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From The President's Quill

The air has turned crisp and the days are growing shorter and once again it is time to pull up the chair to the fireside and listen to some chats on the history of

Basalt. Our first presentation will be on Quilting and Blacksmithing. We chose these two subjects because one helped shape the west and the other helped to record the stories of the West.

John Hoffmann is a blacksmith from Carbondale and has been working as one for years. The care he gives to each piece of metal has a story unto itself and one that he will graciously share with us.

Ruby Davis is on the Colorado Quilting Council and the Sunset Quilter of Grand Junction. She has been quilting since the age of 7 and as she says, she started seriously quilting in 1991. If you have a quilt you would like to know a little bit more about, please bring it to this "chat". She is more than happy to share her knowledge and you might find the history of your family in the quilt.

Please join us for an evening of storytelling and history.

Diana C. CordovaElliott

W. W. Frey Building

(Coop Building/Midland Bar/
Bistro Basalt)

Walter William Frey was a native of Nashville, Tennessee and was married to Ora May Howe of Peoria, Illinois. They moved to Aspen Junction in 1888 where Mr. Frey served two terms as mayor before opening a general store in the Frey Building in 1903.

In 1964 the Frey Building housed a bar and restaurant called the Midland Bar which was owned by Jim Crowley. The Midland Bar also served hamburgers and steaks and every Saturday night the citizens of Basalt and the Ruedi workers danced to a live band.

Mr. Crowley sold it to John Wicks and Clyne who were from Rifle. They continued to run it as the Midland Bar until they sold it in 1994. In October of 1994 it opened as the Bistro Basalt.

It seems that the Frey building is destined to remain an eating and drinking establishment for the citizens of Basalt, as it continues to play an important part in Basalt's social life.

(info. courtesy of Basalt: Colorado Midland Town, by Clarence L. Danielson and Ralph W. Danielson C 1965, 1971)

Calendar of Events 2004

October

Monday Oct. 25, 2004 6:30 p.m.

Fireside Chat: Needles and Iron; A look at Quilting and Blacksmithing in the West.

Place: Basalt Town Hall

December

Saturday December

Basalt Holiday Stroll and Tree Lighting

FINDING THE STORY IN HISTORY

Apron Was All Purpose Garment

Great Grandma's garments made little impression on me as a child - except for her apron. Its uses were unlimited.

The apron was a "basket" when she gathered eggs. If there were fluffy chicks to be carried to the back porch during a sudden cold spell, they the trip peeping contentedly in Grandma's apron. When these same chicks grew to hen-hood and pecked and scratched in Grandma's flowers, she merely flapped her apron at them and they ran squawking to the chicken yard. I can see her yet tossing cracked corn to the hungry flock from her apron.

Lots of chips and kindling were needed to start fires in the big ivory colored cook stove in Grandma's kitchen. She carried them in her apron. Lettuce, radishes, peas, string beans, carrots, apples and peaches all found their way to the kitchen via Grandma's carry all.

When she cooked, the apron was a handy holder for removing hot pans from the stove. To men working in the field, the apron waved aloft was the signal to "come to dinner". At threshing time, Grandma hovered about the long table passing aromatic dishes and flipping the apron at pesky flies. When children came to visit, the apron was ready to dry childish tears. If the little ones were shy, it made a good hiding place from strangers.

The apron was used countless times to stroke a sweaty brow as Grandma bent over the hot wood stove or hoed the garden under a blistering sun. Grandma wrapped the friendly apron around her arms when she hurried on an outside errand or lingered at the door with a departing guest.

Hastily and a bit style, the apron dusted tables and chairs when company was seen coming down the lane. And in the evening when the day's work was done, Grandma shed her garment of many uses and draped it over the canary's cage.