



BLONDIE & DAGWOOD SEE PAGE 10

# the mountain states collector

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54th ANNIVERSARY — ESTABLISHED IN 1972

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## An Irish-American Tradition: Early 20th Century St. Patrick's Day Post Cards

By Roy Nuhn

Legend has it that many an Irishman, upon departing his native village to go to America, would pause for a second and tuck a bit of turf into his slender luggage. Thus, though in time he became an American citizen, a piece of his beloved Emerald Isle would always be near his heart.

This love for both the land of their birth and for their new homeland helps to explain the preponderance of Irish and American symbols found on greeting postcards published for St. Patrick's Day a century ago.

Of the many holidays and celebrations we enjoy each year, only three - St. Patrick's Day, Halloween, and Columbus Day have origins in the arrival of a specific nationality to our shores.

The Irish, who came in large numbers to this country throughout the 19th century, early embraced March 17, St. Patrick's Day, as their special day. It slowly became a wonderful blend of Irish pride and American patriotism, as the Irish love and appreciation of America counterbalanced the strong tug that the Emerald Isle exerted upon her former sons and daughter and their descendants.

The Irish, mainly Anglo-Irish and followers of the Anglican religion, were present in goodly numbers in pre-Revolutionary War days. Festivities on St. Patrick's Day were being enjoyed as early as 1760 in New York City. The holiday was even celebrated by many officers and men of George Washington's Colonial Army.

Throughout the 19th and into the 20th century, waves of immigrants from Ireland came to this country year after year. The Irish became an important continual presence in this nation and contributed mightily to the proverbial melting pot.

Irish consciousness of their heritage was especially strong in the years between 1900 and 1920, the era that souvenir postcards were in their heyday.



Dozens of publishing companies, most of them in the U.S. and a few in England, were kept busy manufacturing St. Patrick's Day greeting style postcards by the hundreds of thousands of copies.

International Art, located in New York City, had its resident chief artist, Ellen Clapsaddle, design more than 90 different cards for the holiday. International Art, along with the firms of John Winsch Co. and Fred Lounsbury Co., were among the most active American publishers.

The leading producer, however, for the American market was Raphael Tuck & Sons, of London, England. Tuck was the world's largest postcard printer and creator of some of the loveliest and most heartwarming ever made. They were responsible for at least a dozen different sets of cards for St. Patrick's Day.

*Continued on page 9*

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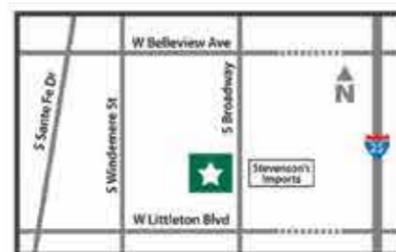
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**MAY 8-10: : 75th ANNUAL ROCKY MOUNTAIN STAMP SHOW** at the Arapahoe County Fair Grounds, Call 720-459-2841 for more information.

**MAY 16 & 17: 54th ANNUAL STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL VINTAGE & ANTIQUE MARKET,** hosted by the St. Vrain Historical Society to be held at the Boulder County Fairgrounds in Longmont, Colorado. Over 80 antique dealers, Exhibit Building at the Fairgrounds, 9595 Nelson Road, Longmont, Colorado, Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sunday 11- 4 p.m. Admission \$11, Children under 12 FREE, (\$10 for cash) This fundraiser supports the St. Vrain Historical Society and highly anticipated event in the Longmont area.

**JUNE 19-21: THE 129 ANNUAL STRAWBERRY DAYS FESTIVAL** in Glenwood Springs, Colorado, the Glenwood Sprints Chamber invites you to be part of one of Colorado's oldest and most beloved festivals where tradition, art and community come together in a stunning mountain setting. General Park hours: Friday June 19, 1 a.m. to 10 p.m., Saturday, June 20, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., Sunday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**JULY 16 & 17: DENVER POSTCARD & PAPER SHOW,** Jefferson County Fairgrounds, Golden, Colorado, Friday 11 a.m. -6 p.m., Saturday 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. More information, go to [denverpostcardshow.com](http://denverpostcardshow.com).

**OCT. 10 & 11: PUMPKIN PIE DAYS** sponsored by St. Vrain Historical Society, Boulder County Fairgrounds, Longmont, homemade pumpkin pies served.



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# Van Briggle: A Name Commonplace in Colorado, but also recognized worldwide for the paintings and pottery created by Artus Van Briggle

By Kathy Honea

Artus Van Briggle traveled to Colorado Springs in March 1899, in search of a cure for his tuberculosis. He was an accomplished artist, and had worked at Rookwood Pottery since he was eighteen years of age. In recognition of his talent, Rookwood Pottery had sent him abroad to study for two years. While there, Artus became acquainted with the dead matte glaze of the Ming dynasty period.

In 1896, Artus returned to the United States and work at Rookwood Pottery. It was in his home in Cincinnati that he created his first "Lorelei" vases, which measure only six and one-half inches in height. Having been produced at home, and not at Rookwood Pottery, these pieces were signed only "A. Van Briggle, 1898."

Photo (center right): Lorelei, 6 ½" height – one of three known to exist today. Inscribed, "A. Van Briggle 1898"

Suffering from tuberculosis since his return to the U.S., Artus decided it would be prudent to relocate to Colorado Springs, widely touted for its recuperative qualities for the disease. His relocation was with the blessing and continued support of Rookwood Pottery and the pottery's founder, Maria Longworth. Artus sought respite at Chico Basin Ranch, and it was there that he produced the first design which came to be known as the Van Briggle Chalice, or Toast Cup. From March 1899, throughout the short remaining years of his life until death, Artus often returned to Chico Basin Ranch for rest and recuperation. The W. C. Holmes family took him into their home, and cared for him as one of their family.

The experiences at Chico Basin Ranch influenced his life and affected his future pottery designs. While living with the Holmes family, he interacted with their neighbors, the Southern Ute Native Americans. He had painted earlier Native American designs on Rookwood pottery shapes in a high glaze style. A Rookwood plaque with Native American design by Artus Van Briggle sold in 2006 for more than \$60,000.

Artus Van Briggle interacted with the local Native American tribes and captured their everyday life on canvas. The talented potter, it seems, was an equally talented painter. Chief Antelope, of the Southern Ute tribe in Colorado, loaned Artus his shield, and it is documented that Artus used the spider design from that shield in several of his later pottery



works. He incorporated Native American designs such as their "Whirling Log" pattern, spiders and other motifs in his pottery.

Photo (below left): Native American "Whirling Logs," Spiders, and other motifs on Van Briggle pottery.

Artus used a design documentation system resembling the one that had been in use at Rookwood Pottery. His first designs were dated 1900; however, very few pottery examples were produced that first year, and those were believed to have been made at Chico Basin Ranch for close friends.

From 1900 until his death in 1904, there have been 247 designs documented from the exhaustive research of Robert Wyman Newton in his Catalogue of Van Briggle Designs. During those years, many of the plain shapes were attributed to Ambrose Schlegel; thought to have been created during periods when Artus was recuperating in Arizona during the winter months at a tuberculosis sanitarium or at Chico Basin Ranch.

In December of 1901, Artus hosted his first exhibit of 300 pieces of pottery at 617 N. Nevada. The invitees were a virtual "who's who" among local residents, and so fabulously was the pottery received, that all the pieces were sold. On December 1, 1901, the Colorado Springs Gazette stated that within weeks, exhibits were to be assembled and sent to Paris, Madrid, and New York. Van Briggle pottery was marketed in the best jewelry and departments stores in the U.S. and abroad.

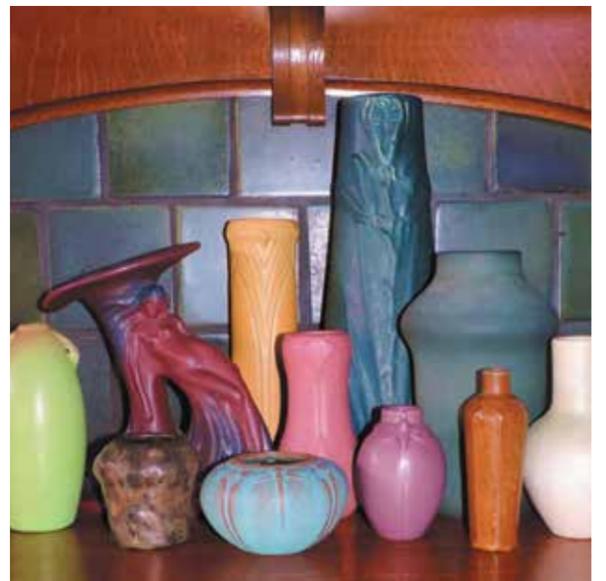
In the early years, Artus Van Briggle numbered and dated the pottery pieces. This practice continued fairly consistently until 1920. Early brochures state that Van Briggle pottery was designed in all the colors of the Colorado landscape. Record books of these early years list among the colors pro-

duced: several shades of yellows, blues, reds, greens, black, white, gray, purple, browns and combinations of those with one shade sprayed lightly over another.

Photo (below right): Van Briggle pottery examples "in all the colors of the Colorado landscape."

Artus married Anne Gregory in 1902, having become engaged to her while both were studying in Paris. The couple worked together for the next two years. By 1903, Artus was producing tile of various sizes, and the pottery was incorporated. Also that year, one of Artus' greatest ambitions was fulfilled. Examples of Van Briggle pottery with Artus' dead matte glaze were accepted for exhibition at the Paris Salon.

Between 1903 and 1904, Rookwood Pottery sent a skilled workman to Colorado Springs, and a few pieces of Van Briggle pottery were produced with metal ornamentation in bronze, copper or silver. Some of these pieces were included in the Van Briggle Pottery exhibit at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis. Van Briggle pottery was given the rare honor of having been allotted display space within three different buildings. The Book of the Fair, by Marshall Evert quotes Henry Neil as saying in 1904, "Van Briggle pottery was described as having blended matte glazes on a close, nearly vitrified stone ware body. The forms and designs of vases and other specialties were plain with occasional decoration in high relief. The matte glazes produced imposing effects, and the blending of the same is ar-



tistic. The colors, which were quite numerous, vary from gray, green, red, yellow and blue to blue green."

Artus, too ill to travel to St. Louis for the events, died on July 4, 1904 in his home at 1712 N. Nevada Ave. in Colorado Springs. Van Briggle Pottery received five medals at the fair, including two gold, two bronze and one silver. We can only hope that he was aware of the great success his short-lived and exhaustive work had achieved.

Anne Van Briggle continued Artus' work at the first pottery located at 617 N. Nevada Ave., and later built a new pottery on 1125 Glen Ave., dedicating it on December 3, 1908 to the memory and work of Artus. The building is currently owned by Colorado College, and has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places by the United States Department of Interior. The interior and exterior of

*Continued on page 8*



## Van Briggles . . . Continued



Continued from page 7

the building are covered with thousands of decorative tiles in multiple colors, hand-made by Anne Gregory Van Briggles and J. Emma Kinkead. Annually, on a Saturday in September, the Women's Educational Society of Colorado College opens the building to the public for tours, and as a fundraiser for their scholarship fund. This year, the tour will be held on Saturday, September 12.

Photo (above): One of the Van Briggles fireplace tile installations at the Memorial Pottery

The pottery was sold in 1912, and Anne Van Briggles did not return after that time. However; it is important to note that between 1900 and 1912, over 950 designs were created and documented. There remain some missing drawings between the numbered sketches of #1 and #953, but new examples frequently surface. The majority of Van Briggles pottery is dated until approximately 1920, and most have the design number until 1912. It is the early "dated" pieces that remain in high demand and continue to increase in value, while pieces made prior to Artus' death command the very highest values.

A few pottery managerial changes resulted from 1912 until 1920 when Mr. J.H. Lewis bought the pottery. From 1920 until 1969, Van Briggles was produced primarily in the glaze colors of Persian Rose, Ming Turquoise, and Moonglo White. From the late teens until 1935, a color combination of brown and green, described as "Mountain Crag Brown" was popular. Early literature described the glaze name as depicting the browns and greens found in a mountain crag. Oral history is that the formula for the glaze was lost in the great flood of May 30, 1935, which destroyed the east side of the pottery and washed written records, molds, and pottery downstream.

Photo (right): Van Briggles Mountain Crag Brown glaze examples

In 1970, the pottery was sold to Ken Stevenson, who had worked with Mr. Lewis for

several years. It remained in the Stevenson family until closing in 2011. Our greatest source of information for the mid-century years comes from a potter, Fred Wills, who worked at Van Briggles from 1947 until 1988 and resides in Colorado Springs. Fred has a wealth of knowledge and is a valuable resource for anyone studying the history of the pottery. He shared many stories and early photographs for our book, Van Briggles Notes, published in 2011, that chronicles the life of Artus Van Briggles and his pottery from his birth in 1869 to the pottery's closing in 2011.



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# 20th Century St. Patrick's Day Post Cards . . . Continued

Continued from page 1

All were sold exclusively through their New York City branch. Sets has from six to twelve cards each and illustrations consisted of Irish couples, harps, flags, great Irishmen, St. Pat himself, pretty colleens, castles and lots of shamrocks and shillelaghs.

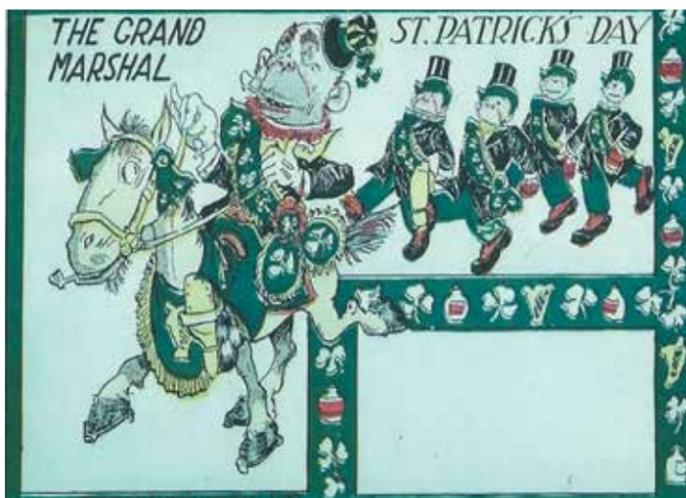
Nostalgia was the prevailing theme on nearly all of them, though comedy, romance and even Irish-American patriotism crept in at times.

Collectors today find old St. Patrick's Day postcards interesting relics of a by-gone era. Some collectors specialize, with interest strong for such categories as artists, a specific publisher, patriotism and novelties.

Another category is transportation and this has become increasingly popular as of late. A wide range of postcards shows Irish

lads and lasses with a wonderful assortment of vehicles. The most common are scenes of carts being pulled by all sorts of animals. The list includes donkeys, horses, and goats.

Long a favorite with collectors, postcards with artwork by Ellen



Clapsaddle are delightful and winsome. Part of her fabulous output for the holiday were some that fit nicely into the transportation theme. These depicted families off on crazy romps in automobiles or through the skies in dirigibles.

Bi-planes, the wonder of the age, pop up occasionally on all types of greeting cards and those for St. Patrick's Day are no exception. One of the most interesting shows a glider-like aircraft approaching New York City. Made by Tuck it is captioned "A Hundred Thousand Welcomes."

When the "Golden Age" of picture postcards came to an end in 1914, nearly all of the presses stopped and few holiday-themed cards were produced until more recent times. Old stocks remained in the nation's five-and-dime stores for another decade and it is possible to find postcards with later postmarks.

In 1985 the Irish Post Office produced a set of 10 postcards for the holiday. These were sent to a large number of American collectors who were invited to address them to friends and relatives, and return them, with proper payment, for mailing, with special holiday postmarks, from Dublin.

In many ways, the postcards of St. Patrick's Day are both a celebration of turn-of-the-century Irish-American traditions and a toast to the United States. They help us to recapture the St. Patrick Days of so long ago. Such are some of the reasons they are so collectable today.

### CAPTIONS

1. "The Wearing of the Green." One of many by International Art Co.
2. Pretty Irish colleen (unknown publisher).
3. Four from set of six by printer identified as "SB."
4. "The Grand Marshall. St. Patrick's Day," part of comedic set marketed in 1906 by the firm of Arthur Livingston.



## March of the Monarchs

In March, monarch butterflies begin their spring migration. As winter ends and the days grow longer, the monarchs become more active, beginning to mate and often moving to locations lower on the mountainsides. They leave their Mexican roosts during the second week of March, flying north and east looking for milkweed plants on which to lay their eggs. These monarchs have already survived a long southward flight in the fall

and winter's cold; they have escaped predatory birds and other hazards along the way, and are the only monarchs left that can produce a new generation. If they return too early, before the milkweed is up in the spring, they will not be able to lay their eggs and continue the cycle.

We look forward to seeing them soon! The photo to the right was captured by wildlife enthusiast, Katie Loyle.



## BECOMING AMERICAN NOW AVAILABLE

A gripping, multi-generational saga of defiance, courage, and revolution

In 1661, Alice Lake is hanged as a witch in the Puritan colony of Massachusetts—a tragic death that sparks a centuries-long fight for justice and freedom.

In the early 1800s, Alice's descendants, the Knowles family, relocate to Ohio during the War of 1812, where they become deeply involved in the abolitionist movement. Braving danger and defying the law, they aid runaway slaves on the Underground Railroad. As the years pass, the Knowles women rise to the forefront of the suffrage movement, determined to secure a future of equality for all.

From Alice's execution to their battles for freedom and civil rights, *Becoming American* is a powerful, multi-generational tale of survival, courage, and the unyielding pursuit of justice. Through the Knowles family's eyes, we witness the heart of America's struggle to live up to its ideals.

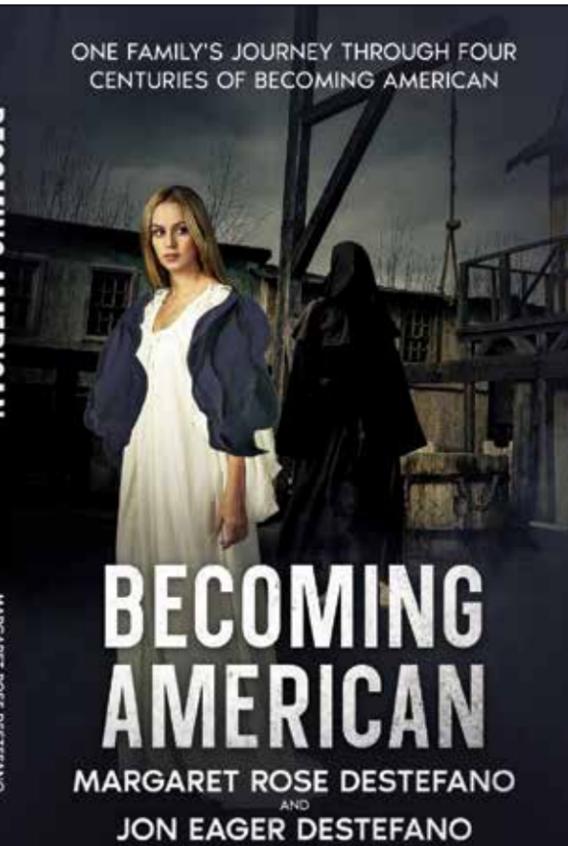
This biographical historical fiction novel explores how one family's fight for justice shaped the nation's destiny—and how the past continues to echo in our pursuit of a better future.



Margaret (Peggy) and Jon DeStefano have been in the publishing field since 1972. They produced over 20 publications each month for various local, state and national organizations. They have published many articles, short stories and poetry during this time. They publish and own the Mountain States Collector, a monthly tabloid devoted to antiques, collectibles and American history. Peggy belongs to several historical societies (Colonial Dames, D.A.R. and Daughters of 1812 to name a few). She and her family have been researching their history for over 50 years. *Becoming American* is Jon and Peggy's first book collaboration. They live in the mountains in Colorado. They have four children and 13 grandchildren.

ONE FAMILY'S JOURNEY THROUGH FOUR CENTURIES OF BECOMING AMERICAN

BECOMING AMERICAN



MARGARET ROSE DESTEFANO AND JON EAGER DESTEFANO

**BECOMING AMERICAN**

MARGARET ROSE DESTEFANO AND JON EAGER DESTEFANO

## Becoming American Is Now Available For Purchase

Peg and Jon DeStefano have recently completed their first book collaboration. *Becoming American* has been a labor of love for the couple as they wanted their children to know their ancestors. This book covers four centuries of the Knowles' family experience in America which began in the early 1600s. This side of the family stems from Peggy's maternal grandmother's side.

The book is based on the genealogical research that Peggy's sister Mary Sikora spent a lifetime recording. All the ancestors are real people. Their place in history helps bring to life America's path up to this time. The book is an historical novel that captures history in a three-dimensional way that old-time history books never could capture.

It is now available through Kindle as a paper back. The electronic version is now available.

# America's Favorite Couple –

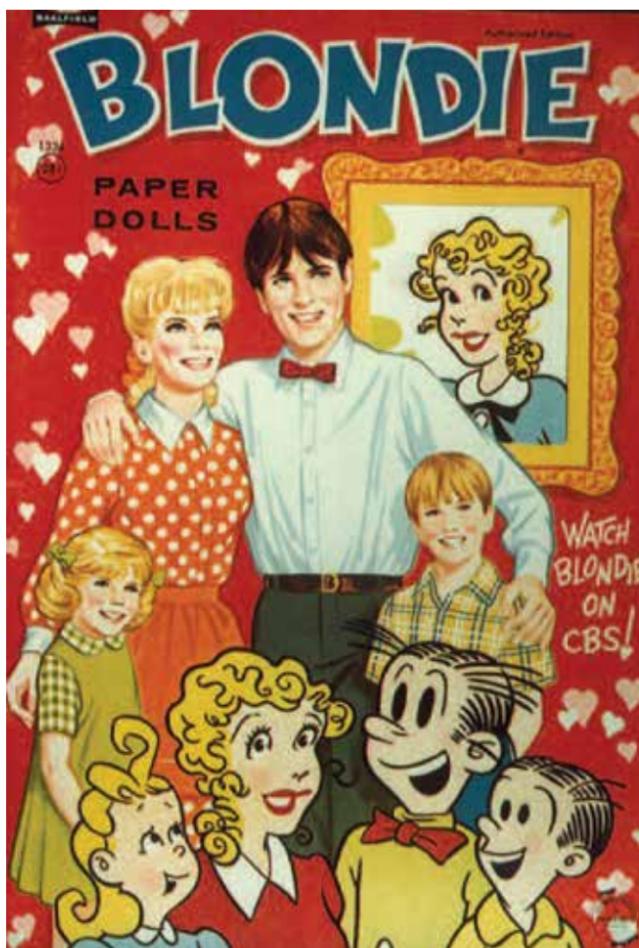
By Roy Nun

The world's favorite married couple, Blondie and Dagwood, have been living in our neighborhood for over 70 years now. Chic Young's seemingly immortal "Blondie," whose continued appearance in over 2,000 newspapers around the world makes it the most popular comic strip of all time, was first seen on September 15, 1930. Appearing in the dailies and Sunday funnies ever since, the Bumsteads quickly came to be loved by Americans as if they were next-door neighbors.

Young did not invent the family theme comic strip, but he certainly perfected it. In the many years since, "Blondie" has had dozens of imitators but no equals. It also substantially influenced radio and television situation-comedy shows.

The comic strip, however, did not begin as a family affair. Originally, it was the adventures of a charming and lovely, though penniless, socialite flapper who rarely played with a full deck. Blondie Boopadoop (yes, that was her real name), always surrounded by admiring men, was constantly pursued by a dogged and determined millionaire's son, Dagwood Bumstead. But Dagwood didn't have a ghost of a chance until Young, sensing a change in the mood of the country caused by the worsening economic depression altered course in mid-stream.

On February 17, 1933, Blondie and Dagwood



were married in the very first wedding ever to occur in the funny papers. Blondie shed her Roaring '20s look to be come a feminine, level-headed housewife and mother of the new era. Dagwood's family disinherited him, and he found himself a working man - for the cranky and grouchy Mr. Dithers.

The following years saw the birth of Baby Dumpling, who later became Alexander, and seven years later, a daughter, Cookie, came along. The Bumsteads were now a standard, typical, middle class – though not too typical – which the reading public could so easily identify with.

The comic strip was a never-ending chronicle of Dagwood's attempts to triumph over life's constant small adversities of job and marriage. He wins a few, just enough to whet the appetites of sympathetic male readers, but most times he comes up short.

Dagwood is a kind-hearted, sincere and loyal husband, father and employee, who is also a bumbling, though well-intentioned, incompetent, constantly getting himself into trouble. Blondie, the real brains of the family, is forever rescuing him – or finding him out.

Chic Young continued to do "Blondie" until his death in 1973. At that time, his son, Dean, and Jim Raymond, both long-time assistants to Young took over the strip and maintained the same style and flavor. From all indications, the changeover has had no effect on the strip's widespread acceptance.

In 1938, when the cartoon was still not quite a decade old, Columbia studios made its first Blondie movie, aptly titled "Blondie." Penny Singleton and veteran actor Arthur Lake, forever fixed afterward in the public's mind as Blondie and Dagwood, were the stars.

In all, the duo starred in 29 Blondie films for Columbia. They were produced on the average

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# Blondie and Dagwood

of one every six months, the last being “Blondie’s Hero” in 1950. These movies, though definitely “B” grade, were hits with generations of moviegoers and later with television viewers. Today the avid collector can find one-sheet posters, lobby cards, and black-and-white promotional stills from all of them.

Arthur Lake and Penny Singleton took their roles to radio for a successful 11-year run under the sponsorship of, first, Camel Cigarettes and later, Super Suds. Arthur Lake, with Pamela Britton playing Blondie, reprised his role as Dagwood for NBC on television shortly after New Year’s Day in 1957. But this first of two attempts lasted only a few months. Likewise, in 1968, a new “Blondie,” with Will Hutchins and Patricia Hartly heading the cast, managed to survive the ratings wars for less than six months.

Except for a paper doll booklet, with illustrations of the show’s stars, and a couple of coloring books - all by Saalfield, few collectibles can be found about this final try for a broadcast winner.

The success and popularity of “Blondie” gave birth to a considerable amount of memorabilia and

souvenirs over the years. All of them are now in demand by collectors and nostalgia buffs.

Included are many paper doll booklets, the first by Whitman in 1940; and dozens of coloring books - also originated by Whitman in 1940. Other publishers of similar novelty books were Saalfield, Lowe, and Artcraft. The Bumstead family also appeared as paper dolls in newspapers during the 1930s.

Beginning in 1938 several publishing houses produced numerous comic books. Most were monthly or semi-monthly issues. Everyone, even “Daisy and Her Pups” (six of them on an irregular basis between 1951 and 1955) headlined a comic book series.

In the late 1930s hardcover and softcover books, aimed at children of all ages, poured off of the presses. These related the comedic mishaps of Blondie, Dagwood, and their kids and pets.

Blondie From A to Z (David McKay Co., 1945), for example, was an A-B-C book for very young readers. On the other hand, Blondie’s Cookbook (David McKay Co., 1947) was targeted toward older children, since it blended together, ever so nicely, recipes and small-sized cartoons.

The famous Big Little Books series from Whitman boasted of at least 14 different Blondie releases. All were done in comic book style. Blondie and Baby Dumpling kicked of the series in 1937 and Blondie - Fun for All finished it in 1949.

So popular were the Bumsteads during the last six decades, thanks to radio, the movies and the comic strip itself, that Blondie and hubby Dagwood became American pop-art heroes. They and their children showed up on everything imaginable, from Dixie cup lids and Pep Cereal pins in the 1940s to all sorts of greeting cards. Mechanical valentines featuring them began appearing shortly after World War II and are highly prized today.

Toys, particularly Marx Company’s “Dagwood’s Aeroplane” (1935) and “Blondie’s Jalopy” (1940s) wind-up me-

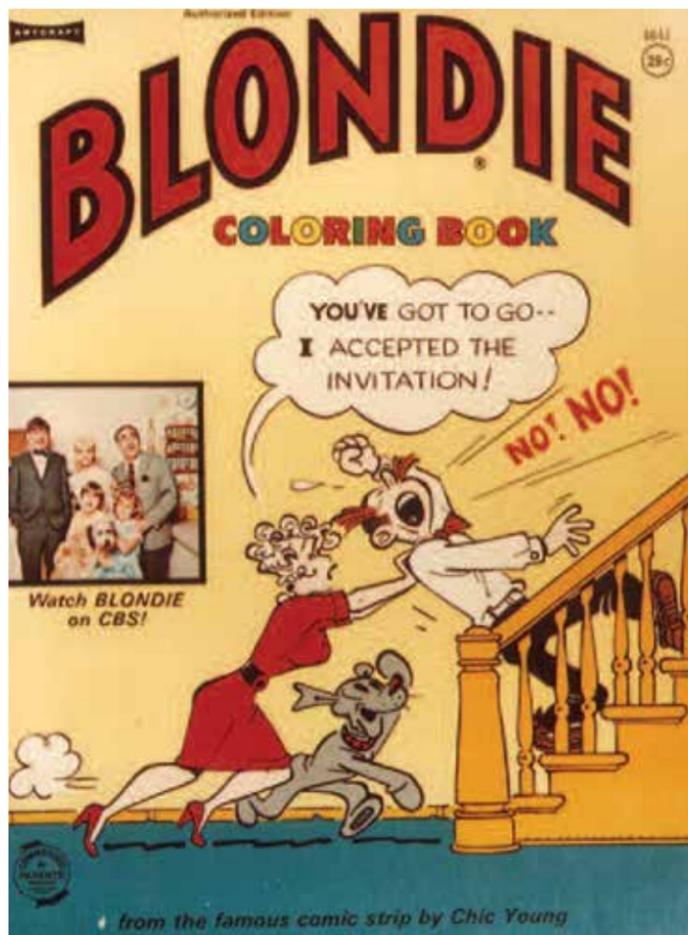


chanicals; paint sets of the 1940s and ‘50s; board games; playing cards; and cloth dolls by Columbia Toy Products Co. in the 1950s are just a few of the many treasures once sold about America’s favorite cartoon family that are now eagerly sought by collectors.

Dagwood and Blondie, in the tradition of comic strips and their heroes and heroines, never grow old. They are as youthful and fresh today as they were more than 70 years ago. True. Alexander and Cookie have grown up, but even so, it took more than a half-century for them to become teenagers.

But the Bumsteads have kept up to date. Blondie is much more the liberated woman nowadays. In fact, a few years ago she went to work running her own catering service. And Dagwood, for a short while, quit his job with Mr. Dithers to work with her.

Thanks to Dagwood, Blondie, and the rest of the family; all of their neighbors; friends; co-workers; and boss Mr. Dithers, we have had over seven decades of wonderful memories, novelties and toys to collect.



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## March Anniversaries

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**March 1**  
The Articles of Confederation, the United States' first constitution, came into force after being ratified by all 13 colonial states (1781).

154th Anniversary of the establishment of Yellowstone National Park as the world's first national park (1872)

**March 2**  
Read Across America Day

**March 5**  
Boston Massacre (1770)

**March 11**  
Congress establishes Army Corp of Engineers (1779)

**March 12**  
Daylight Savings Time begins

**March 16**  
James Madison "Father of the Constitution" born (1751)

**March 17**  
St. Patrick's Day

**March 22**  
Stamp Act passed by Parliament (1765)

**March 23**  
251th Anniversary: Patrick Henry delivered his "Give me liberty or give me death!" speech before the Second Virginia Convention at St. John's Church in richmond, VA (1775).

**March 29**  
50th Anniversary of the last American soldier leaving Vietnam (1973) – National Vietnam War Veterans Day

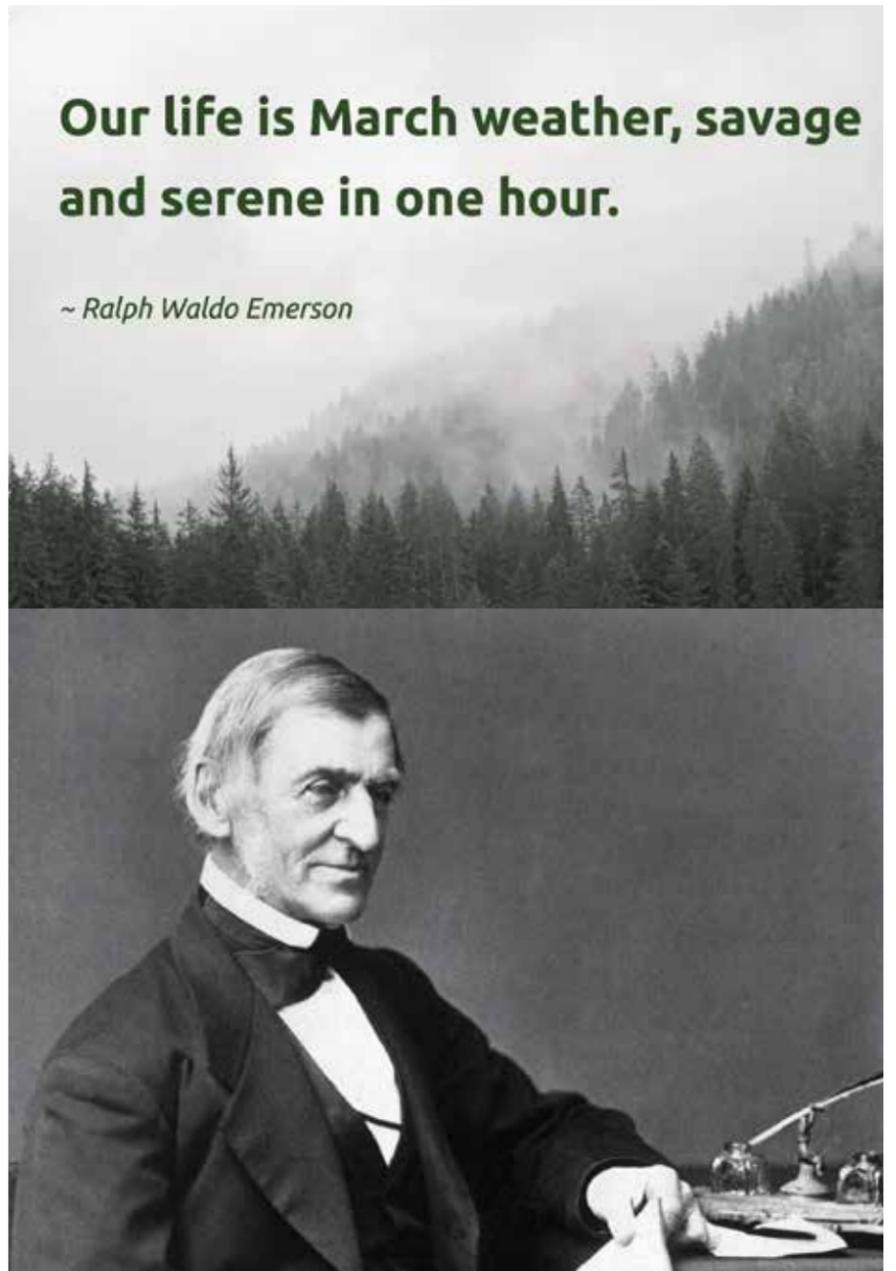


## INSPIRATION

# March's Quote of Month

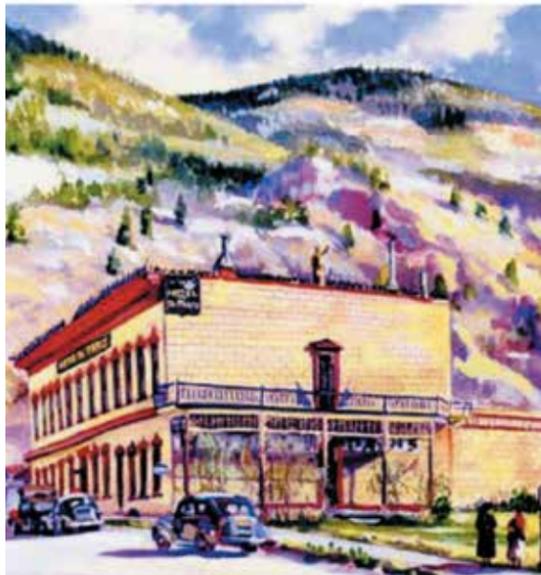
**Our life is March weather, savage and serene in one hour.**

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson



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(Opinions of the writers contained herein are not necessarily the opinions of the publishers.)

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# Capt. Fred Hadley – Tattoo Man

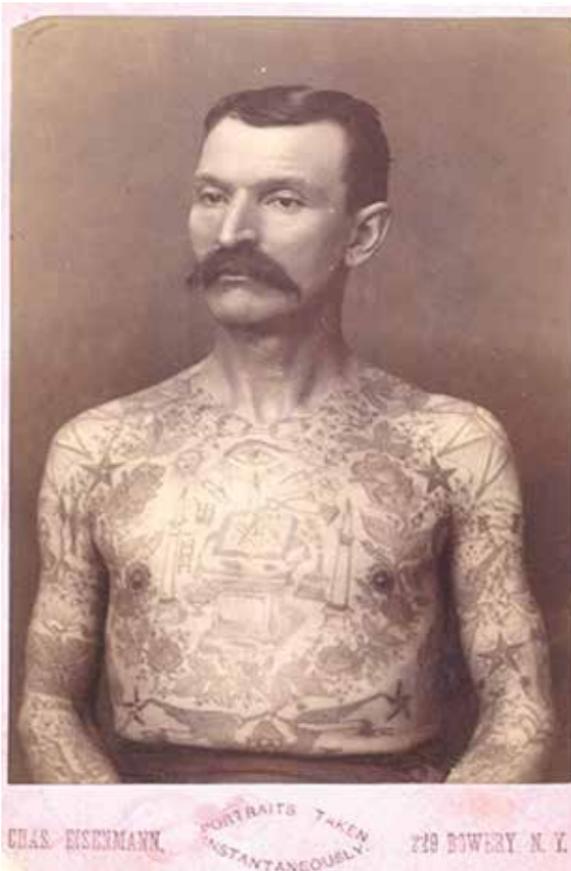
By Carol Mobley

Ambrose Hadley aka Capt. Fred Hadley was my great grandfather and married to the Circassian Girl, Lizzie Metz. He was notable for a number of things, Civil War Veteran, Nebraska Pioneer and Tattooed Man. That's right, my great grandfather was the tattooed man in the circus from 1882 to 1884. I never knew him, he died long before I was born but I am proud to say he is my relative.

Ambrose was born March 12, 1841 in Sterling, Mass. His home life was very difficult so when he was 12 years old, he left home to find his own way. He found work at sea as a deck hand where he worked until the Civil War broke out.

Ambrose joined the Union Army in 1861 and was a member of Company H, Second Rhode Island Infantry. He was mustered out in 1863 after serving his required duty. He then re-enlisted in 1863 and was wounded in May of 1864 and was mustered out of service in 1865. It was customary at that time for a soldier not to be able to reenlist once wounded in battle so, as the story goes, Ambrose had his scar covered over with a tattoo so he could remain in the Army. He remained in service until the end of the Civil War. He never rose above the ranks of Private.

It was after the Civil War that his life changed. He returned to Boston where his



story goes in two different directions, you can decide which one you believe.

The first story is that he hired Elmer E Getchell of Boston, a tattoo artist, to ink him from neck to toe. Ambrose was one of the very first men to be tattooed using the new

'electric' equipment. In an article published in The Chicago Daily Tribune, April 21, 1884 Getchell states that it took 6 weeks to tattoo his entire body.

The second story is documented in "Life of Capt. Fred Hadley, the Tattooed American with a Treatise on the Art of Tattooing" written by Himself, printed and published by John H. Campbell, Phenix, Rhode Island. After the Civil War he returned to Boston where he shipped aboard the "Susan Wilson" bound for Australia. He fell ill at sea and was left on Chatham Island, South Pacific Ocean, in the hands of a resident there. He became acquainted with a native woman of the island who was an expert tattooer who tattooed him from head to foot.

Ambrose had 386 designs and his entire body was covered from neck to toes. Here is how he describes some of his tattoos:

...beginning on the breast: where is seen the full masonic emblem enclosed in a floral wreath of great beauty, with all the working tools and emblems of the entered apprentice, fellow craft and master. On the back is to be seen the finished picture illustrating the "Rock of Ages," which extends from shoulder to shoulder, and clearly defines the wreck dashed against the rock and going to pieces. On the right our Savior, under a beautiful sun-burst, and all calm in the centre, the cross

*Continued to page 15*

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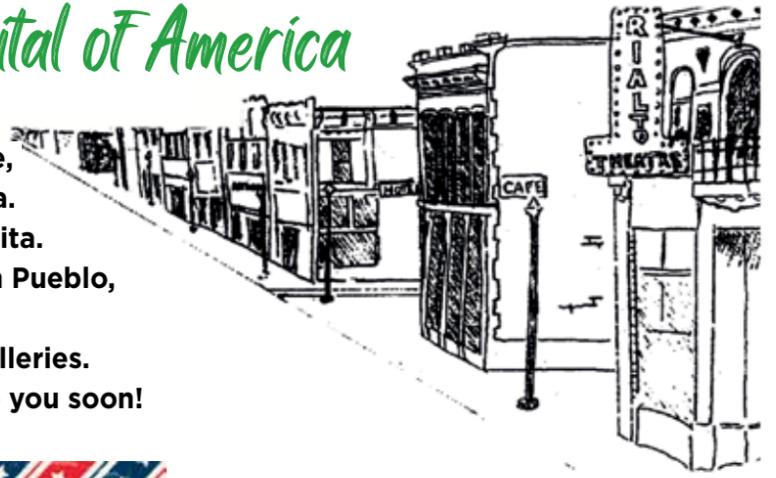
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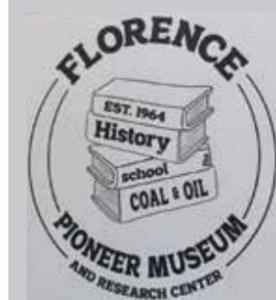
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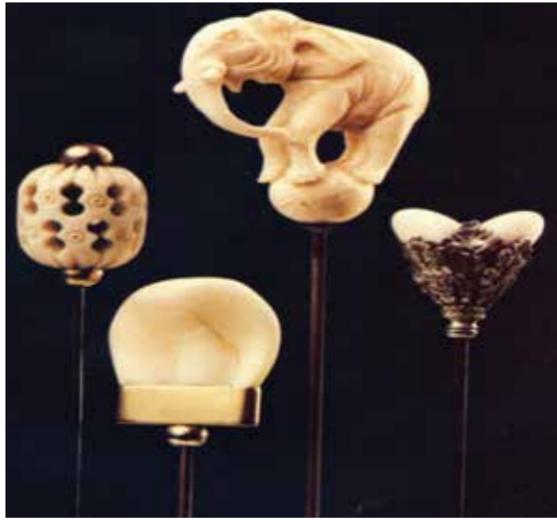
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## February's What Is It?

The four hatpins shown to the left are all fashioned from natural materials. From left they are carved bone, a tooth (probably from an elk) mounted in gold, carved ivory, and two small deer teeth in a silver setting. The most valuable of the four is the ivory- elephant hatpin.

We had several correct guessers for February's What Is It. They have all won a year's subscription to the Mountain States Collector. Congratulations!

The winners are: Kay McGrath, Pueblo, Colorado; Jacquie Rutledge, Northglenn, Colorado; Loene McIntyre, Fort Collins, Colorado; Marjorie P. McLaren, Anchorage, Alaska; Judy



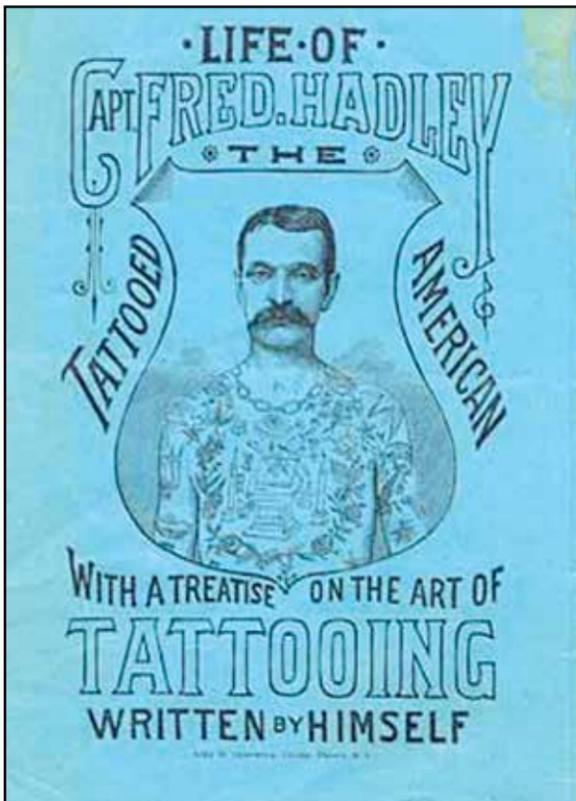
Hess, Greeley, Colorado; Jeanne Beyer, Aurora, Colorado; Terry Cook, Fort Morgan, Colorado (though they are not cane handles or baton ends, they probably could be used that way); and Starla Metayer, Roggen, Colorado.

## March's What Is It?



Send your answers to the What Is It contest, postmarked by March 20, to the Mountain States Collector, P.O. Box 1003, Bailey, CO 80421. At least three winners will be drawn. Winners will receive a one year electronic subscription to the Mountain States Collector. Be sure to include your email address to your guess.

## Capt. Fred Hadley – Tattoo Man Continued . . .



Continued from page 13 with the lady clinging to it. The Altar, Bible and Robe are also plainly pictured here, and clear to the sight [sic] in the angry waters may

be seen parts of the wreck. Around the neck is a chain in thirteen links, representing the thirteen original states. On each shoulder is the sun, on the right, the moon. On the right arm, near the shoulder, is Washington's bust, surrounded with French and American Flags. Below it is the United States Coat of Arms, Easter Cross, Bunch of Grapes and many new figures and designs of my own conception, including the 'Warriors' in colors, Faith, Hope and Charity, a Bee Hive, a figure of young America, a small cross wreathed with flowers, a ballet dancer, etc.

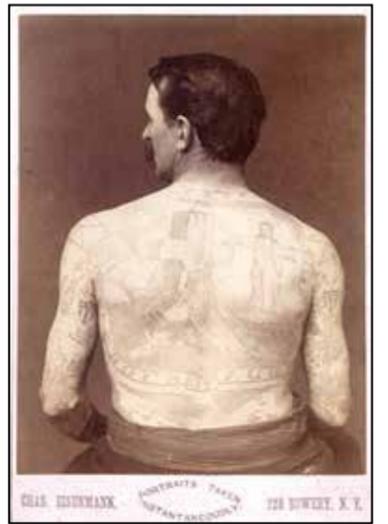
My favorite story, however, is one my mother told me. When she was a little girl she would sit on her grandfather's lap. If she was sad, he would tease her with the sad face on one knee until she laughed and then he would tease her with the smiling face on his other knee.

Ambrose married Lizzie Metz in 1880 and together they both performed in the circus. It was there that he started calling himself Capt. Fred Hadley – I am sure Ambrose didn't sound as good as Capt. Fred! The well-known photographer, Chas. Eisenmann of New York, took photos of Capt. Fred Hadley which he sold at circus stops along the way. He also

wrote a small pamphlet which he sold that told his life story and detailed his tattoos.

After Ambrose left the circus he traveled to western Nebraska where he homesteaded and later owned a farm in Box Butte County. At the end of his life he and his brother moved into Battle Mountain Sanitarium at Hot Springs, SD. He is included in postcards of the Veterans Home. He died in May 1924 and is buried in the military cemetery at Hot Springs, SD.

I am very pleased to be able to document history either from my own family history or from other ephemera that can be found at the local Postcard and Paper Ephemera Collectible Show. You can read more about the show at [www.DenverPostcardShow.com](http://www.DenverPostcardShow.com).



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*Krysti Jomei of Birdy magazine couldn't resist visiting the dinosaurs at the Brass Armadillo. Photo by Sean Forrester.*

