Steinle's walking tour of Evergreen on April 5th and a special presentation (from yours truly) about the deDisse Ranch and Evergreen Lake in May (TBD) - more to come.

Regards,
Stuart

Events

JUNE 8
Annual Membership Lunch
(11:30am-1:30pm)
Timbervale Barn

Presenter: Peter Anderson on the 75 years of the Evergreen Fire/Rescue Dept. and his new book "Burning Bright".

JUNE 2 - 5 and JUNE 9 - 12
(9am-12pm)
Discovery Days - 2 sessions

JUNE 3 - 5 and JUNE 10 - 12
(9am-12pm)
Medlen School Days - 2 sessions

THROUGHOUT THE SUMMER
Just Being Kids (free program) - Time and location to be released in May.



Rosemary Barenbrugge and Deb Cash having a blast Deep Cleaning in the new Exhibit Room.