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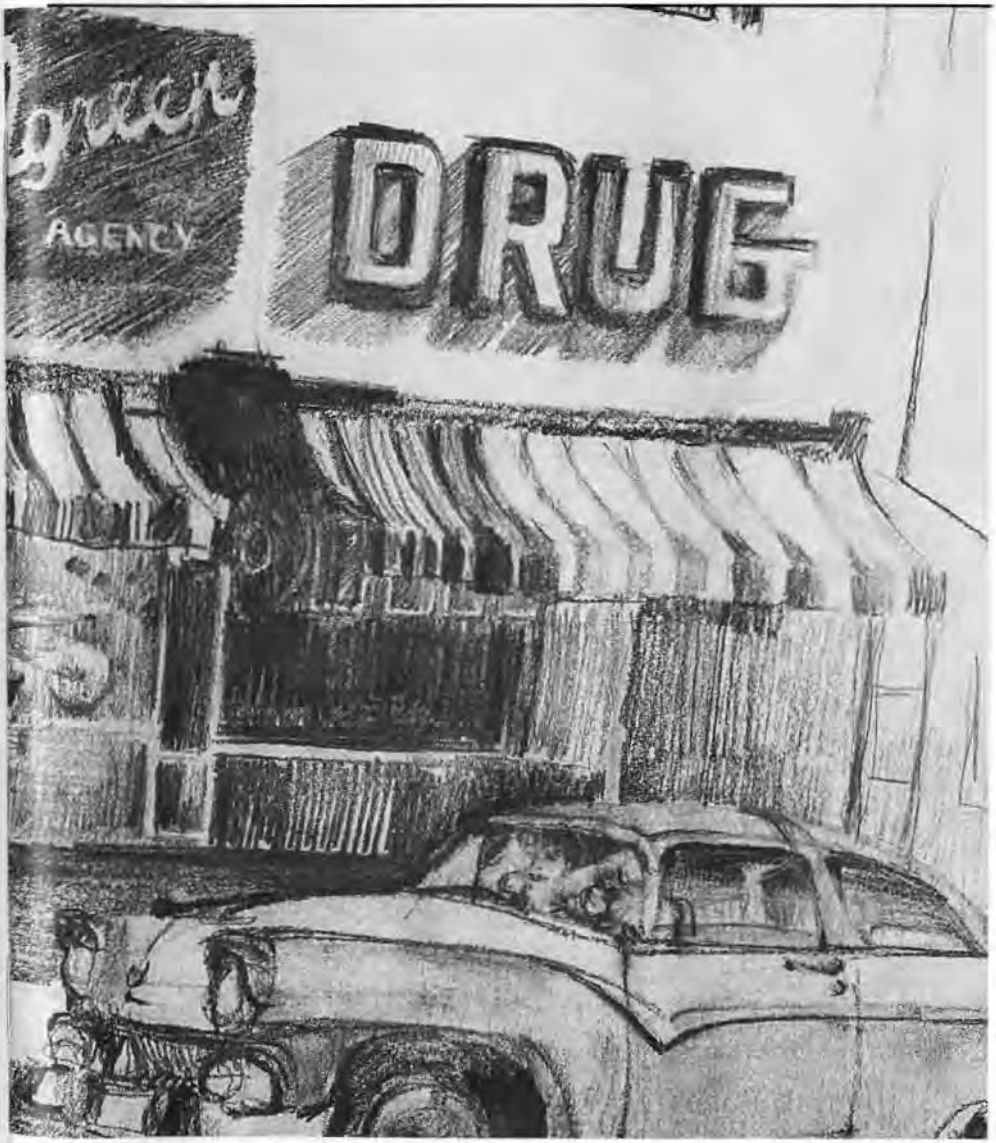

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JOURNAL OF THE WESTERN SLOPE

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The Journal of the Western Slope is a member of the Media Board of MSC and abides by its policies, procedures, and code of ethics.

THE COVER: The drawing is by Ami Turner. She is currently a Senior at Mesa State College majoring in Art. She is looking forward to continuing her studies at the graduate level.

Mesa Drug: A 1950s Social Institution

by Terri Strode

In the 1950s, Mesa Drug was a mainstay for many in Grand Junction. Located at Fourth and Main Streets, in the heart of the downtown shopping district, it was a place for friends and families to meet for lunch. It was also a gathering place for local teenagers who, after dragging Main in their fast cars, would stop at the soda fountain to enjoy a "suicide" or a cherry Coke. The social history of Mesa Drug is an important part of understanding Grand Junction in the 1950s.

During the fifties, the economy was booming across the nation. John Patrick Diggins points out in *The Proud Decades: America in War and Peace 1941–1960* that "between 1950 and 1958, the economy expanded enormously."[1] People had good jobs and the post–war economy left them with money to buy previously unavailable goods held in limbo by both Word War II and the Korean War. With the war over, men were back in the work place. Because of their return, many women who had been filling the void in the work place left by men who went into combat returned home to fulfill their duties in the domestic circle. In *The Fifties*, David Halberstam states that "the new culture of consumerism told women they should be homemakeers and saw them merely as potentail buyers for all the new washers and dryers, freezers, floor waxers, pressure cookers and blenders."[2]

The fifties also saw an increase in minority migration into the state of Colorado. While in the southern United States it was the African–American who suffered from discrimination, in Colorado the victim was the Hispanic. Carl Ubbelohde says, "The rapid movement of minority groups into previously all–white neighborhoods unfortunately generated hostile reactions." He also reveals that "the problems encountered by minority groups were not limited to the Denver area, but spread throughout Colorado as Hispanics struggled to advance their positions."[3] They were exposed to all kinds of prejudicial treatment from segregated schools to segregated neighborhoods created by "white flight" to the suburbs.

Grand Junction's economy, like that of the nation, was good in the fifties. People had money to spend, and downtown, including Mesa Drug, profited from it. Teenagers were also working, creating an entirely new market for manufacturers of consumer goods. Women in Grand Junction went against the national trend, however, when it came to working outside the home. While there were those who chose to return home to their domestic duties, many others chose to work. Mesa Drug, in response to that trend, actually tended to hire more women than men to work the lunch counter, according to previous owners F. Craig and Betty Harris. Mesa Drug was also among the first of Grand Junction's businesses to hire Hispanic workers. These people, who were subject to so much ridicule, were, in Betty Harris' eyes, "some of the best workers we ever had."[4] Grand Junction, then, was both in step with the trends of the fifties as well as breaking new ground.

To understand how Mesa Drug became such an important part of peoples' lives, one had to look at Main Street itself. In many communities, Main Street served as the center of city life, and Grand Junction was no exception. When people went to buy just about anything, they knew they would find it downtown. It would be difficult to open any copy of the local newspaper, the *Daily Sentinel*, and not find an ad for one shop or another downtown. Main Street was, according to Deana Frisch, who was a young teenager in the late fifties, "*the* place to be." She says, "It was a big thing to go downtown on the weekends." As a young girl, she lived in the downtown area during the fifties, and it was nothing for her and friends to simply walk to Main Street. It was safe for young girls to do that back then. "You can't do that anymore. It was a more easygoing, safer time then."[5]

Going downtown involved much more than just shopping. While stores like Fashion Bar, JC Penney, and Montgomery Ward were successful in getting peoples' money, there were other reasons to venture downtown, such as the Mesa and Cooper theaters. Rita Latham, who grew up in Grand Junction,

(Photo courtesy Jim Burlison)

Mesa Drug, circa 1957.

has fond memories of these movie houses, and films starring the likes of Tammy Reynolds and Glenn Ford. After a movie, she and her friends would go to Mesa Drug for a soda or some other treat.[7] Betty Harris remembers her own children seeing a movie and then heading to the drug store for an after–movie treat.[11] It seemed almost as if a ritual were developing. Parents and children would head to Main Street. The parents would shop while the children went to catch a matinee at the Mesa or the Cooper, and they would meet at Mesa Drug afterwards. It was truly a family oriented time, a time when, according to Deana Frisch, "children were not ashamed to be seen in public with their parents."[8]

During the fifities, the automobile was, according to John Patrick Diggins, very important to teenagers. "For proud teenagers, it [the auto] was the supreme status symbol, the one possession that with its 'souped–up' carburetors and lowered chassis and various metallic colors, answered the need for freedom and diversity in a community of flatness and conformity."[9] Main Street provided the showcase for these status symbols. Today, Main Street is a series of curves that discourages speed of any kind. In the fifties, however, the street was straight as an arrow, perfect for teenagers with jazzed–up hot rods. Betty Harris, who, as owner of Mesa Drug saw a lot of action on Main Street, recalled that "it became the thing in the fifties to drag Main."[10]

Cruising Main Street had different results for some than others. For some it was a way to show off and pick up girls, while for others it could be a real nightmare. Vonnie Hombach has just such a bad memory. Back in 1959, she borrowed her parent's Chevy station wagon to go to Grand Junction High School's homecoming football game. Her parents warned her not to drive a lot of kids around, but, being a teenager, she decided to do it anyway, knowing her parents would never find out. After the game everyone, including Vonnie and her car full of passengers, drove down Main Street to celebrate the team's victory. In all the excitment, Vonnie failed to see that the young man in the car in front of her had stopped. She rear–ended him at the corner of Fourth and Main, right in front of Mesa Drug.[11]

Shopping, movies and cruising were all reasons that people flocked to Main Street during the fifties.Those factors alone, however, do not explain why Mesa Drug itself was so popular. According to the *Daily Sentinel*, "the downtown drug store [Mesa Drug] has been a fixture since pioneer days." F. Craig Harris, who took over the operation of Mesa Drug in 1954 after his father, Frank, passed away, believes "it's been a good location [for Mesa Drug] for years and years."[12] But this does not seem to be enough to explain the store's success. The question remains as to why Mesa Drug was the place to be in the fifties.

(Photo 1996.64, courtesy of Research Center & Special Library, Museum of Western Colorado)

Main Street, circa 1955.

Main Street during the fifties had several drug stores. Lende's Super Drug was located just two blocks down from Mesa Drug on Sixth and Main. Copeland's Cut Rate Drug Store also called Main Street home. When people went downtown, however, they did not go into Lende's or Copeland's after a rough day of shopping or a Saturday matinee. More often than not, they went to Mesa Drug, despite the fact Copeland's had a lunch counter and Lende's would serve sodas. There was just something about Mesa Drug's lunch counter that drew people to it.

Maybe it was the location, as Craig Harris believed. Or it could have been that people got used to going there because they had done it for so long. Young and old alike spent time in the familiar surrounding of Mesa Drug. Ted Hoaglund was one such youngster who has fond memories of the little store at Fourth and Main. Even though he was only four years old in the late fifties, he remembers his family driving from their home in Kannah Creek on Saturdays. This, he knew, meant they were going shopping on Main Street, and then they would all have lunch at Mesa Drug. Even at four, Ted looked forward to these Saturday outings because he got to go to Mesa Drug. It was really the only place in town to eat, he remembers. Who could beat a full meat and potatoes meal for only ninety–nine cents? Mesa Drug was a big part of Ted's life as he grew up, and these Saturday lunches meant a great deal to him.[13]

Saturdays meant family lunches for Deana Frisch as well. For only thirty–nine cents each, she and her mom and dad could each get a "Jiffy Burger" with fries and a Coke or an ice–cream soda. Deana recalled that "the food was good, and we always had to wait in line to get in."[14] People knew the food was good and the prices were fair, and they were willing to wait.

Families were not the only kind of people that patronized Mesa Drug. Teenagers were also an important part of the store's success. From church youth groups to high school football teams, teenagers found Mesa Drug a great place to "hang out" in the fifties. Going there was more than having an ice–cream soda or a hamburger. It was a social event. For many teens, Mesa Drug was a way to gauge what was going on in Grand Junction. Teenagers during the fifties had distinct ideas about how people should behave in public. If someone showed up at Mesa Drug, he had better watch his p's and q's or else risk being the talk of the town the next day, and this usually was not good talk. Society put restrictions on almost every aspect of peoples' lives. Teenagers, being critical, felt it their duty to enforce these unspoken, but well–known rules.

The standard dress for young ladies in the fifties was the poodle skirt, rolled–down bobby socks and saddle shoes. Deana Frisch recalled that "nice

girls did not wear pants. We wore dresses and dressed up. We had pride in how we looked. If someone walked in wearing pants, we wouldn't have anything to do with her."[15] The girl in the fifties who dared step outside the safe circle of poodle skirts and saddle shoes took the risk of being ostracized by her peers.

Boys, on the other hand, had a slightly more relaxed dress code. The typical look for the young man of the fifties was a button–down shirt with blue jeans which were rolled up at the bottom. They could even get away with a T–shirt and jeans. Deana Frisch remembered that the boys, like the girls, "always looked nice."[16] Betty Harris distinctly recalled that "boys in the fifties did not wear hats in Mesa Drug or any other building. They were well behaved."[17] It was a time when girls were young ladies and boys were young men, at least in public. They knew to do otherwise would be social suicide.

There were those, however, who stepped outside what was acceptable. Rita Latham was one such person. What evil and horrible thing did she do? She smoked. By doing so, she broke an unspoken rule. Young ladies did not smoke, only easy girls did. Because of this stereotype, Rita kept her smoking a secret. "I smoked, but I don't remember doing it except in the bathroom [at Mesa Drug]." The one thing Rita remembered most about Mesa Drug was that "the bathrooms were really dirty."[18] She remembered this information because she spent more time in there than most teenagers, trying to hide something she knew would cause her problems.

Mesa Drug was more than just a meeting place for friends. It was a place to check out the opposite sex. Flirting was an everyday happening at the drug store. If the flirting was successful, the kids still went to Mesa Drug for their dates. "Mesa Drug was a big date place," recalled Sue Fox, herself a teenager in the fifties. "You could go lunch at Mesa Drug on a Saturday afternoon for thirty–nine cents and then head to the theater to catch a fifty–cent matinee."[19] A young couple could have a big time with just a little money.

The teenage scene was a huge part of Mesa Drug's success, but there were others who stopped to enjoy the food and atmosphere at the Mesa Drug's lunch counter. There were regulars who stopped in on a daily basis to have lunch or a cup of coffee. It was also convenient for the businessmen who worked downtown to run into Mesa Drug for lunch. Others just stopped by day after day because they knew someone would be there who they could talk to. Betty Harris remembers, "It was a meeting place for several of the retired railroaders who lived around here, and they came in to talk about whatever it is retired railroaders talked about."[20] It was a time, says Deana Frisch, when "you could meet up with a perfect stranger on Main Street and go to Mesa Drug and get a five–cent Coke. You couldn't do that today."[21]

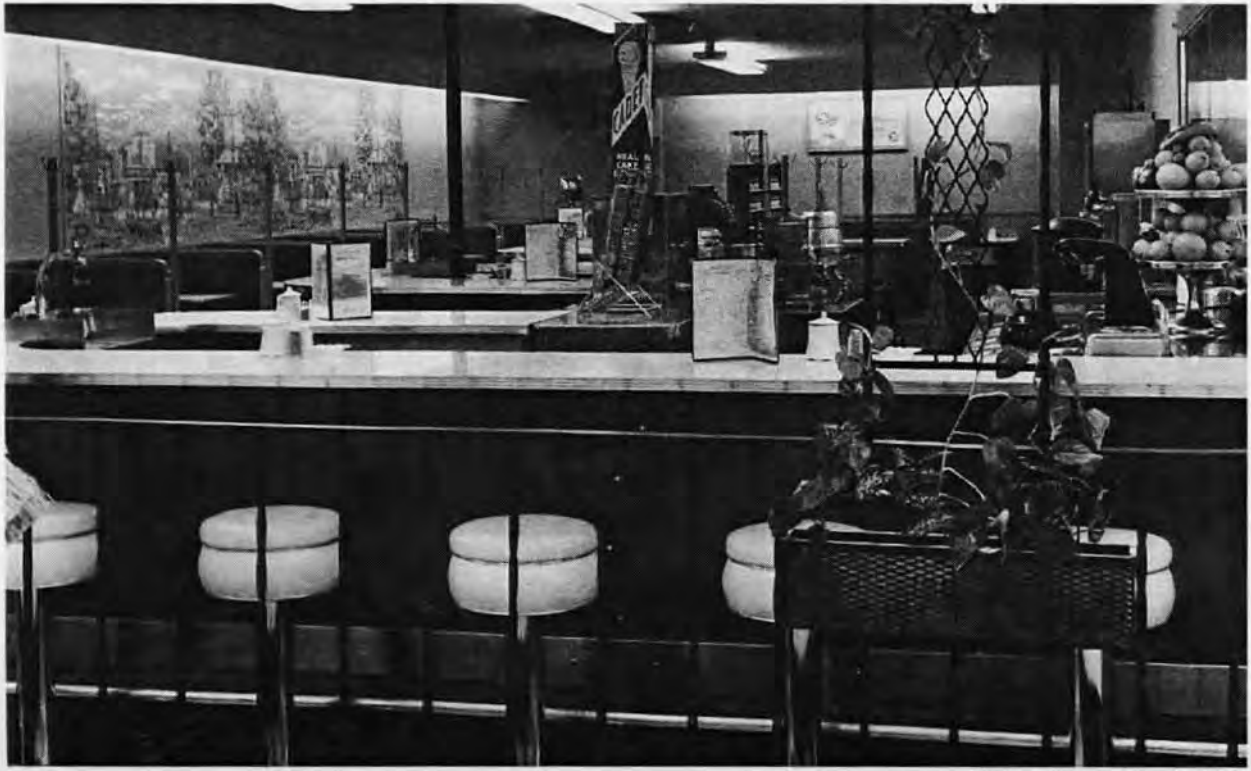
With all of this business, the owners had to make sure they had a good staff to keep things running smoothly. "They were very choosy about who they hired," remembered Sue Fox, who worked for Mesa Drug as a gift wrapper during Christmases in the fifties.[22] Continuity also seemed to be the key, as people who were hired stayed on for years. Entire families worked for Mesa Drug. Those who worked there seemed to feel just like the customers—they felt at home.

Deana Frisch says that it was "cool to work at Mesa Drug."[23] Because it was such a hot spot in town, especially for teenagers, working there was a high-profile job. "Everyone knew who worked at Mesa Drug," Sue Fox recalled.[24] In fact, her future husband, Fred Fox, worked there beginning in 1955. Fred held a number of different jobs. "I started out in the kitchen as a busboy, then I was a dishwasher, then I worked in the stockroom, and later I was trained to keep the books."[25] Fred worked at Mesa Drug at the same time as another young man who would become familiar with the business. John Cesario started his career with Mesa Drug in 1956 as a busboy. He would eventually buy the building in 1981 and start his own little coffee shop.[26]

One may think Mesa Drug tended to hire men, but it was acutally the opposite. To see a woman working the lunch counter was much more common. Fred Fox's mother, Elva, worked there during the fifties as a cashier. Most women, however, found work behind the lunch counter. Hiring women did pose one problem for Betty Harris. As a woman, she found the skirts that society deemed proper to be very confining, especially in the physical environment of the lunch counter. It seemed much more sensible to her that the girls be allowed to wear pants, no matter what society dictated to be proper. Betty made it quite clear that the girls who worked for her would be allowed to wear pants because it only made sense. She told her husband Craig exactly how it would be. "I will not get up on a ladder with a skirt on," she remembers telling him. That was the end of that discussion.[27]

The fifties saw a great influx of Hispanics into Grand Junction because of the booming fruit industry in the valley. This meant there would be Hispanics looking for work. Mesa Drug's owners saw these people as hard workers and did not think twice about hiring them. Social ideas on race or color took a backseat to having a good staff to work the lunch counter.

While the fifties saw segregation in the southern United States, Grand Junction was different. Hispanics in the community found a niche, at least at Mesa Drug. African-Americans were also treated like everyone else, despite what was going on in other parts of the country. They could sit at the lunch counter like anyone else and enjoy the same service everyone else got. There



(Photo courtesy of Jim Burlison)

Snack bar at Mesa Drug, circa 1957.

was still conservative feeling, however. "It was okay to be friends [with African–Americans and Hipanics] but there was no dating."[28] Despite this attitude, Mesa Drug was a place where no one was denied the right to have lunch or a soda if they so desired. They were family just like everyone else.

Besides being one of the first places in Grand Junction to hire Hispanics, Mesa Drug was also, according to Betty Harris, one of the first places to hire the mentally disabled from the State Home and Training School. One young man in particular stood out in Betty's mind. This man, named Teddy, was "everybody's love" at Mesa Drug. He worked as a busboy, as did most of the State Home residents. Betty laughed as she remembered Teddy coming up to her with a five dollar bill, wanting to buy a girlie magazine. It was not just for him, he explained, but for all of his friends, too. Betty had to refuse him despite his valiant attempt to get the magazine.[29]

Unfortunatley, everything was not all laughs. After Teddy started working at the store, the girls who worked there began to notice that money was missing from their purses that were stored in the backroom while the girls worked. The staff, as well as Craig and Betty, had a feeling it could be Teddy taking the money, but they had no proof. They decided to set a trap using a powder that, by itself, is nearly invisible. When it comes into contact with the oils in human skin, however, it turns a bright purple that stains whatever it touches and cannot be washed off. One day, after being in the backroom, Teddy came out with his hands purple from reacting with the powder from the purses. The thief was caught, but everyone was sad to see that it was Teddy. They had to let him go, but they continued to hire those people from the State Home who could work.[30]

The lunch counter and those who worked there were important to the success of Mesa Drug, but that is only part of the story. The drug counter itself was very much part of what made Mesa Drug great. "The business in Mesa Drug was split about fifty–fifty between the lunch counter and the drug counter."[31] Everything from prescriptions to cold cream to baseball mitts were sold in the store. A patron could even purchase the latest forty–five record by whatever artist was popular at a particular time for just twenty–nine cents. Just about anything anyone could possibly need or want was under one roof.

Sometimes people wanted a little more than they could have, so they decided to try to take whatever it was they wanted. In the fifties, the drugs at Mesa Drug became a target for thieves. Before silent alarms and today's breakthrough security technology, many tried to help themselves to whatever they could get their hands on. Some were more successful than others. Perhaps the

most bungling burglar to break into Mesa Drug was a young man who decided to get into the building through the space for the air conditioner. Once inside, he got what he wanted, then realized he had a small problem—he could not get out. Instead of trying to break the glass and escape, he simply waited for the police to arrive and arrest him. Another criminal who also entered via the roof decided to get creative and left a calling card. He defecated on the roof. This was the kind of crime that Mesa Drug had to deal with in the fifties.[32]

The drug and lunch counters at Mesa Drug worked together to create a special place in the communtiy in the fifties. The success, however, could not go on forever. Main Street began its slow decline in the late fifties and early sixties. Even though it had provided the community with a place where everyone could always feel at home and like one of the family, there was no stopping progress.

The rise of the automobile, which at first seemed to be drawing teenagers like a magnet to Main Street, also helped to pull them away. The late fifties saw another part of town becoming popular. North Avenue was pulling teens away from Main Street. Instead of taking dates down Main Street on Saturday night, teens headed to the new drive–ins on North Avenue. Places like the Top Hat Drive–In, located at 139 North Avenue, were becoming the hot spots. Teen could eat and show off their cars at the same time, something they could not do on Main Street. The A & W Drive–In soon followed, as well as a Sonic Drive–In in the sixties. Vonnie Hombach believes "the heyday for Mesa Drug was the early fifties, and the Top Hat during the last half of the decade began to draw people away from downtown."[33]

Craig and Betty Harris could not believe that North Avenue would ever amount to anything. Main Street was "the hub of business for the Grand Junction community during the fifties, as it had been since the turn of the century."[41] When an enterprising young businessman opened Martin's Mortuary on North Avenue in the fifties, everyone on Main "thought he was crazy."[34] North Avenue was like an unexplored frontier. It seemed a risky proposition to most people who did not see how anything, especially a barren area like North Avenue, could ever compete with Main Street.

Mesa Drug still had its faithful patrons who came in after weekend shopping expeditions and regulars who came in for company and conversation, but the sixies saw an early frost that wiped out fruit crops all over the valley. The economy, which had been booming in the fifties, suddenly suffered a setback. The fruit crop that had been such an important part of the valley's economy was gone. Fred Fox remembers that he "could not get a

(Photo courtesy of Jim Burlison)

Interior of Mesa Drug, circa 1957.

decent job. Mesa Drug had to suffer because of the downturn in the economy."[35]

A struggling economy and, years later, urban growth, signalled the end of an era for Main Street and Mesa Drug. A new shopping mall and multi–screen movie theaters made it virtually unnecessary to travel to Main Street. In 1987 Mesa Drug, in response to these pressures, closed for good. It was a sad situation for many who saw Mesa Drug as a symbol of better times. Ginger Rice, a *Daily Sentinel* reporter, found that "the prospect of a downtown without a Mesa Drug store saddens some of the city's longtime residents...[like] Sterling Smith, who said, 'I hate to see it close.'"[36]

The closing of Mesa Drug signified the end of an era. The fifties were a happy, prosperous time, and Mesa Drug personified that. With a staff that was like family and loyal customers, Mesa Drug epitomized the downtown experience. A customer could walk into the store at the corner of Fourth and Main and know they would see a friendly, familiar face. If nothing else remained certain in their world, they knew they could count on Mesa Drug to be the same no matter what. A customer was a person, not a number. Sue Fox believes that "outstanding, wonderful people ran the store," and that was part of their success. "Nobody ever left Mesa Drug needing a prescription they could not afford, and no kid who looked hungry ever left without something to eat, even if it was a candy bar."[37]

It is precisely because of this kind of attitude that Mesa Drug was so loved by the communtiy. Now, all people have are the memories of a happier time, of ice–cream sodas and nickel candy bars, of family outings and Saturday matinees. It is sad that not everyone will be able to experience an establishment like Mesa Drug or be a part of what it stood for. It is not likely we will ever see anything quite like Mesa Drug again.

NOTES

[1]John Patrick Diggins, *The Proud Decades: America In War and Peace 1941–1960* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1988), 178.
[2]David Halberstam, *The Fifties* (New York: Villard Books, 1993), 589.
[3]Carl Ubbelohde, Maxine Benson, and Duane A. Smith, *A Colorado History* (Boulder: Pruett Publishing Company, 1972), 357.
[4]F. Craig and Betty Harris, interview by author, Grand Junction, Colorado, 18 October 1996.
[5]Deana Frisch, interview by author, Grand Junction, Colorado, 30 September 1996.
[6]Rita Latham, interview by author, Grand Junction, Colorado, 6 October 1996.
[7]B. Harris, interview.
[8]D. Frisch, interview.
[9]Diggins, *Proud Decade*, 184.
[10]B. Harris, interview.
[11]Vonnie Hombach, interview by author, Grand Junction, Colorado, 6 October 1996.
[12]Ginger Rice, "Downtown Foreclosure Forces Mesa Drug Move," *Grand Junction (Colorado) Daily Sentinel*, 1 June 1987.
[13]Ted Hoaglund, interview by author, Grand Junction, Colorado, 6 October, 1996.
[14]D. Frisch, interview.
[15]Ibid.
[16]Ibid.
[17]B. Harris, interview.
[18]R. Latham, interview.
[19]Sue Fox, interview by author, Grand Junction, Colorado, 18 November 1996.
[20]B. Harris, interview.
[21]D. Frisch, interview.
[22]S. Fox, interview.
[23]B. Frisch, interview.
[24]S. Fox, interview.
[25]Fred Fox, interview by author, Grand Junction, Colorado, 18 November 1996.
[26]Rice, *Daily Sentinel*.
[27]B. Harris, interview.
[28]R. Latham, interview.
[29]B. Harris, interview.
[30]Ibid.
[31]C. Harris, interview.
[32]Ibid.
[33]V. Hombach, interview.
[34]B. Harris, interview.
[35]F. Fox, interview.
[36]Rice, *Daily Sentinel*.
[37]S. Fox, interview.

War Relief Efforts of Mesa County During the Second World War

by Hilary A. E. Correll

World War II was the most popular war in modern history. Because of the immense popularity of the war on the home front, war relief efforts were a top priority in many communities. They provided Americans with opportunities to help their loved ones and gave people a sense of purpose and accomplishment, a way to become involved in the fighting. Many American families were separated as a result of the war—young men went to fight in the war, young women were called upon to nurse, wives suddenly had to work and lifelong neighbors pulled up and moved to other areas of the country to take war production jobs. This was a difficult period for all Americans. America had survived a decade of extreme hardships brought on during the Great Depression with an abundance of support from family and friends. When the war started, the close knit communities and families that had existed during the 1930s were broken. The Grand Valley, like other communities across the country, turned to supporting the war, supporting their sons, brothers and friends who were fighting.

Colorado in the 1940s was a quiet place to live. The population was made up of strong hard working people who cared about their communities and their country.[1] The economy, although not spectacular, had made it through the Depression with the help of many New Deal programs. Before the war, the

mountain towns were quiet, without any of the tourist attractions that would come later. Colorado's communities represented some of the best America had to offer, and they would support the war and those fighting it for the duration.

World War II changed everything for the Grand Valley, as it did for the nation. The war brought with it an excitement unseen in Colorado for some time. Colorado historian Carl Ubbelohde said, "The demands on farm and factory brought radical expansion of planting and fabrication to the already existing installations, at the same time spawning a host of new enterprises."[2] The war brought jobs and money to Mesa County, increasing the community's wealth and allowing its residents to fully support the war.

The attack on Pearl Harbor transformed the entire country. World War II brought about changes in everything from movies to families to politics. The entire country was immediately caught up in war fever, excited and eager to help the war relief efforts. In the Grand Valley, as throughout the country, war relief efforts came in every imaginable package. People across the nation were eager to give. America supported the war and their boys, and gave abundantly of their time, money and energy to win a war in which they all felt involved.

The first war relief effort to be organized, after the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, was the promotion of government defense bonds and stamps. The bonds and stamps were to be purchased by local residents to fund the war effort: bonds were attainable for $18.75 and stamps for only ten cents. The first article to appear in the *Daily Sentinel* promoting war relief efforts in the Grand Valley was an advertisement urging the public to purchase war bonds and stamps, and war bond sales nearly tripled from what they had been prior to the bombing of Pearl Harbor.[3] No one could do enough during those first few months after America entered the Second World War. Officials from the various local institutions selling war bonds and stamps claimed that they would have been able to sell even more bonds during the first few days following Pearl Harbor had the Federal Reserve banks not run out.[4] Patriotism was at such a high fervor that it infected the entire Fruita Fire Department, who voted unanimously to use to use $2500 from their $2917 pension fund to purchase war bonds.[5] In Mesa County the final figures for the first month of the war showed a six–fold increase in war bond sales from the prior month, totaling $84,499.25.[6] The community continued to give generously, and seemingly without thought, for the first several months.

By the following spring, some of the initial surge of patriotism began to wear off. Richard E. Tope, chairman of the war savings committee, urged the continued purchase of war bonds, saying, "We know what is expected of us as patriotic citizens in the war effort. I expect the citizens of Mesa County to meet

this challenge to their loyalty to the men on our fighting fronts."[7] A national cry went out for increased sales of war bonds, and Tope declared, "We are beginning to realize that it does take fighting dollars for fighting men. Every day will have to be bond day until this war is over and don't wait, for delay prolongs the war and increases the cost of lives and money too. Do all you can do quickly."[8]

All of the publicity and patriotic declarations to support the war effort paid off. Mesa County sold well over its quota month after month. The *Daily Sentinel*, an active participant in war bond sales, began printing a column informing Mesa County residents of exactly what they were purchasing with their war bonds and stamps. One such column printed in May 1942 informed bond owners of the reconnaissance cars they were supplying for the armed forces. The column explained how the Jeep was able to transport a half ton of supplies or six men for a cost to the Mesa County bond buyer of only $18.75.[9] Informative measures such as these helped to keep sales high. The state of Colorado was assigned eighty–four million dollars worth of bonds to sell in a single month.[10] The quotas for bond sales remained high throughout the war, and Mesa County residents continued to raise the required funds.

Mesa County was lucky to have the support of its local retailers to meet the assigned quotas. These retailers took an active role in promoting the sale of war bonds and stamps. This was done as part of the national American retail family campaign "to sell...a billion dollars worth of U.S. war stamps and bonds."[11] The local "Retailers for Victory" staged a rally in downtown Grand Junction to kick off a month long drive planned for Mesa County, declaring the usual sales "in all retail establishments of the city will cease for 15 minutes and the entire efforts of the sales personnel in each store will be centered on the sale of war bonds and stamps."[12] The drive was a huge success for the Grand Valley, and the retailers were able to raise nearly their entire quota only seven days into the campaign.[13] A victory ball was organized by the "Retailers for Victory" to close their successful war bond campaign. Not only were attendees able to purchase bonds and stamps, but the admission fees collected were also used to aquire stamps and bonds which were later given away as prizes.[14] The retailers in the Grand Valley were proud of their success in the war bond campaign. They were able to sell three times the quota assigned to Mesa County.[15]

The federal government began to take a new approach to selling war bonds and stamps to raise enough funds to support the war, which was rapidly headed toward a cost of a billion dollars a month. Americans were asked to invest ten percent of their paychecks in the purchase of war bonds. The *Daily*

Sentinel urged people to buy bonds, saying, "Everybody, every pay day, ten per cent, is the battle cry throughout the country."[16] The campaign was ultimately successful. Thirteen hundred railway employees joined the program and seventy–three percent agreed to have money withheld from their paychecks for the purpose of purchasing war bonds. This made a tremendous difference in Mesa County's ability to meet its quotas, as the railroad was a large employer of local residents. "Company and group organization for voluntary savings are just beginning to get under way," said A. J. Dunn, federal war savings staff member. He added, "The nation probably won't make the bond purchase quota in July; but the machinery for payroll deductions should be well enough perfected by August to fulfill government expectations."[17]

Although the big drives and campaigns attracted the most attention, bond buying went on across Mesa County in less obvious manners every day of the war. The Mutual Savings and Building association agreed to "participate to the extent of $25,000 in the $100,000,000 war bond drive planned by the United States Savings and Loan league for the last half of 1942". Howard H. McMullin, secretary and treasurer of the association, pointed out that the national business organization's president asked all cooperative banks and savings, building and loan associations to invest their own funds in the financing of the war to a minimum of six months.[18]

Another event which boosted bond and stamp sales was the national War Heroes day held in Grand Junction. "War Heroes day was set aside by more than 600 cities over the nation to boom the sales of stamps and bonds," declared the *Daily Sentinel*.[19] Everyone was eager to help the soldiers fighting across the world. Local movie theaters became involved with the "Salute to Our Heroes Month," advertised as a mammoth bond drive to be organized by the theaters. B.V. Warren, Mesa County chairman of the motion pictures exhibitors' Victory drive, urged everyone to buy a bond. "It is your greatest investment advantage today. It's the one way to have cash after the war to buy everything you want now, but can't buy...It's our duty and our privilege as true Americans to buy the freedom that no other people on the face of this earth can buy."[20]

These types of incentives helped Mesa County to keep its sales high, above the quota, even when other counties began to fall behind. Tope said, "Many other counties had only a half or less [of their quotas] by the middle of the month, when Mesa County had already surpassed its assigned amount."[21] The fight to keep sales high in Mesa County was a continuous battle throughout the war as attitudes towards the war began to change as it dragged on.

In 1944, the *Daily Sentinel* characterized the attitude towards the bond drives as becoming "callous." Clarence Adams, state chairman, "said that no one wanted them [war bond drives] to continue indefinitely, but that 'the bottom of the barrel' would have to be reached first in July unless this drive was made. He said that bond buying should not be an irritation to people, nor should it be associated with political issues...bond buying was not sacrificing, but rather an opportunity to answer the question, 'What have I done today that any mother's son should die tonight?' He said there was no excuse for hoarding cash, as bonds and stamps are as good as cash."[22]

An intense campaign was waged for the fifth war loan drive in Mesa County, complete with visiting state officials and live entertainment. Rallies across the Grand Valley attempted to create excitement over the newest quota. Adams spoke to workers saying, "'The only reason we have been successful to date in putting over our drives is because men and women like you get behind us.' He added that he was confident of the ability of Mesa County, of Colorado and of the United States to reach the goal set." Despite any waffling patriotism, Colorado was able to keep its bond sales above the quota mark. Mesa County residents, as well as Americans across the country, were proud of their efforts to aid in the war. Mr. Charles Engle, Executive Vice Chairman, spoke of this patriotic spirit when he "pointed to the 'V' on his lapel and pronounced that all workers should consider the 'V' not only for volunteer and victory, but also for valor".[23]

Daily Sentinel carriers waged a campaign of their own to sell war savings bonds and stamps, and they were quite successful in selling them while on their paper routes. In addition to the pride of being able to help support the war effort, the carriers also received praise from the newspaper. It printed the names of the boys who participated in the campaign, and presented awards for sales. Just seven weeks into the campaign carriers had sold a total of $6,761.32 worth of bonds and stamps.[24] The boys sold the savings stamps and bonds door to door, and even purchased a few themselves. The *Daily Sentinel* noted that "The keynote of war effort is keep working, and the carriers are doing just that. Every day, they contact residents of the city regarding investing money in the U.S.A. in the form of war bonds or stamps."[25] The awards being given by the *Daily Sentinel* for high sales were successful in promoting the carriers' desire to sell more and more bonds. The boys were very successful in their war bond and stamp campaign. By the summer of 1944 they had raised the incredible sum of $472,842.15 in sales.[26]

Newspaper carriers were not the only children to take an active part in war relief efforts in the Grand Valley. The local Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts

were especially active in their campaign to collect used paper and scrap rubber from local residents, due to the need for such items in war production. They collected six tons of old magazines and newspapers in the first week of the drive.[27] The boys were also successful in collecting rubber from Mesa County residents, delivering 3250 pounds of scrap rubber by July of 1942. C. R. Brown, chairman of the Mesa County scrap rubber drive, believed that the drive would collect at least one hundred and seventy tons from the city and county.[28]

Other children throughout the valley also participated in collecting scraps to aid in the war effort. The *Daily Sentinel* reported:

> The children in the 1300 block on White avenue are today waging an intensive drive for scrap rubber and in their enthusiasm they are reported even stripping the boots from children of the neighborhood.... This morning they started the canvass of every home in the block. Not content with their first call, they were returning to homes to request that a second search be made for old rubber.

The children were able to collect over one hundred pounds of rubber which they sold for one cent a pound, and invested the money in gas stamps.[29]

Junior high and high school students wanted to help. The junior high school was in charge of a scrap paper drive, collecting paper at all area schools. According to the *Daily Sentinel*, "The junior high school to date has collected a total of 432,423 pounds of paper. Also collecting in the drives are members of St. Joseph's school and groups at Fruita, Palisade and other points."[30] Towards the end of the war a very successful war bond auction was held at one home room at the junior high school. Principal John Snider said, "Two $100 bonds were sold and one $50 bond in addition to $46.80 worth of stamps. The home room decided on this method of raising their bond and stamp figure upon learning that their standing was not as good as it should be."[31]

Grand Junction High School students, anxious to aid in war relief efforts, planned many activities to help in the war relief efforts, including organizing a student defense council, selling defense stamps and collecting waste paper. The defense council was organized to help students promote relief efforts, "disseminate information on safety in the school, home and on the streets, and first aid training is planned as a part of the program." In addition, stamp sales were promoted at all of the valley's schools, including Grand Junction High School. Local schools and students were so eager to participate in the relief efforts for the war, many young adults volunteered alongside their parents in the adult relief campaigns. The *Daily Sentinel* praised the schools, saying, "Americanism is being stressed throughout the school, and a general attitude

of cooperation and patriotism is evident."[32]

Mesa College students were also active in several war relief efforts around the campus, including Red Cross first aid, a blood bank and defense stamp sales. An article described how the students used social occasions to raise money, saying, "The student council at a recent meeting voted to use recorded music to be broadcast over the loudspeaker system at the college for some of the future dances. Money that would be paid to a dance band will be put into defense bonds." Each student strived to do his and her own part to aid in the war effort through "collecting old paper and old rubber, walking instead of riding to school, [and] matching every nickel spent for a Coke with a nickel to be applied toward defense stamps." Even the college symphony orchestra contributed to the relief effort by donating the proceeds from their spring concert to the Red Cross.[33]

Many of the college's female students helped with Red Cross work by "sewing, knitting, making bandages and learning the fundamentals of nursing." Horace J. Wubben, president of the college, said that "Mesa College would not sit back but would take an active part in the defense program....College courses can and do train students in many technical subjects vital to the execution of a war, the college can and will help to eliminate unnecessary fear and develop a high public morale."[34]

There were several "Victory" drives held in Grand Junction for many different types of campaigns. The Victory Book Drive was immensely successful. The goal of the drive was to collect ten million books for libraries to serve the men in the armed forces and the merchant marines. The campaign was directed by the American Red Cross, the United Service organization and the American Library Association. The spirit of Mesa county residents regarding the book drive was described as very "generous." All types of books were donated: fiction; popular books on travel, history and biography; plays and essays; books on science, technology, and vocations; and up–to–date reference works.[35] The book drive was a tremendous success, and made each participant and donor proud.

Victory Gardens were another extremely popular local war effort. Merle McClintock of the *Daily Sentinel* spoke of these mostly young gardeners, saying that they felt that planting victory gardens would "help in the fight against enemies that think starving our fighting men, to the people at home, would be an excellent step toward final victory in the great war." The gardeners planted with the desire to provide more food for the fighting soldiers. McClintock wrote about their spirit, saying:

> They will continue their work after school closes, tho it will be hot, and they will miss the mass spirit evident with school is in session. But I think they will keep on, remembering how our soldiers keep on all over the world, no matter what the forces are that are opposed to them I hope that they cut down weeds they will feel that each unwelcome invader is one of the enemy they remember from Pearl Harbor, and that their victory harvest will be a substantial one.[36]

The American Junior Red Cross was also involved in the Grand Valley's war relief efforts during World War II. The nationwide effort of the Junior Red Cross to supply comfort and recreation articles for the armed forces was warmly embraced by Grand Valley children. The funds raised by the Junior Red Cross members were split between the local chapter and the general war fund. In the Grand Valley, junior high and high school students started "defense days" to raise awarness as well as money for the war. One day each week assembly programs, home room sessions and other classroom events were devoted to defense and patriotism.[37]

In the junior high school, each home room adopted specific projects to aid the war effort. Membership rose with the progression of the war, and so did the children's efforts. Members of the Grand Junction High School American Junior Red Cross raised money as part of the special emergency war fund of the American Red Cross. Mesa County's Junior Red Cross was busy throughout the war raising money and making useful items for soldiers, particularly those who were wounded or ill. One fourth grade class crafted an afghan from scraps of yarn donated for that purpose by Grand Valley residents. The students from the Glade Park area hand–crafted sets of checkers and checkerboards. "The afghan, checkers and other articles made by the Junior Red Cross were sent to a military hospital."[38]

Grand Junction High School students also raised money for the Red Cross through school dances and were active in many different activities throughout the war. One group of Mesa County young people, full of Christmas spirit, made three hundred Christmas table favors for hospitals at Lowry and Fort Lyons. The Junior Red Cross was active in building the general Red Cross war fund as well as in collecting magazines for the soldiers on the troop trains passing through Grand Junction. The Junior Red Cross constantly aided in other community relief efforts. They were particularly helpful in the Victory Books campaign, and they conducted a book collecting campaign through the schools. All of the county's schools collected books from the public and from students.[39]

History has recorded that, "As the Second World War began, the doors of Red Cross chapters were thrown open to thousands of new volunteers who wanted an outlet for their frustration over Japan's surprise attack on Pearl Harbor."[40] The Mesa County chapter of the American Red Cross responded to the call for service, declaring that their mission was, "to feed, shelter, clothe and give medical aid to American men, women and children bombed by the enemy...to provide comforts for our American Army and Navy; and for welfare work for our American troops at home and abroad, and their families on the home front."[41] The Red Cross chapter in Grand Junction immediately began to organize fund raising drives and other relief activities following America's declaration of war.

One of the first organized activities of the Red Cross volunteers was the meeting of troop trains passing through Mesa County. The Red Cross chairman O. H. Hoech and vice–chairman Mrs. Brumbauch met the first trains to pass through the area. They "interviewed the officers to find out how the local chapter could best serve the men going thru" the Grand Valley. "The officers and men were unanimous in saying that they were getting the best food in the world, but that they would appreciate postage stamps, stationery and post cards." Knowledge of troop train schedules were not public, due to national security, but top Red Cross officials were privy to the information.[42]

The soldiers were extremely grateful for the Red Cross and community efforts. The *Daily Sentinel* was eager to participate by sending "papers fresh from the press," and reported that that they were "in brisk demand among the men." One particularly thankful solider wrote back to the Mesa County Red Cross chapter: "Dear Lady: Just a card to let you know that we appreciated the cigarettes and postcards that we received...it was something that never happened to us before."[43] Other community organization and clubs began to collect items for the Red Cross to distribute to the traveling troops. The American Legion auxiliary and the Western Colorado Commercial Travelers' association began extensive campaigns to collect contributions from Grand Valley residents. They made efforts "to secure cigarettes, cigars, tobacco of all kinds, candy, chewing gum and other treats for the boys on the trains." Red Cross officials made a valiant effort to meet all of the troops passing through the Grand Valley, distributing the items they had collected. The push for contributions and donations to supply the troops with the needed articles continued throughout the war.[44]

As the demand and supplies increased, a new executive committee was formed by the Red Cross canteen service to concentrate solely on the collection of articles for distribution to the troop trains. The new committee designed

new containers to be distributed throughout the valley, replacing the "Remember Pearl Harbor" boxes that had been distributed by the Travelers' association. The new glass jars represented the "Treats for Traveling Troops" campaign tripled the contributions within the first two weeks. The committee was so successful that an official emblem was even created for the service—a miniature troop train about three feet long and ten inches wide.[45]

The work of the Red Cross canteen service was greatly appreciated by the soldiers and officers, and was a great source pride to the community. At a Lion's Club meeting Mrs. Brumbaugh, chapter chairman of the canteen service, explained the work with the canteen service and then read several letters "from boys in the service and from their mothers, written in appreciation of the attention given the soldiers and sailors when they went thru Grand Junction."[46] Donations for the "Treats for Troops" campaign poured in from the community as long as the troops passed through the area.[47]

One of the community's special efforts regarding the troop train service was that of the local fruit growers. One hundred and three bushels of peaches were furnished by area growers "free of charge, were placed on the dining cars of the trains" for the soldiers going off to fight the war. Local participants were especially pleased with the contribution, saying that "the fruit was of the finest quality and a credit to the community." Yet, despite strong community support, there was a constant demand for more contributions so that the service would continue.[48]

The Red Cross immediately went into action following the bombing of Pearl Harbor. "Within minutes of the first attack, Red Cross first-aid teams and nurses were on the scene."[49] This type of support throughout the entire war required substantial financial support from the home front. President Roosevelt announced that "the American Red Cross, of which he was president, would begin immediately to raise a war emergency fund of at least $50,000,000." Locally, "chairman O. H. Hoech had received a telegram from Norman H. Davis, chairman of the American Red Cross, saying that the quota of the Mesa County chapter was $7000."[50] Donations began to pour into the Mesa County chapter even before the big announcement. The *Daily Sentinel*, in support of the Red Cross, began printing lists of donors and their donations as an incentive for residents to give more, telling its readers, "The first effective thing that can be done by civilians in this emergency is to give to the Red Cross. Every dollar given to the Red Cross is a blow to the Japs, the Germans, and the Italians who are fighting our boys."[51] As the war progressed, the emergency fund goals were realized. By 1945 the annual goal was set for $200 million "as a result of the mounting demands for Red Cross services in the European and Pacific theaters of war."[52]

The Red Cross began canvassing Mesa County to raise the necessary funds to provide aid throughout the war. Volunteers under R. A. Schumacher, chairman of the Clifton Red Cross chapter, were able to raise a very respectable sum of $213 on the first day of the first drive, a great accomplishment for the small community. The *Daily Sentinel* reported, "An old pensioner, who could ill afford to do so, donated $5. A father with two sons in the army donated $4, and he also is not financially able, but he wanted 'the boys' to be well cared for." Due to the poorness of the community, more imaginative contributions such as corn, chickens and other farm products were also welcomed.[53]

Several parties and dances were held in the valley to help raise funds for the American Red Cross emergency fund. The first party held after America's entry into the war took place at the Redlands Community center, and was sponsored by Redlands community residents in honor of the young men of that community who were leaving soon for military service. There were "games of various kinds, an auction sale of cakes and other articles," and the receipts were contributed to the Red Cross fund.[54] The Fruita community was also active in raising funds. The proprietors of the Eat–'n–Bowl, Mr. and Mrs. M. A. Lutton, turned "all proceeds from the bowling lane to the Red Cross" for one evening, and an auction of produce, fancy work and food was held. Fruita residents were very supportive of the event. One individual, winner of the patriotic quilt from the county fair, donated the quilt for sale, with the proceeds going to the Red Cross.[55] The Orchard Mesa community also hosted a dance to raise funds for the American Red Cross.[56]

One of the Red Cross' largest drives, the Merchant's Community Red Cross day, was able to raise several thousand dollars for the emergency war fund. The community turned out in full force to support the drive. Almost every retail merchant in Grand Junction pledged support of the war relief fund drive. Two hundred and sixty merchants participated in the event, agreeing to give five percent of the day's gross sales to the American Red Cross. Several participating retailers ran ads in the *Daily Sentinel* advertising sales for the big day, and informing the public of their pledge to give five percent. The Public Service Company of Colorado advertised the big drive, saying, "And now it's happening to us. It's happening to us in the Pacific, in the Atlantic, and at home. We have a job to do...and it's a big job."[57]

The drive was a great success. Not only did the merchants honor their plege, but their employees and the railroad workers also gave freely of their salaries. Generous donations also came from other areas of the community, particularly from clubs and private company funds. The $4309 which was raised by the merchant's drive boosted community spirits as well as the emergency fund.[58]

Overall, Mesa county residents were wonderfully supportive of all the relief drives and collections throughout the duration of the war. Whatever the individual reasons behind the Grand Valley residents' generous gifts and purchases, they provided the cash and supplies that helped win the war. Like so many communities around the nation, Mesa County was willing to support the war effort through whatever means necessary, with time, cash and morale. Giving, giving and giving some more was the symbol of the proud Americans who supported the war effort in the Grand Valley. They gave their cash and their hearts to the winning of the Second World War.

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Book Review

People of the Red Earth: American Indians of Colorado. By Sally Crum. (Santa Fe: Ancient City Press, 1996. Pp 287. Hardback $29.95, paperback $16.95.)

People of the Red Earth by Sally Crum is a welcome addition to books about Colorado. It fills the need for a comprehensive study of Indians in the state from approximately twelve thousand years ago, when Paleolithic hunters arrived, to the present. The author synthesizes books, reports and articles from anthropology and history into an authoritative volume. The book will appeal to scholars, college students and general readers.

The volume contains twelve chapters, two appendices ("The Process of Archaeological Investigation" and "Indian Place Names in Colorado"), and about a hundred illustrations, including line drawings, photographs and maps. *People of the Red Earth* includes a bibliography which scholars and other readers will find valuable. Chapters begin with brief overviews of a tribe or a cultural unit, followed by material under such heading as "Beliefs", "Clothing and Personal Adornment" and "History and Culture". Crum concludes each chapter with "Places to Visit" and "Suggestions for Further Reading" which are helpful tools for those who want to gain more understanding of Colorado's Indians by reading or traveling.

Crum puts Colorado's native peoples in proper perspective by seeing them in regional and continental contexts. She explains those forces which brought Indian groups to Colorado, what cultural influences reached them here, and how Indians related to other groups—Indian and non–Indian—in the region. The author demonstrates the complexity of Colorado's Indian heritage by explaining its antiquity and influences from such diverse sources as

Woodland cultures and what is now Mexico and New Mexico. Material on the introduction of the horse, warfare, trade and Indian slavery illustrate the dynamics of inter–tribal alliances and rivalries. The Sioux and Navajos get their rightful places as major players in Colorado history.

Sally Crum is an archaeologist who lives on the Western Slope, and *People of the Red Earth* shows her knowledge and enthusiasm for this part of Colorado. Chapters with a strong Western Slope emphasis are those on the Archaic, Anasazi, Fremont and Ute peoples. The chapters on the archaic and Fremont groups are excellent. Grand Valley readers will be pleased to see the names of local experts like Sally Cole, Carl Conner and Brian O'Neil cited in the text and notes. The number of listing under "Interviews and Correspondence" indicate Crum's willingness to telephone and write people to get Indians' views on her topics and to ascertain details about subjects ignored or not explained fully in existing scholarly works.

Author Sally Crum has written a book that is enjoyable to read. Her prose is clear, flowing and free of the technical verbiage found in most works about anthropology and archaeology. Never does Crum lose sight of the fact that she is writing about human subjects. Portions of the book tug at one's heartstrings. Most readers will be moved by Crum's story of the Cheyennes losing their medicine arrows and the account of two old Arapahoes from the Wind River Reservation visiting their former homeland in Rocky Mountain National Park, identifying important places, and reminiscing about their life there. Crum's descriptions are often superb. For example, her word picture about the look and feel of a Plains Indian band moving camp enables the reader to form a vivid mental image of it.

There are remarkably few weaknesses in the book. However, historians will note that Crum attributes the Spanish, not the Mexicans, with making land grants in Colorado. As a person closely associated with the *Journal of the Western Slope*, I noted that articles such as Buckley Bangert's monograph on Chief Ouray and Don MacKendrick's article on the Teller Institute were not consulted. While the narrative is clear, so much happened to so many different Indian groups in widely separated parts of the state that many readers would appreciate a time line to clarify the sequence of events.

People of the Red Earth is a notable contribution to scholarship about Colorado, and author Sally Crum is to be commended for it. *People of the Red Earth* will replace *American Indians in Colorado* by Donald Hughes as the standard one–volume work on Colorado's Indian heritage.

Professor of History, Mesa State College Paul Reddin

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