



Discovering Clara Barton's search for missing soldiers

On a summer day five years ago, a government carpenter crawled into a dark and dirty attic and gave history a nudge.

Near the edge of piles of Civil War-era letters, abolitionist publications, old photographs, bandages and period women's clothing he found a square tin sign inscribed with gold letters on a black background.

It read: "Missing Soldiers. Office. 3rd Story. Room 9. Miss Clara Barton."

Richard Lyons, an employee of the General Services Administration, had discovered a virtual time capsule — sealed for nearly 130 years — bearing on the early career of one of the 19th century's most interesting women, Clara Barton, founder of the American Red Cross.

More discoveries were to come. The long-unused third floor of 437 7th St. NW, near Pennsylvania Avenue, halfway between the White House and the Capitol, did have a Room 9. The number was still printed on the door. Rolls of white satin striped wallpaper in the attic matched wallpaper still clinging in tatters to the walls of the room. In her Civil War journals, Clara Barton had reported hanging white satin striped wallpaper.

Gary Scott, chief historian for the National Park Service's National Capital Region, soon had the evidence to show that Barton had lived and worked in the 7th Street apartment from 1861 to 1868. It was her headquarters and refuge as she organized relief efforts for the wounded on the battlefields of the war. She continued to live there, sleeping in an area partitioned off from the rest of the long room, as she led the government's search for thousands of missing Union soldiers.

"In delighted amazement we literally crawled through a thick layer of historical papers, publications and clothing, all dating from the mid- to late 1860s, none later than 1868," Scott wrote in an article describing the discovery in "Washington History," the journal of The Historical Society of Washington, D.C.

The founding of the American Red Cross would come long after Barton left Room 9. But her life and work there was clearly an important step in that much longer story.

At the time Lyons popped his head into the attic, Barton's red-brick building and the structure on the corner next door were scheduled for demolition. Because of his discovery, both will be saved and restored.

As part of the agreement between Congress' General

Accounting Office and the private developers, Room 9 and the stairway from the 7th Street sidewalk will be returned to their 1860s appearance and opened to the public.

When work is completed at the end of 2003, the two buildings will become the focal point for a complex of 420 luxury apartments and a 250-seat theater.

When the Civil War broke out in the spring of 1861, Clara Barton was a 29-year-old former school teacher working as a clerk at the U.S. Patent Office. When the first Union troops arrived in the city in 1861 she helped provide supplies for them.

The success of this effort led to a far broader enterprise to distribute medical and humanitarian supplies to wounded and sick soldiers that continued until the fighting ended.

President Lincoln then authorized her to organize the search for thousands of missing soldiers, making her the first woman to head a federal agency.

When it closed its books in 1868, the Office of Correspondence with Friends of the Missing Men of the United States Army reported that it had received 63,182 inquiries, written 44,855 replies and identified some 22,000 of the estimated 62,000 missing men. Most had died of wounds or disease.

More than 60 boxes of artifacts were removed from Clara Barton's attic.

"We found glass inkwells and boxes of small steel pen points," Scott wrote. "We found office signs in the attic for dentists, doctors and lawyers who also had offices in the building." There were women's straw hats and fans "and a great deal of funeral bunting, perhaps used at the time of Lincoln's funeral."

"The apartments in their tattered, faded shape give a haunting feeling of what it must have been like living in a crowded, middle-class rooming house during the Civil War," Scott wrote.

Outside on 7th Street a steel mesh fence surrounds the construction site and the two surviving buildings.

Taped to a third-floor window, a photograph of Clara Barton peers down at the street she once knew well.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The above article was taken from the Goodland Daily News and was written by Lawrence L. Knutson, the White House and Washington's history for 34 years.

Reader tells his side of story

Letter to the editor:

I feel I must respond to the statement in last week's paper about the head judge at last year's demo derby. My family, friends and I have volunteered our time at the Cheyenne County Fair for many years to help at the demo derby. When I was asked to be head judge, I took the responsibility and remained unbiased and impartial on the night of the derby. Our group took pride in doing our job and had many compliments from both in-town and out-of-town people.

Last year, one person on the fair board decided to become a driver in

Letter to the Editor

the derby and did not like the decisions of the judges. He told two of them that they were fired and would not return.

After the fair, I went to a fair board meeting and told them I would be more than willing to help at next year's demo derby but there would have to be some changes. The person who was taking notes for the paper did not quote me correctly in the article in the paper. I didn't even respond to the paper when they printed it.

Now I want to correct these things. First of all, I did not say that I or any of the volunteers wanted to be paid. I stated that if the fair board had to pay for judges that it would take out of the profit that the demo derby makes at the fair.

I also stated that I get paid to judge out-of-town derbies but did not expect that in my hometown. I asked how much the derby had made for the fair but no one had that information. I was later told that \$7,500 had been

brought in.

I now understand why there are people that quit serving on the fair board because of one stubborn foolish fair board member. It's not easy spending most of the day inspecting cars and running the demo derby. It takes a group of people working together.

Overall, the fair board has been a great group to work with throughout the years. I just want to make it clear that I nor any of the judges have ever been paid or have asked to be paid to judge the Cheyenne County demo derby. We did these things so that Cheyenne County people could enjoy the fair. I just want everyone that has asked me about this year's derby to know that I was fired by one fair board member. **I did not quit!**

I wish good luck to whoever is running and judging the derby this year. I hope you have as great a turnout as in previous years.

David L. Wright
St. Francis

Honor Roll

New and renewed Herald subscription: Leroy Felzien, Raytown, Mo.; Stanley Hilt, St. Francis; Bev Crane, Hugoton; Elsa Potter, Stratton, Neb.; Mr. and Mrs. Chris Haugsness, Topeka; Mary Lou Murphy, Broomfield, Colo.; SS Enterprise, Imperial, Neb.; Gilbert Ochsner, St. Francis; Joyce Wiley, St. Francis; Dean Knapp, Bird City; Aletha Murphy, St. Francis; Mark Crumly, Gray, Tenn.; Leonard Richard, St. Francis; Tobe D. Zweygardt, Prairie City, Ore.; Harold Cress, Bird City; Fleda Raile, St. Francis; Penny Raile, West Hollywood, Calif.; Robert and LaNeele Netherton, Titusville, Fla.; Betty Stroup, Benkelman, Neb.; Mrs. Don Watts, Sacramento, Calif.; Mrs. William Black, Jonesboro, Ark.; Gale Walz, St. Francis; James Tracy, McDonald; Kenny Bracelin, St. Francis.

GOD SAYS

Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

Proverbs 22:6

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J.P. Doodles

Genealogy Korner

By Marilyn Holzwarth

Have you ever heard the name Tomai? Thomas Tomai married Josephine Friedley in Davenport, Iowa in 1875. They were in Bird City by 1886 where they operated the Globe Restaurant, and he was noted as a French Restaurateur.

While they lived there, he applied for a pension for serving in the Civil War because he had a chronic liver

and kidney complaint. Seven children are listed on the pension, R. Edd, who changed his name from Adam, Rosa, Mary, Lola, Inez, Vira and Hertha. Little son Frank is buried in the Wheeler-Cheyenne Valley cemetery. The family was not aware that Thomas and Josephine had lost a child here in Cheyenne County.

The family joined quite a few others from Cheyenne County in 1893

who left for Oklahoma. Thomas and Josephine are buried in Shawnee, Okla.

We enjoy learning about the lives of our early settlers, and are glad to share what information we have found here in the county. If you have questions about any of our early people, please let us know, we will see, if we can find some interesting facts about them.

News From the Past

10 years ago - 1992

Thirty seniors received diplomas at graduation Sunday. Senior class president Karah Dankenbring gave the senior farewell and the class vice president Jason Gardner presented the senior talk.

The Cheyenne County Fair Board voted to authorize the construction of a building which would be 50-by-90 foot. This building will house a kitchen area.

The Cheyenne County Jaycee have begun working on the area around Keller Pond to make it more inviting to area residents. They have been planting bushes and grass. Plans are for 12 Ponderosa pines in the picnic area which will be enclosed with a cable fence.

Delegates to Girls State include Brandi Gabel, Shara Kechter, Stephanie Polly and April Lyons.

Tracksters qualifying for state include Chad Wolfe, Kale Dankenbring, Jason Applegate, Chris Lampe, Mindy Porter, Kayla Raile, Amy Shay, Jennie Schlepp, Stephanie Polly, Heidi DeGood, Leigh Faulkender, Kelly Renk, Jenny Cassidy, and Karah Dankenbring. Alternates traveling with the team include Jeff Hoffman, Ryan McAtee and Carly Duquette.

Cheyenne County Young

Women of the Year candidates include: Chasiti Gutsch, Shara Kechter, Kristin Schlittenhardt, Kari Krien, Stephanie Polly, Tonya Potthoff, Loretta Pederson, Crystal Semler, Mariah Berry, Ann Miller, Brandi Gabel, Ericka Renzelman, StarAnna Schneider, Tonia Semler, Kelly Renk, Christina Poling, Melissa Horn. Shara Kechter won the title.

Last week, bulldozers began flattening the Lawn Ridge food stand, along with the 4-H Council food stand. In place of these buildings, a 50 foot-by-95 foot steel building will be erected. The first food stand at the fairground was constructed by the Lawn Ridge 4-H Club in 1940.

The St. Francis Area Chamber of Commerce recently hired Teri Davis as the new chamber secretary.

Andy Poling set three new pool records as the St. Francis swim team entered their first league competition at Wray.

Eunice Burnham and Shaaron Girty were recognized for 25 years of teaching.

Virginia Fiedler recently moved her Sweat Shop to its new location at 109 S. College Street.

30 years ago - 1972

The St. Francis Lions Club began work Monday night on the "Kiddy Park" between Faulkender Hardware and Hefner Sewing Center. Clean-up

work, erecting a fence, and installing some playground equipment were all accomplished. This was a much needed downtown project.

Scholarship winners in the class of 1972 include: Ed Kite, Rodney Hilt, Rick Wolfe, Dan Keller, Harvey Barnhart, Trudy Little, Barbara Floyd, Diane Herman, Debbie Sperry, Michele Schlittenhardt and Marilyn Miller.

Lawrence Joe Randle, Cheyenne County Extension Director and County Extension Agricultural Agent, has resigned effective May 31.

President John Lindsten set fire to the note on the building and equipment of the Cheyenne County Rod and Gun Club at a special ceremony. The club in just five years has paid for the building purchased from the country club plus installing one of the finest trap shooting facilities in the area.

The Malt Shoppe in St. Francis has expanded its facilities to include car hop service at the drive-in portion.

60 years ago - 1942

The one well and windmill out at the cemetery has not been furnishing sufficient water for the proper care of the trees, the plants and plots and so the city officials are making a new well to augment the water supply.

men in St. Francis.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

<p>Wesleyan Church Hwy 36 • 734-2727 Pastor Scott Baker Sunday School 9:45 a.m. Worship 11:00 a.m. Sunday Bible Study 7 p.m.</p>	<p>Peace Lutheran Church 202 N. College 332-2928 Pars. 332-2308 Pastor David Roszbach Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:30 a.m.</p>	<p>United Methodist Church Church Office 332-2292, Church 332-2254, Pars. 332-3170 512 S. Scott Pastor Dennis Livingston Early Bird Service 8:30 a.m. Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:30 a.m.</p>
<p>Church of Christ 332-2380, Pars. 332-3424 502 W. Spencer Norman Morrow - Minister Bible Class 9 a.m. Morning Worship 10 a.m. Wed. Bible Study 7 p.m.</p>	<p>First Christian Church 332-2956 • 118 E. Webster Pastor Joe Briseno Sunday School 9:15 a.m. Church Service 10:30 a.m. Wed. night Bible Study 7 p.m.</p>	<p>First Baptist Church 2nd & Scott • 332-3921 J.W. Glidewell, Pastor Sunday School 9:30 Worship 10:30 a.m. Sunday Evening Service 6:30 p.m., Wednesday prayer service, 6:00 p.m. Wed. AWANA Club 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.</p>
<p>Grace Assembly of God 332-2925, Pars. 332-2899 208 E. 2nd Rev. Rob Meyer Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:30 Sunday Eve. Service 6 p.m.</p>	<p>Seventh-Day Adventist Church 332-2888 • 3rd & Adams Pastor Arlin Cochran Sabbath School 9:30 Morning Worship 10:45</p>	<p>Clough Valley Baptist Church Pastor Al Davis D. Min. 12 m. west, 6 m. north of SF 332-2506 Sunday School 9:00 a.m. CT Worship 10:00 a.m. CT</p>
<p>Salem Lutheran Church 332-3002 Pastor Chris Farmer Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Morning Worship 11 a.m.</p>	<p>St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church 625 S. River • 332-2680 Fr. Beryl Gibson Sunday Mass 10:30 a.m. Weekday Mass 8 a.m. Confessions Sat. 4-4:30</p>	<p>St. Francis Equity</p>

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