

Celebrating a Living Residence

At the northwest corner of Hwy. 50E and Main Street in Old Town Dayton is a building that soon will begin its return to its original appearance as Dayton's 1881 Carson & Colorado Railroad Depot. However, this building also had a life as a residence after 1934 when the C&C RR line through Dayton was closed down. As a home it served as both a rental and as an owner-occupied dwelling. Families grew up here, residents coped with joy and sorrow, and here the last resident owner lived out her life.

Families such as the Alinghams owned the residence at its original location (about a block away, now in the path of Hwy. 50E) and raised their children there. When the depot was sold by NDOT the man who bought and moved it to its current site was "larger than life" Chester Barton. He was Dayton's deputy sheriff, ran a garage, operated the Old Corner Bar, owned the Union Hotel, bought Christmas presents for every needy kid in the community, "recycled everything" into a structure or other use, was a well known practical joker, and was a general jack-of-all-trades. He kept rattlesnakes, a pet Bobcat "Chico," a bear and other wild animals, drove a pink station wagon as his "official" vehicle, and was the model for the unusual protagonist in Robert Laxalt's *Man in a Wheatfield*. Later his widow Helen—colorful in her own right as a wonderful gardener and cook—lived out her life in the residence. And after Helen's death the home became a carefully maintained rental residence.

Before this building begins its journey to restoration as a depot, the Dayton community will gather to celebrate its long life as a residence. Many people remember those who lived here, others lived here themselves, and yet others have wondered about the history of this building. If you remember the home and its residents here is the chance to share those memories, and if you do not here is a chance to learn and to enjoy a community celebration.

On Sunday, July 12 at 5:00 p.m. we will gather at the depot to enjoy a community barbeque and remembrance. Everyone, no matter what your relationship to the building, is welcome, as is the whole family. Please bring your meat or other main course to barbeque and a potluck dish to share. We will have grills for barbequing, shade with tables and chairs, water and soda. It will be an old-fashioned community get-together to share a meal and remembrances, and take a last look in the residence before restoration begins,. Please also feel free to show up for the remembrances or to tour the building even if you don't want to join the meal or bring a dish. At the end of the evening we'll gather for some old fashioned community entertainment, so if you have a guitar or other musical instrument, bring that as well!

For more information please contact Linda Clements at 246-0505, clements@775.net. You don't need to RSVP, so if you decide at the last minute that you can come, y'all just come on by!

Presented by the Carson & Colorado Working Group of the Historical Society of Dayton Valley.