

INSIDE

Art Notes E3
Books E2
Crosswords E4

Jumble E4
Television E5
Travel E6

60 years of Elvis on display in Memphis E6
Time to prune roses for summer display E8



RIDGE LINES

Tom Orr

Columbia Park was not fully realized

Dominated by Queen Anne and Foursquare architecture, the homes in Columbia Park are some of the most charming to be found in all of Hendersonville.

Many of my friends grew up in this area.

Columbia Park (Lennox Spring) was a planned development created by a group of businessmen, primarily H.S. Anderson.

I read in the French Broad Hustler (September 1909) that the Hon. H.S. Anderson had in his office plans for a new \$100,000 hotel to be erected at Columbia Park. "It will be on the old Whitted House or on the superb hill near the spring." The hotel was never built.

Also, I read that my grandfather John L. Orr gave "a rousing talk" at the courthouse on the advantages of a street railway. The proposed railway would run from the depot to Anderson (Seventh Avenue) to Main to Willow to Lake Osceola — returning through Columbia Road, through Columbia Park, to Whitted Street, to Broad Street (Fifth Avenue) to Main.

It seems that creating Columbia Park was an ambitious undertaking — not fully realized. I want to know more about Columbia Park.

Lu Ann Welter, the administrative assistant for the Hendersonville Planning Department, agrees to accompany me on a drive through the Westside Historic District.

I need Lu Ann to share her knowledge of the district and its history. She is active in the Hendersonville Historic Preservation Commission.

We leave City Hall and travel to Justice Street, to West Allen, then to Spring Street and on to Dale Street.

Our destination is Whitted Street. When did Whitted Street get its name? Where was Dr. Whitted's home?

I turn to LuAnn and make the comment: "How nice it would have been if the name of every street and road had been recorded with an explanation as to how the name came about. Some are obvious, but others are mysteries to be unlocked."

Dr. Whitted was the first pharmacist-doctor-physician to practice in Hendersonville. He had his apothecary shop in the Flave Hart building on the corner of First Avenue East and Main Street around 1847.

If you visit the area once called Columbia Park, you must stop at Lennox Spring.

Frank FitzSimons ("Banks of the Oklawaha") suggests that there was a medicinal value to the waters of Lennox Spring. He connects the history to the Cherokee Indian and the sacredness of the place.

The name Lennox, according to FitzSimons, came from a famous jewel, dating back

◆ SEE RIDGE LINES PAGE E8

HISTORY PRESERVATION



PHOTOS BY PATRICK SULLIVAN/TIMES-NEWS

David Weintraub, above, tries to preserve WNC's oral history by interviewing Barbara Lackey, below, at the Center for Cultural Preservation.

Weintraub records stories of elders

By BETH BEASLEY
Times-News Correspondent

One interview at a time, the Center for Cultural Preservation is linking Henderson County's past with future generations.

With an oral history project and two documentary films in the works, the new nonprofit run by former ECO executive director David Weintraub has a vision to preserve the wisdom of our elders.

"It's a great project," says Stephen Fosberg, a volunteer with the organization who works as a heritage specialist with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

"My attitude toward elders in our community is not unlike archaeological sites: They are not a renewable resource," says Fosberg, who recently moved to Hendersonville from New Mexico. "If we don't capture it, it will be lost."

The oral history project gleans stories from the county's agricultural past.

"What we're hoping to uncover is how people lived their lives," Weintraub says. "How did they build and heat their homes, how did they celebrate, where did their food come from?"

Public programs as well as workshops in sustainable living are integral features in the center's activities.

A public event this past Tuesday



revealed the history of moonshine production in this area.

Dan Pierce, professor of history at UNC Asheville and author of the recently released book "Corn From a Jar: Moonshining in the Great Smoky Mountains," led a discussion and was joined by several current and former moonshiners.

The center also holds a regular lunchtime meeting on the third Thursday of every month, which is also open to the public.

The brown bag event slated for March 20 starts at noon at the center's

◆ SEE HISTORY PAGE E7

Learn more

- ◆ The Center for Cultural Preservation hosts luncheon meetings on the third Thursday of every month. The next brown bag event is noon March 20 at the center's headquarters in the biz611 building on Church Street. The meetings focus on recently completed oral histories, as well as discussion of the organization's work.
- ◆ The center's first fundraising event, the Mountain Spring Art Show, is set for 7 p.m. May 31 at HiArt Studio, 443 N. Main St.
- ◆ For more information, call 828-692-8062 or visit www.saveculture.org.

'BEYOND THE PALE' BY KEN GROSSMAN

Book details the author's commitment to principles

By BILL RAMSEY
For the Times-News

What does an entrepreneur smell like?

Ken Grossman, founder of Sierra Nevada Brewing Co., likely smells of barley, hops, welding flux, sweat and tears. They have all been a part of his life for more than 30 years.

In his 2013 book, "Beyond the Pale," Grossman writes candidly and with justified pride about what it took to get from tiny batches of home-brewed beer, made while still a high school student, to making Sierra Nevada the leader in the craft beer industry. He avoids the display of ego that might have been justified, given his accomplishments. He

acknowledges and extends his thanks to long-term associates.

The book opens with candid reflections concerning his youth. His father was an attorney who was frequently absent. He was 10 years old when his parents divorced. His mother did a marvelous job of supporting and raising her three children — younger sister Diane and older brother Steve. Grossman's

◆ SEE BOOK PAGE E7



PHOTO PROVIDED

Ken Grossman, founder of Sierra Nevada Brewing Co., writes about his life.

Grossman, King to headline Bookfest

From staff reports

Ken Grossman, co-founder of Sierra Nevada Brewing Co. and author of "Beyond the Pale," and novelist Cassandra King, author of "Moonrise," will be the featured speakers at the sixth annual Blue Ridge Bookfest at Blue Ridge Community College on April 25 and 26.

The theme for the 2014 festival is "Tell Us Your Story."

Grossman will speak at the Friday evening reception. King, wife of well-known author Pat Conroy and an established writer in her own right, will speak at the luncheon on

Saturday.

Joining Grossman and King on the festival program will be Nicholas Warr, author of "Charlie Company"; Arthur Heise, author of "Das Haus"; Sharman Ramsey, author of "In Pursuit"; and Bill Ramsey, author of "Me Now — Who Next?"

The two-day event will include a Friday workshop by local author Joe Perrone Jr. on self-publishing titled "How to Tell Your Story and Get It Read" as well as workshops by several other writers.

For more information, visit www.blueridgebookfest.org.

HISTORY

From page E1

headquarters at biz611 on Church Street, just north of downtown. These meetings focus on recently completed oral histories, as well as discussion of the organization's work in the present and into the future. Weintraub is no stranger to rolling up his sleeves to preserve cultural traditions. Before moving to Western North Carolina from Miami in the last decade, he headed the Center for Yiddish Culture and produced the documentary films "Where Neon Goes to Die" and "Golden Side of the Tracks." Both films were screened at numerous film festivals as well as on PBS stations. "Golden Side of the Tracks," which chronicled the history of Overtown, an African-American neighborhood in Miami, was completed in 2008. "It became clear to me then that there was no way to run ECO and do film-

making," says Weintraub, who left the environmental organization in early 2013. In 2010, while he was still at ECO, he completed a short film about water resources titled "Code Blue: Water in the Mountains." Water quality plays a part in another film he is working on titled "Call of the Ancient Mariner: Man's Historical Connection to Turtles." Another film in production centers on mountain heritage and incorporates interviews from the center's Elder Wisdom oral history project. One of the elders Weintraub approached for the film is Leon Pace, an area native and local plant expert. Pace says the interview was enjoyable, as it led him to recall many "pleasant times and events I hadn't thought of in a long time." A volunteer with the Henderson County Genealogical and Historical Society since 1999, Pace is also invested in nourishing cultural roots. "I hope that a lot of our elders will be willing to

share in this effort," Pace says. "I would hope that the oral history project would bring the generations together and create a renewed interest in our culture and history and ... help them to be better prepared to live in a fast-changing world when adverse conditions arise." The mountain heritage film will have as its focus about 50 or 60 interviews and go into post-production next year, Weintraub says. He hopes to convey a different notion of wealth in the film, one that accentuates community connections and quality of life. "There's a notion of wealth from the past that is difficult to find," Weintraub says. "They knew where they came from, had faith, strong community ties — it's a kind of wealth we don't connect with today." Jennie Jones Giles, an area native who teaches a Henderson County History and Heritage class at Blue Ridge Community College, has also been involved with the center in an advisory capacity.

Giles makes a point of the fact that mountain people in Henderson County were self-sustaining until about the mid-20th century. "Many of our young people today have lost the culture and knowledge of our self-sustaining Appalachian mountain people," Giles says. "They have lost the connection to the land and its natural resources." Giles has supplied many of the contacts needed for connecting with Henderson County elders, so their lessons can be brought to the youth of the technology age. "If there were a natural disaster or other event, they would not know how to survive without today's modern conveniences," she says. "It is important to learn the lessons that our older people in the community can teach us." Fosberg envisions the interviews to be a "rich treasure trove" for high school students and genealogical organizations, to name two examples. "I think we need more

of these local history preservation initiatives," he says. The Center for Cultural Preservation is in collaboration with many local organizations with similar activities and missions, including the Henderson County Heritage Museum, Cherokee Junaluska Museum, Mountain Gateway Museum, Ramsey Center at Mars Hill College, Mountain Cultural Center at Western Carolina University, Spruce Pine Cultural Center, Transition Hendersonville as well as a recently formed connection with the Appalachian Food Storybank. An inaugural fundraiser is planned for May 31, featuring the work of local artists in an art exhibit and sale. The Mountain Spring Art Show will take place downtown at HiArt Studio at 443 N. Main St. starting at 7 p.m. The night will include musical entertainment, wine and cheese, and an opportunity to purchase art from local artists. The Center for Cultural Preservation also relies

heavily on public donations and grant funds to sustain its activities. Those interested in leading interviews with elders can attend one of the regularly scheduled oral history trainings offered by the center, Weintraub says. He stresses that the interviews are more than simple conversations — there is a skill to making an interview subject comfortable and allowing knowledge to be revealed. A side project that is related thematically to the oral history project is the service Weintraub is offering to create full-length films to document personal family histories. These privately funded films, done under the auspices of his business, Weintraub Films, can include interviews with a family elder about their life, interspersed with family photos, period music — whatever the family desires. "The few I've done so far have been a real hit with the families," he says. Contact Weintraub at the Center for Cultural Preservation, 692-8062, for more information.

BOOK

From page E1

childhood friends were important to him. He was fiercely loyal to them; loyalty to friends is a personality trait that has been lifelong. Young Grossman was not a bad boy. He might best be described as having been a unconventional youth. The traditional school classroom was not where most of his learning occurred. He would much rather spend the day taking a household appliance apart to see what made it work. His inventiveness would serve him well when he started the brewery. He skipped his high school graduation ceremony to take a backpacking trip in the Sierras. He went with friends to check out college prospects at Chico State and fell in love with the town, moved there and bought a VW bus. Starting school at Chico State, he soon moved on to Butte Community College. It was less expensive and closer to

his home and work in Chico. He took chemistry, physics and calculus classes. He read available books about beer, took brewing classes at UC Davis and toured craft breweries. He was hooked on brewing. After marriage, he and wife Katie lived in a rural setting. They raised poultry, and she raised goats and made cheese from the goat milk. He and a neighbor opened a store in Chico to satisfy the needs of local home-brewers and winemakers. Grossman also repaired bicycles at a local bicycle shop to support his wife and their three children. His work schedule was grueling. This book reads like an action-adventure novel. Grossman found himself battling to grow his dream. His timing for a brewery startup could not have been much worse. The major, commercial breweries with their flavorless, watery ales were driving small craft brewers out of business. The industry was consolidating. He and his 50 percent partner started with just \$50,000

obtained in the form of loans from family members. The company was undercapitalized. He was forced to design and fabricate equipment and install used equipment from soft-drink bottlers and dairies. He traveled to Germany to acquire a used copper brew house. Some expensive mistakes resulted but were worked around to keep the beer flowing. There were many additional challenges. At times, high-quality hops were in short supply because crop yields had suffered. Initially they used recycled beer bottles. Removing labels, washing and sanitizing those bottles was tedious. Building additional space on the limited acreage was a challenge. While employees and suppliers were always paid, the partners took no salary. Marketing was not driven by using flashy advertising or promotions. Little by little, beer drinkers discovered the Pale Ale and demanded more of it. The flavor and consistent quality caused demand to consistently outstrip

production capacity. Sierra Nevada was forced to allocate its production to the distributor network. The temptation to "contract" production to other breweries must have been strong. Yet concerns about their reputation for quality always came ahead of quick sales and profit. As the years went along, his partner proved to be much less committed to the business than Ken was. A protracted process to buy out his partner took years and was a major distraction in growing the business. Ken worked day and night, and no task was demeaning to him. Anyone who has ever been involved in a start-up business will enjoy this book. For those contemplating the building of a business based upon a good idea and limited available capital, it is a must read. As one reads the history of Sierra Nevada, the success it came to enjoy seems to have been unlikely. So many things ran counter to success. However, in the end, the boundless energy and commitment of Grossman and his team prevailed.

Grossman has been strongly supportive of other craft brewers and considers them to be more friend than competitor. He correctly understands that the real competition comes from big, international breweries and non-beer beverages. Sierra Nevada has always been strongly committed to being an environment-friendly business. Sustainable agricultural practices and the careful use of water, a major component in beer, are cornerstones of their business. If you like beer, you will learn many things that you never knew. You will appreciate the true art and the involved chemistry of brewing. This book is much more than a personal memoir. Those of us who enjoy a consistent, fresh and flavorful beer have Grossman and his associates at Sierra Nevada to thank. It is time to wrap up this review — I've grown thirsty. **Bill Ramsey is a member of the Blue Ridge Bookfest Steering committee and a published author.**

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