



Fowke/Fooks Focus



Family Newsletter for the surnames Fowke, Fooks, Foulke, Fookes, Fowkes, etc.

Volume 2 Issue 2

Produced by Ray Fowke and Steve Fooks

May 2001

Hello, and welcome to the fifth issue of **Fowke/Fooks Focus**.

Subsequent issues will be produced periodically so return to this site regularly for new and up-to-date information and stories.

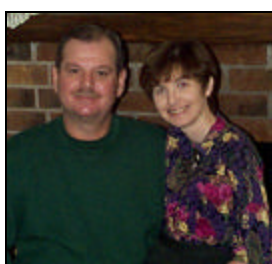
EDITORS' CORNER

It has been four months since the last issue of Fowke/Fooks Focus went on line. Where does the time go? Although a number of people have indicated their interest in contributing an article or some information for future issues, the result is, unfortunately, 'nothing yet received'! However, it is hoped that everyone who has read one or more of the first three issues (and there has been quite a number according to the web site counter) considered the project worthwhile and would like to read further issues during the next twelve months.. Let's have some feedback. Even if just to say that you read it with interest, or consider it a waste of time, as the case maybe.

This newsletter is a means for everyone interested in sharing and learning more about the history of our family. Treasured family stories are another way to share your "living history" with others. We are interested in publishing your story as a way to share family memories with "cousins" around the world. Contact either Ray or Steve if you have any memories to share.



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FAMILY NOTICEBOARD

Having a get-together or family reunion? What are your genealogy interests? What are your hobby and travel interests? Looking for someone? Announce hatches, matches and dispatches. List them here.

FOWKE FAMILY TREE PUBLICATION

If you are interested in learning more about the above book and how you can obtain a copy, e-mail Ray Fowke without delay. Copies of the fifth edition are still available and the sixth edition is expected to be published in June, 2001.

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Profile

on

THE FOOKS FAMILY IN ARKANSAS

by

Opal Fooks Stegall

From our earliest ancestors down to the youngest generation we share a deep-seated curiosity about what lies over that hill, around that curve and about other people in other places. Most of all, we want to see it for ourselves. Some visit and go back to where they came from. Some find a new place and make it their home. My great-grandfather, Samuel Fookes, son of Daniel, was the first in our family to make Arkansas home.

Samuel was born about 1821 in Worcester County, Maryland. He was the third child of Daniel and Nancy (Carey) Fookes. His brothers and sisters were James Liburn, Jonathan, Annis, Eleanor, Daniel and Leah. About 1830, Samuel's father moved the family to western Kentucky. They settled in Marshall County (called Calloway County at that time) about fourteen miles from Paducah.

On December 19, 1850, Samuel and Nancy Jane Armstrong were married in Marshall County. Their sons Jonathan and Lynn Boyd and their daughter Elizabeth were born there. Sometime in the late 1850's, Samuel moved his family to Missouri. There two more sons, Henry and Samuel were added to the family. Leaving his wife and five young

children, Samuel joined the Confederate Army and was gone for about four years.

For many years this was all I knew about Samuel and his family. In 1994 I was given the address of one of my dad's cousins, Thelma Justus Ballard, a direct descendant of James Liburn Fookes. Her wonderful letters brought Samuel and Nancy Jane to life for me. The following is from her letters. *"I remember Grandma Hill³ saying that Uncle Sam and Aunt Jane lived in Missouri during the war (Civil). Aunt Jane farmed and tried to keep the children fed. Yankees would rob her of food, chickens, cows, etc. I remember it as being near Joplin and they lost a boy there. I had to sit with Grandma a lot. She was in a wheel chair and I was the youngest. The rest were out working, usually. I remember Grandma saying that Aunt Jane was alone with the children for four years and she would ask each ex-soldier or straggler that came by if they knew Sam Fookes. No one did until the day before he got home. One guy said "A tall, skinny guy? Yes, he is O.K.'. The way they told it he got home the next day. Being an old Army wife, I can appreciate this--." " . . . Uncle Sam was a Confederate and was in Louisiana, near Baton Rouge, when the war ended. The Yankees took their horses and they had to walk home. Aunt Jane kept looking for him to come home. He had detoured through Kentucky to see his mother before coming home. I guess he knew he would not see her again. They lost a boy in an accident near Joplin, Missouri⁴. I think they came to Arkansas after that."⁵*

Around 1870, Samuel moved his family for the last time. They moved to the hills of Sharp County, Arkansas. On October 11, 1872 my grandfather, George Lee Fookes, was the first 'Fookes' born in Arkansas, the second was his sister Mollie. And somewhere between Samuel Fookes, son of Daniel, and Samuel Austin Fookes, son of George Lee, an 'E' was lost from our name.

In 1882 the people in the community wanted a building to be used for school and church. Samuel helped build this eighteen by twenty foot one room building that became Lone Oak School, District 33 and the meeting place for Lone Oak Landmark Baptist Church. The building burned in 1911. The new one was a twenty by thirty-foot frame building built by George Lee Fookes with the help of two of his sons, Sam and Ray, and his brother-in-law Berl Hill.⁶

The second 'Fookes' to leave Kentucky for the hills of Arkansas was Eliza Elizabeth Fookes, the daughter of John Calvin Fookes and granddaughter of James Liburn Fookes. Eliza, her husband, Samuel Franklin Hill and their two daughters, 12 year old Mary Emeline and 10 year old Ellen Lea, moved there in 1892⁷. All of their belongings were hauled by wagon to Paducah. Their baggage and all the family was loaded on a steamboat, which took them down the Ohio River to Cairo, Illinois. From Cairo the steamboat took them down the Mississippi River to Memphis, Tennessee. The

remainder of the trip was by train and wagon. (When my grandmother, Mary Emeline Hill Fooks, told me about their move to Arkansas, she was in the hospital recovering from a broken collarbone. Nonetheless, there was a sparkle in her eyes and a look of pure pleasure remembering a very adventurous time in her life.) Thelma Ballard wrote: *"I think Grandpa and Grandma Hill came to Arkansas for Grandma's health. A lot of her folks died of TB. When they came here they homesteaded as close to Uncle Sam as possible. Grandpa Hill settled along Aubom Creek in Sharp County. Mama said when they were clearing land along that creek they hauled off Indian arrowheads by the bushel basket. They thought it was once a battlefield or a place where they made arrows. I remember seeing big rocks with a large hollow chipped out (this is how they ground corn for meal)."* Eliza and Samuel had eight more children after they moved to Arkansas. Their names are Oregon, John Lamedon, Amelia, Evelyn, Ruthie Dale, Lillie, Charles Norman and Berl.⁸

George Lee Fookes married Mary Emeline Hill in 1896. My father, Samuel Austin , was born on May 20, 1897. Raymond Doyle was born February 28, 1899, Lowell Boyd on July 3, 1906, Lawrence Lee was born January 9, 1910 and Elmer "Happy" Glenn on May 8, 1912. All were born in Sharp County. All of their children were born in Arkansas. All of Dad's children were born in different counties.

Samuel Austin Fooks was discharged from the United States Army February 27, 1919. Soon after that, he and other members of his family left the hills to work in the cotton fields near Blytheville, Arkansas. There he met Savannah Mae Holmes, who was just 3 months past her fourteenth birthday. Two weeks later they were married and Savannah Mae Holmes Fooks left the flatlands to live with the hill people. Sometime during the 1920's Samuel started working on road building jobs. In 1929 he was operating a steam shovel (I have a picture) and later he was a dragline operator. When he moved to a different job, he took his family with him. This changed in 1939 when he moved his wife and six children (Lambert, Oliver, Thelma, Mary, Hazel and Opal) to Saline County in central Arkansas. Four years later Betty Carolyn was born.

Our house had a constantly changing population depending on how many grandmothers, uncles or cousins were there. Our house was never overcrowded, there was always room for more. Dad and his brothers were always close. Uncle Lawrence and Uncle Happy were very young when their father died. Mom and Dad helped keep them all together. Our house was the place to come to celebrate holidays (most of our family pictures were made on Easter, 4th of July and Christmas) or just to visit for a few days. There was always good food, hours of conversation and most of the time, music and singing. My favorite song was *"Fourth of July"*⁹, which they all sang together. Dad usually sang *"Be Nobody's Darling But Mine"* by himself. When they played *"The Waltz You*

Saved For Me", he danced with Mom, it didn't matter if they were in the house or out in the yard, they danced. The last songs they would sing were *"Never Grow Old"* and *"Farther Along"*. Uncle Ray had two children, Doyle and Fred. Uncle Lowell had one son, George. Uncle Lawrence had two children, Linda and Joyce. Uncle "Happy" had three children, Amos, Clara Nell and Glenn. Uncle "Happy" was the only one that made his home in the hills near his place of birth. Forty-five of Mom and Dad's descendants live in central Arkansas. Thirty-two live out of state. Only 3 descendants that were born in Arkansas live out of state. One of those is looking forward to moving home next year. I know there are other descendants of Samuel and Nancy Jane and descendants of Eliza Elizabeth and Samuel Hill that still live in Sharp County and other parts of Arkansas and other states. I know so few of them. Would love to hear from all of them!

Terrell Davis Fooks, grandson of James Liburn Fookes, was the third 'Fooks' to move to Arkansas. He moved his family to Camden, the county seat of Calhoun County in south central Arkansas in 1914. A few years later they moved back to Kentucky.

In 1925 his son, Benjamin Tyndle (B.T.) Fooks, moved back to Camden. He bought a service station, then sold it to buy a bottling plant¹⁰. In 1930 he established the B.T. Fooks Manufacturing Plant which became The Grapette Company, Inc. In 1962 it became Grapette, International. B.T. sold the company but Grapette International (now located near Malvern, AR.) kept the *Grapette* formula and only sold it overseas.¹¹ . Late last year they were selling *Grapette* again in Arkansas. In the *Arkansas Times 25th Anniversary Edition*, they listed one hundred notable Arkansans, B. T. Fooks and *Grapette* was first in the *Food and Drink* category.

Written by:

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Foot Notes:

¹ **FOOKS FAMILY** by Herbert C. Fooks. Copyright 1953 by Herbert C. Fooks.

² **FOOKS FAMILY** by Herbert C. Fooks. This information was given by Mary Emeline Hill Fooks.

³ Eliza Elizabeth Fookes Hill, daughter of John Calvin Fookes, granddaughter of James Liburn Fookes.

⁴ Jonathan was injured in a mining accident. He died from his injuries.

⁵ From the letters of Thelma Justice Ballard, daughter of Ellen Leah Hill Justice, granddaughter of Eliza Elizabeth Fookes Hill.

⁶ **A HISTORY OF THE ONE-ROOM SCHOOLS OF SHARP COUNTY**, published by The Sharp County Historical Society

⁷ **FOOKS FAMILY** by Herbert C. Fooks

⁸ **FOOKS FAMILY** by Herbert C. Fooks

⁹ I have no idea what is the true name of this song. I have never heard anyone other than my family sing it. The first verse is:

One Fourth of July at a county fair a man went up in a balloon. He was to go up to the clouds and make a circle around the moon But when he got up about ten miles high the gas in his balloon went out, He came down without a parachute and he gave the loudest shout.. "I ain't got no featherbed to land on when I fall. I may land in the river; I may land on City Hall. The best of all that I can land on is a house top or a tree, Just any old haystack that I land on will be home sweet home for me."


¹⁰ **FOOKS FAMILY** by Herbert C. Fooks

¹¹ *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, June 25, 2000

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Traditional Family Recipes

Family gathers...loved ones gathered around a table, chatting and laughing as familiar dishes are passed back and forth. It seems our memories are often filled with these images and the smell and taste of the food plays an integral part in our traditions. Passing family recipes along is another way of passing along our history. We are interested in compiling a collection of family recipes. favorite family (ingredients, cooking or directions), who originated with history behind



Fooks/Fowke
 Send us your recipes instructions, baking the recipe along with it. If you can, include information on the person you most remember being associated with this recipe and even a picture of that person or a family gathering where it was served. Recipes received will be included in future issues of the family newsletter.

Send recipes and information to Steve Fooks at Steve@fooks-robb.com or Ray Fowke at rayfowke@clear.net.nz

PEOPLE MEETING PEOPLE

You are welcome to contact the following individuals who would like to hear from you about your family, country, and your interests.

E-mail:

Ray Fowke, New Zealand: rayfowke@clear.net.nz
Steve Fooks, FL, USA: Steve@fooks-robb.com

Let us know if you would like to be listed here

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JOURNEY INTO UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND CANADA

(Holiday, Adventure and Genealogy Expedition)

Friday, 4th June to Monday, 5th July, 1999

It is most interesting to produce a family tree starting with your own family group and tracing ancestors through the ages! It is absolutely fascinating to expand your knowledge of the family surname by making contact with 'distant cousins' world wide! It is tremendously exciting to have the opportunity to travel to distant lands, and combine that with visiting people with whom you have corresponded for some time, and shared a common interest.

Through the wonders of the Internet and e-mail, fifteen months of planning, and advice and hosting from many generous people, this extensive holiday, adventure and genealogy expedition produced a wonderful experience, and life-long international friends.

All this is what Ray and Mavis Fowke from Hamilton, New Zealand, were able to do during 1999, and this is their account of that wonderful journey. (See chapters one, two and three in previous newsletters)

Part Four (the last in the series):

Saturday, 26th June, 1999

At the ungodly hour of approximately 3.20am 'The Canadian' train pulled into the city of Saskatoon, in the Canadian Province of Saskatchewan. Due to the fact that we had forgotten to change our watches to the new time zone, and that this province does not observe Daylight Savings time in the summer, we thought that we had arrived even later, thus keeping our expected hosts from their beauty sleep even longer. However, we were on time and Lynne Fowke, all bright and smiling in spite of the very early hour, was on the platform to greet us. A quick trip through the quiet streets of

the city, a brief chat, then back to bed for a few more hours. Larry Fowke was due back home from an out-of-town trip about lunchtime. Larry (Lawrence) is the brother of Donald Fowke whom we met briefly in Toronto. He is Head of the Biology Department at the University of Saskatchewan. We had already had the pleasure of meeting Larry and Lynne when they visited New Zealand some 18 months earlier and spent a day with us in Hamilton.

During the morning Lynne took us for a tour of the city. Unfortunately light rain was falling so most of the sights were viewed from within the car but this was new territory and everything most interesting. We stopped a number of times on the banks of the South Saskatchewan River which flows through the city and drove over one or two of Saskatoon's five traffic bridges. During a brief spell between showers we were able to get out of the car and watch a number of teams that were dragon boat racing on the river. We also spent a little time on the campus of the University of Saskatchewan, a most attractive place, also located on the banks of the river. Nearby was Diefenbaker Park and while travelling though this park we were introduced to Gophers (groundhogs) which Ray spent some time endeavouring to capture on video. Lynne provided some background about these creatures and told us about the problems they cause for farming communities on the prairie.

Larry arrived back from his trip and after lunch he took us to the Saskatchewan Western Development Museum where, this weekend, demonstrations of vintage equipment and live displays of pioneer living were being presented. The Program was entitled Pion-era '99 and was being staged as part of the "Fifty Years 1949-1999, Reflecting Our Past", celebrations. The Museum contains a vast range of vintage agricultural and domestic machinery and artefacts. The main building houses 1910 Boomtown Street where a self-guided tour takes you through a representation of a typical Saskatchewan town of that era, including a Harness Shop, Livery Stable, Blacksmith Shop, General Store, Dentist's Office, Drugstore, School and Butcher Shop, to name a few. Billed as being the longest indoor museum street in Canada we were most impressed by the layout and displays. A vintage fashion show was in progress on the platform of the railway station display when we arrived. There was just so much to see and of special interest we recall viewing an old timber mill, a pack-horse demonstration, a hand operated rope-making machine, and an early model of a snowmobile. Old farm tractors and steam-driven traction engines, all in operation, also kept our interest.

Back at Larry and Lynne's home a Fowke family gathering had been arranged to coincide with our visit and we were very pleased to meet, make friends with, and take group candid photographs of:

Larry FOWKE, Lynne Fowke, Marilyn FOWKE Tupper and Doug Tupper.

Vernon FOWKE, Mary Fowke, Carol FOWKE Ryan, David Ryan, Christine Ryan, Erin Ryan, Alison Ryan, Margery FOWKE Bingham, Bill Bingham, Scott Bingham.

Revered Stan FOWKE, Edna Fowke, Donna FOWKE Bleakney, Blair Bleakney, Kyla Bleakney, Katie Bleakney.

Larry, Vernon and Stan are cousins.

Meat was barbecued and served with salads and we had a wonderful time learning about the Fowke families in the area and showing our own family photographs which we had, of course, brought with us.

Sunday, 27th June

Today, Larry and Lynne informed us, our sightseeing would involve a trip to their holiday home at Lake Wakaw. The name is derived from an Indian word meaning 'crooked water'. The trip involved about a 100km drive from Saskatoon with a diversion en route to view the small country township of Wakaw, together with its grain silos, very typical of this whole area. Most of the houses in this town appear to be set on quite large plots of land and we particularly noted the excellent vegetable gardens surrounding these homes. Canada's 13th Prime Minister, John Diefenbaker, practised law in this town during the mid-1920's.

Once again, while travelling, we totally lost our sense of direction and in no other place during our whole trip was this feeling so pronounced. When people refer to the "big sky", the prairie is one of those places in the world where you can experience that 'bigness'. Having lived all our lives on a mountainous island produces an 'odd feeling' when confronted by a 360 degree level horizon! There where no obvious (to us anyway) landmarks. Only in Australia have we previously viewed the 'curvature of the earth' in similar surroundings.

Lynne and Larry's recently completed holiday home, set among native trees and shrubs on the edge of Wakaw Lake, is absolutely beautiful. That many loving hours had been spent by themselves and 'contracted friends' in the construction and finishing of this home is obvious. From the balcony we could view the lake through the trees and watch Chickadees, Humming Birds and Gophers going about their business above and below us. A walkway down to the water's edge brought us to a small jetty to which a dingy was moored and beside it, a canoe was 'beached'. Nearby was a much older cottage with a sign which reads "The Fowkes and the Tupper's". Marilyn invited us in to have a look around the original home owned by Larry and Marilyn's parents, which she and Doug now use as their 'retreat'.

Larry took us for a short drive along the lakeside and also to the site of a Ukrainian Church (which indicates the background of many of the settlers in this region) with quite a

large cemetery adjacent. The unusual gravestones proclaimed many surnames which were impossible for us to pronounce.

We returned to Saskatoon and, following dinner and general conversation, retired for the night because we had another very early start in the morning.

Monday, 28th June

We were out of bed about 2.30am this morning and made our preparations to be driven to the railway station to re-board 'The Canadian' which would be departing at 3.20am and conveying us onwards to Vancouver. This time we were prepared to have our large bags 'checked through' so that we did not have to take them on board with us and into our small travelling compartment. We said our goodbyes to Larry and Lynne and thanked them for their generosity in hosting us for the weekend and for the effort they had made to see that we met as many of the Fowke clan in the area as possible.

On board the train all was quiet as we prepared to settle down on our beds for the remainder of the night. Most of the passengers would sleep right through this early morning arrival and departure from Saskatoon. We slept, and somewhere between Unity and Wainwright the train passed over the border into Alberta. Clocks also changed from Central Time to Mountain Time. We finished our breakfast in the restaurant car not long before arriving at Edmonton where there was a 40 minute 'service' stop. The railway line and station at which we stopped at Edmonton was right on the boundary of the airport. Through the perimeter fence beside the track we could view aircraft arriving and departing.

During the rest of the morning and early afternoon we passed through Evansburg, Edson and Hinton and all of this, but for a walk down the corridor to the restaurant for lunch, we viewed from the perspex-enclosed Bullet Lounge (described in Part Three).

Shortly after leaving Edson, mountain ranges appeared on the horizon ahead. By now the countryside had changed again to gently rolling hills clad with forest. The Rocky Mountains filled more and more of the skyline as time went by until, all of sudden we seemed to be surrounded by mountain peaks. We had arrived at Jasper, Alberta. We stayed on board during the stop at Jasper. We had been in this place before, some 10 years ago, when we travelled on a tourist bus from Vancouver to Calgary, returning again to Vancouver by air across the mountains. The weather here was overcast and cool. Many of the high peaks were still snow-capped but generally summertime scenes in the mountains prevailed.

Not long after departing Jasper the train passed over the final border on this service into the province of British Columbia and clocks again changed, this time from Mountain Time to Pacific Time. The local time was about 5pm. From

this time until dusk we were awed by the views that presented themselves as the train rolled its way along the banks of streams and through cuttings into valleys between rows and rows of mountain peaks. At one point the train slowed and, right beside the tracks, a high, wide, white waterfall cascaded down through the trees, the water disappearing out of sight below us. We watched and video'd until it was too dark to see then returned to the restaurant for a final, three-course dinner with lots of lovely wine. The last view we had was of river rapids beside the track, fir trees in the middle ground, and a background of high mountains, somewhere between Blue River and Clearwater.

Tuesday, 29th June

We woke in our compartment just as dawn was breaking and put up the window blind to see what we could see. It was raining quite heavily and beside the tracks, what was last night a raging, white-water torrent, was now a wide slow-moving expanse of water, the mighty Fraser River. The mountains had already given way to rolling hills and wide river flats. We passed through Hope and Chilliwak and, as we got nearer and nearer to the outskirts of Vancouver, river traffic and factories became more and more prevalent. The logging industry is big business in these parts. Anchored to piles driven into the river bed are vast 'rafts' of felled timber waiting for processing in the numerous timber mills that line the banks. Boats and tugs of all shapes and sizes were heading upstream and downstream and now and then a car ferry could be seen setting out on a short trip across the river. We passed through Matsqui then the train slowed down as the suburbs of Vancouver city were reached. The Fraser River was crossed by way of a long lattice-type bridge into Port Coquitlam at approximately 8am, and at 9am we were packing up our gear and preparing to disembark at Pacific Central Station, Vancouver.

The Canadian had brought us 4424km across Canada, in two stages, over the last five days, and we make this final comment. The overall trip is great. Very relaxing and not at all boring. The scenery is awesome and the service and meals on board the train are excellent. We found the compartments in the renovated 'older style' rail coaches a little cramped but comfortable, and we certainly would not advise cheaper options available on board for such a long trip.

After picking up our large suitcases from baggage claim we scouted around for suitable transport to convey us to Vancouver's International Airport. The temperature outside was quite cool and it was drizzling with rain. We found a shuttle bus company for our journey across town and soon we were on our way. After a few minutes the bus stopped at a unmarked bus location near the centre of the city and, along with others, we were instructed to take our bags off the bus and wait on the sidewalk for another bus which would be along shortly to take us to the airport. This was a surprise as

there were no shop verandahs under which to take shelter from the rain and, although we had light jackets on, it was quite cool. We waited and waited. None of the buses going by took any notice of us at all. This was not exactly a good public relations situation for the shuttle bus company as we had all expected that the fare we had paid would have been for a direct transfer from point to point. We were kept waiting for at least 45 minutes and everyone was pretty 'brassed off' when the next bus finally arrived.

Our flight to Denver from Vancouver was not due to depart until 2.30pm so we had plenty of time to check out the airport terminal, have some lunch, read a little, and generally lounge around. We had not planned any sightseeing in Vancouver because time would not have permitted that. Anyway it was raining and as we had been here for a few days once before, it was not really a problem that we were confined to the airport for a few hours!

Finally, we were on our way again, flying over the states of Washington, Idaho and Wyoming involving seemingly endless ranges of mountains, many of them snow-capped, until touchdown at Denver, Colorado, at approximately 5.57 pm. There to meet us in 'The Mile High City', after we had passed through customs, was Ray's life-long friend, and Best Man at our wedding, Richard, whom we had not seen for many, many years. Richard and his family had settled permanently in the United States some years ago, after Richard had decided to continue his service there following an international exchange, as a Methodist minister. Richard and Lisa reside in Littleton where Richard is the Senior Minister of The Littleton United Methodist Church.

Ray and Richard grew up together in the township of Ashburton in the South Island of New Zealand. As 10-year-olds they spent a lot of time in each other's company and in each other's homes. They were in the same class at school and college for some 7 years and had many interests in common during their early working life. Finally, each sought wider horizons in other parts of New Zealand, Ray continuing his interests in commercial printing and Richard studying at the Methodist Theological College. They met up two or three times during Richard's postings to various regions throughout New Zealand, and then lost touch.

This reunion of old friends had resulted from locating each other on the internet and 'filling in' the years that had gone by, and remembering 'old times', through the exchange of E-mail. That Richard and Lisa had invited us to visit them for a few days during our tour was absolutely marvellous!

An excellent dinner at Grady's Restaurant completed a very long day.

Wednesday, 30th June

Today we spent some time touring the attractive church and excellent facilities enjoyed by the congregation in Littleton, as well as meeting some of the other members of the church staff. The summer holiday programme for children was in full swing and we were impressed by the range of activities for both young and old.

We marvelled at the magnificent housing estates in the area and the size and structure of many of the homes under construction.

In the evening we enjoyed a barbecue in home-garden surroundings. Richard and Ray talked non-stop about past memories, surprised that they could remember so much in such detail. Mavis and Lisa were condemned to hear all the details about bicycle tours through the 'outback' of New Zealand's South Island, good and bad and eccentric school teachers, and amateur stage shows and comedy skits that were popular to be part of, and attend, in the 50's and early 60's. These and many other subjects were 'trotted out' and created much amusement as well as nostalgia.

Thursday, 1st July

This morning Richard had duties to perform and appointments to keep so Lisa took us walking through a popular recreation area then on to The Littleton Historical Museum located on fourteen acres adjacent to Ketring Lake. The museum encompasses three exhibition galleries and a research library in the main building plus two 'living history' farms. The 1860's homestead farm and the 1890's turn-of-the-century farm exemplify how people lived and worked during the early years in Littleton and the South Platte Valley. We did not have time to view it all but there was much of interest. Ray was even able to readily identify the Merino sheep penned for inspection in one of the displays and discussed their original introduction into the area from Australia, with the resident staff member.

Early in the afternoon Richard joined us and we set off on a tour in their car which, after some time driving through many city suburbs, took us up a winding mountain road into the Rocky Mountains. There amongst the tall peaks we were completely taken by surprise when we entered Central City. Once known as the richest square mile on earth, Central City is again enjoying a boom. We had not realised that this colourful, old town with its Victorian houses, nestled in a narrow valley, was almost completely devoted to entertainment and casinos. The entire city, just a mile up the road from Black Hawk, is part of a national Historic District. We had a late lunch there and enjoyed two or three hours wandering through the narrow streets and trying our luck at several establishments. Places like Gold Coin Casino, Famous Bonanza Casino and The Teller House Casino are remembered distinctly as Ray 'did quite well'!

Returning to Denver we attended The Littleton United Methodist Church Music Campers presentation of "100% Chance of Rain", a Jazz Cantata for young singers. The children enjoyed themselves singing and dancing, and so did we, along with a large audience of friends and family of the participants. The show was a big success.

For dinner we were escorted to what has to be the most unusual dining venue that we have ever encountered. Billed as the world's most exciting restaurant, the Casa Bonita Mexican establishment is a very popular venue! No bookings. Simply queue up and, on entry, enjoy the excellent food and amazing atmosphere.

We arrived about 9.15pm. The entrance courtyard sports a large fountain covered with many lights. The queue of patrons waiting to get in was long but quite fast moving. Lots of parents with children were there in spite of the hour. The queue snaked its way to the main entrance doors where we kind of expected to be met by the head waiter or some such person but no, the queue continued on and on inside, through a maze of twisting and turning corridors. Then, at last, just as we could smell food but not yet see it, a bevy of waitresses and waiters appeared and, while we were still standing in line, proffered a menu and waited to take our order. The speciality of the house is a Deluxe Dinner. All-you-can-eat Mexican feasts for \$8.69! There is no limit on refills! Taco and Enchilada of many kinds, Green Chile Burrito, Nachos, Fajitas and Corditas. Fried Steaks and Chicken Breasts were also available and a host of other delights too numerous to mention. As we pondered the range being offered the line moved continually forward. Once the order had been taken it was only a short distance to the serving counters where our requirements were ready waiting for us on a tray, and then we were escorted to our table. We had chosen Chicken and Combo Fajitas, and to wash it all down, frozen lime drinks and berry wine cooler.

Once past the serveries we were immediately conscious of our surroundings. This establishment features live entertainment in what must be a unique atmosphere in a very unique setting. The centrepiece of the restaurant is a very high, rocky cliff face with a large waterfall spilling over the top and down into a large, deep rock pool. This structure is surrounded with rocky ledges divided by rock walls, which contain the restaurant tables. There are perhaps three or four levels of ledges, can't recall exactly, and each table is quite private except for a wide view of the waterfall and pool. It is impossible to tell just how many tables and people are in the place!

The programme indicates a variety of attractions on each night of the week and includes strolling musicians, exciting gun-fights, amazing magician, hilarious puppet show, dancing monkeys (in costume) and, tonight, daring cliff divers. As well as the waterfall there are graceful palms, a

volcanic mountain, caves, a mine, a palace and a jail! As we sat at our table three young men appeared at the foot of the waterfall and proceeded to climb up the cliff face from ledge to slippery ledge, sometimes through the waterfall, to the top of the cliff. One by one they poised themselves at the top of the cliff then, without warning, launched themselves out over the waterfall, into space, and dove into the rock pool at the foot of the falls. An estimated drop of some eight metres. They were excellent divers and obviously a big hit with the young women in the audience many of whom lined the edge of the pool for a better look and to perhaps (great excitement) speak with the performers as they surfaced from the deep. This activity continued throughout the period of our dinner, the boys diving sometimes in pairs, sometimes dressed as clowns, to name just two variations. It was a lot of fun. We were impressed, as were particularly the young female spectators. And the food was very good too!

Friday, 2nd July

Our tour destinations today were a bit of a mystery although Richard did disclose that we would be heading, roughly, towards Colorado Springs. Near Colorado Springs we stopped at the US Air Force Academy where we had the opportunity to view the campus, parade ground, The American Legion Memorial Tower and the US Air Force Academy Cadet Chapel which is a most unusual and imposing architectural structure. Richard had officiated at church services here in the past. For some years he and his family had been stationed at the nearby centre of Pueblo.

After passing through Colorado Springs we arrived at a fascinating area called Garden of the Gods which contains a large variety of magnificent red-rock formations with names such as Three Graces, Cathedral Rock, Cathedral Spires, South Gateway Rock and, the main attraction, Balanced Rock where we stopped for photographs. A short distance from Balanced Rock is Garden of the Gods Trading Post and visitor centre. Here we spent some time inspecting the huge range of souvenirs plus traditional and contemporary art covering sculpture, pottery, Navajo rugs, sandpaintings and Native American Indian jewellery. Mounted on a wooden base in one of the shops was a very large grizzly bear standing on its hind legs with its fore-paws outstretched. We had no idea just how large these animals really are until standing beside this specimen which towered above us.

As well as obtaining a number of postcards and small souvenirs at the Trading Post we also were attracted to the Navajo sandpaintings. Apart from the attractive appearance of the sandpaintings and the natural materials used, the way in which these artworks are crafted caught our imagination. The backing board is covered evenly with white glue and sand of different colours, each applied separately to avoid mixing, is applied by letting it flow through the artist's fingers. Detail is done with a fine brush and glue. After drying it is sprayed with

a clear fixative and can only be damaged by direct contact with water. The example which we purchased contains white gypsum, blue cryscola, black magnetite, yellow sandstone and sulphur and red sandstone and clay, and looks just great hanging on a wall in our lounge.

Next stop was Manitou Springs where we obtained refreshments. During a short walk through the shopping area we noticed a sign which indicated an attraction nearby called a Cog Railway to the summit of Pikes Peak. This sounded to us like something we would enjoy so after locating the Manitou Depot we enquired about purchasing tickets. Although it was almost 4pm in the afternoon we were thrilled to learn that seats were available on the last trip for the day departing at 5.20pm. Richard and Lisa had travelled to the top of this mountain before but did not elaborate so the souvenir tickets which we purchased contained the first real information about what we were letting ourselves in for. "The world's highest cog railway from Manitou Springs, Colorado, 6571 feet, to Pikes Peak, 14,110 feet." Now, the highest mountain in New Zealand, and it has permanent snow on top, is only 12,349 feet high and only experienced mountaineers get to go up there, so this was going to be a real experience. We reminded ourselves that since arriving at Denver we had been constantly at a mile or more above sea level, then wondered if there would be enough oxygen for us to breath at that altitude! Signs at the railway station cautioned those people who suffered from heart, lung and high blood pressure disorders but otherwise, no ill effects were indicated other than, perhaps, mild altitude sickness! The original cog railway train, powered by steam, first reached the top of Pikes Peak in June, 1891. From some of the old photographs on display at the station it was obvious that the service and transportation had improved a little bit since then!

At exactly 5.20pm the advertised 3 hour and 10 minute adventure up the granite mountain began with the modern, comfortable railcar, built at a Swiss Locomotive Works, pulling out from Manitou Depot (6571 feet) and following a cascading stream through a steep canyon filled with dense pines and gigantic boulders. Minnehaha was reached at an altitude of 8332 feet and shortly after that, Son-of-a-Gun Hill. Vistas then slowly opened to encompass miles of aspen and towering mountains. After four and a half miles of steep climb we reach 10,000 feet and our first view of the top of Pikes Peak, then, at about 11,500 feet, the train started its climb above the timberline. The Big Hill was climbed, then, at 6 miles, Inspiration Point was reached. Windy Point is 12,130 feet above sea level and it was now getting quite cool. The train stopped for a few minutes and we had time to view Lake Moraine and a small herd of deer or elk in the distance. The wind was very strong and rocked the car. There were a few pockets of ice and snow still visible, even though it was mid-summer. The ground was very rough and rocky and covered with moss and lichen. At 12,500 feet we notice that we were a little light-headed but not uncomfortable. We had

now travelled some seven miles. Slide's Cut (13,000 feet) was reached at eight miles then Ghost Corner was negotiated. We could now see the summit buildings at the end of the line.

Stepping out of the train at the summit (14,110 feet) we were immediately assaulted by the cold air and reduced level of oxygen which here, is one third of that available at sea level. It was a beautiful sunny day and this was as high as we had ever been on land. We could see the city of Denver 60 miles to the north, and a long range of mountains pushing south into New Mexico, over 100 miles away. To the west lies the historic town of Cripple Creek and beyond, mile upon mile of mountains forming the Continental Divide. Directly below us, nestled in a valley, are the red rocks of the Garden of the Gods. The high altitude was noticeable and for us, having spent all of our lives living just a few metres above sea level, a little tiring. Ray was feeling a little dizzy and retired into the summit cafe and souvenir shop where, following instructions, he sipped from a bottle of spring water which helped increase the oxygen level in his blood. At this altitude everybody, young and old, was moving very slowly. Nobody appeared to be particularly stressed, however, although a couple of young people did have bleeding noses.

After 30 minutes we received a call to return to the train for the decent. We had our photographs taken in front of the special Pikes Peak Summit Sign, Ray took some more video, and then we were off on the return trip which seemed to take less time than the ascent. There is also a roadway to the top of this mountain and it is possible to drive your vehicle to the summit in the summer time. This was how Richard and Lisa had reached the top on a previous occasion. We are not sure that that form of transport would appeal to us in the environment we had just experienced but thousands of people apparently do so every season. Once a year a car rally race is also staged from Manitou to the summit. With some pride we learned that New Zealand racing driver, Rod Millen, holds the record time for the distance.

Pikes Peak Cog Railway was definitely a 'big buzz' and a highlight of our tour and we are so grateful to Richard and Lisa for giving us the opportunity to experience the thrill of that new adventure and achievement.

The rail trip had given us an appetite so on arrival back in Colorado Springs, Giuseppe's Old Depot Restaurant was selected as a good place for a meal. Actually, this establishment is quite fascinating as the building was originally the Colorado Springs Railway Station and the grand old Depot and the shiny black Engine 168 on display stand today as reminders of a glorious past. Like the first passenger train from Denver in 1871, freight trains still rumble past and can be seen through the restaurant windows as guests enjoy a meal from the very large and varied menu. The floor of the main dining room still bear the original tiles, polished smooth by millions of feet since 1887. We enjoyed a relaxing time

here before returning to Denver very late in the evening. So relaxed were we that Ray left his credit card behind. A telephone call on arrival back in Denver ensured that the card would be returned to Richard who would forward it on to us in New Zealand in due course.

Saturday, 3rd July

Our last full day in Denver and USA and another busy day for Richard as he prepared for appointments and Sunday services. Lisa drove us to the Southglenn Mall where we spent a few hours browsing through a wide variety of stores where we made some last minute souvenir and gift purchases for family and friends back home. In the early evening we joined Richard and Lisa at a multi-theatre cinema, something we haven't done in New Zealand for a long, long, time, and enjoyed the screening of "The Wild, Wild, West" along with hundreds of happy locals, most of whom were much less than half our age!

Because we had a very early start on Sunday morning for our flights homeward we had arranged for the airport shuttle to pick us up so that our hosts did not have to concern themselves prior to their busy day ahead. We said our 'goodbyes' to Richard and Lisa and thanked them for all they had done to make our visit so enjoyable and memorable. We agreed that we should not leave it too long before we could be together again, either in Denver or Hamilton, New Zealand.

Sunday, 4th July

As pre-arranged, the airport shuttle arrived to pick us up at 5.45 am on the dot. We quietly moved out of the house and closed the front door behind us. Richard informed us by email some days later that they did not hear us leave at all! Our flight departed at 7.15 am.

United Airlines conveyed us in 2 hours and 15 minutes to Los Angeles on a flight that was strangely quiet and bereft of people. It was a large aircraft and there were barely 60 passengers on board. A short discussion with a flight attendant established that this was quite normal on Independence Day, an anniversary that we are familiar with but had forgotten all about. A little over half way through the flight, as we were approaching the Grand Canyon, the captain of the aircraft advised us that there would be a slight change in the sound of the engines as he executed a turn (wing dip) to the left and then to the right so that we could all see down into the canyon as we passed over it. As most of the few passengers on board were probably overseas tourists, such as ourselves, this was a most appreciated public relations manoeuvre by the airline. It was a very clear morning and the view we had of the canyon was excellent.

We landed at Los Angeles about 8.30 am local time. We had three hours to collect our luggage, transport it to the Air New Zealand counter at Terminal Two, have a meal, and prepare ourselves for the long flight home to New Zealand.

The flight passed quietly, and without incident. Once again we had practically the whole huge aircraft to ourselves. There were less than 80 passengers so we had a choice of many seats. In fact, we had our own seating area for viewing out of the windows, seating for watching movies, seating (with armrests down) for sleeping, and seating area (close to the galley) for drinks and meals. The stewards and stewardesses were more-than-usually attentive, having so few people to serve and look after. Not much to see outside the aircraft except cloud and, miles below, ocean, although at one point we passed over a number of coral reefs and small pacific islands, the names of which we do not know. This flight was a bit different from the normal trans-pacific crossing because on this service we were travelling constantly in daylight. Due to the morning departure and the fact that we were travelling east, towards the rising sun, it only commenced to set an hour or two before we landed in New Zealand.

At 7.15 pm, New Zealand time, on Monday, 5th July, we arrived back in Auckland, suddenly very, very weary. Once out of the terminal building we were also reminded that we were back to winter. After weeks of glorious summer temperatures even the mild New Zealand winter felt pretty grim.

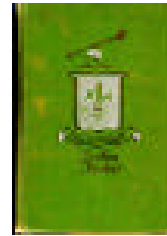
The 32 days of our trip had been absolutely magic. Our holiday, adventure and genealogy expedition had exceeded all expectations. We will remember always the experiences, the wonderful people that we met and the friendships made with great affection, and pray that we will have the opportunity to 'do it all again' sometime in the not-too-distant future. One of our greatest wishes is that one day soon, we will get the opportunity to welcome you onto New Zealand soil and return the hospitality that was so freely given to us during every day on our tour.

THE END

Ray and Mavis

Herbert C. Fooks
and the
The Fooks Family

I am interested in being contacted by anyone who has knowledge of Herbert C. Fooks, author of *The Fooks Family*, or his family as requested in my article published in Volume 1, Issue 2. I can be contacted by mail at:



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