

BISHOP CASTLE AND FAMILY INFORMATION for 1984

Twenty-five years ago in 1959 a down payment of \$450.00 was made on a 2½ acre piece of mountain property. This payment was made by Jim Bishop, then 15 years old. The total price of the property was \$1250.00. Jim and mother Pauline and father Willard paid for this property in a few years.

Jim quit high school in the middle of his junior year (11th grade) and went to work with his father at their Ornamental Iron business. This is a very small (2 man) meager business and as far as money goes we are not money people.

Their dream was to develop this mountain property and end up with a comfortable stone cottage. Common sense told them not to work off of a loan but to do things themselves and stay out of dept. An access road was built with pick, shovel and wheelbarrow. The first cabin was a metal shed made out of the material from old automatic washing machines (the sheet metal sides).

Willard Bishop built a well rig and hit water at 30 feet. Later the well was dug out by hand (by Jim and himself) and he installed a hand pump which he built himself. Willard created allof the equipment used thus far in their shop from scratch and parts from junk yards. The shop is located in Pueblo, Colorado.

The first decade on the mountain was spent doing all the ground work (wheelbarrow and shovel) leading up to the start of the construction on their stone cottage.

In 1969 the first stone was laid in place for the cottage, with no blueprints or building permits (at that time and to this date Custer County, Colo. has no building code, they do have a zoning code). Work went on only in the summer months (mostly concrete and masonry work). Willard was constructing a round tower staircase around an old water tank. This round tower staircase is the only part of the Castle that Willard can take credit for building and it is up to Jim to finish it at a height of 100 feet as well.

In 1971 people commented on how the project looked like a castle, thus the mediocre cottage project turned into a monumental castle project,.

Jim saw the very real goal to do something very unique. Jim's father could see no end to this and, for whatever reason, he gave up on the castle and moved over to the metal shed to build the cottage there.

In the past 14 years the Castle has grown to 70 feet high and will reach an overall height of 120 feet at the square elevator and bell tower keep. Also, at this time, there are approximately 13,000 tons of rock in the existing structure (each stone is handled up to 10 times or so before they find their final place in the castle).

Its base is dug into the mountain ground and in places it is 12 feet deep and only 18 inches in others. Bedrock of the mountain is its foundation. It is educational and entertaining to anyone who visits the Castle including the Colo. State Hospital and mental health centers. Anyone can talk and ask questions of Jim Bishop and his family. He can work and answer questions at the same time. Work areas are roped off for safety and a warning sign at the property entrance reads- ENTER AT YOUR OWN RISK!. CASTLE UNDER CONSTRUCTION. KEEP CHILDREN AND PETS UNDER CONTROL. IF YOU DO NOT AGREE DO NOT ENTER!

The public can watch it change and grow from time to time and a great love for it has developed by the public. Where can anyone go and be entertained at no charge? We do have a gift shop at the cabin but we do not funnel people past it just to sell them something. The Castle will always be a public service place.

In the next ten years, as the building we call a Castle comes to a finish, it will contain an estimated 20,000 tons of rock in it. This does not include the sand, cement, lumber or steel used. After that time the north half of our property that the Art Form sits on will be walled in with corner towers and a massive gate house with drawbridge and spiked gate (portculis). The wall may be 40 feet high in places. It will be battlemented. The wall will be at least 4 feet thick and hollow (for rooms or storage) at that point the entire north half will be a castle fortified

A PLACE THE POOR PEOPLE
CAN ENJOY AS WELL AS
ANYONE ELSE - FREE!

complex.

From a totally undeveloped mountain side the Castle is a great Monumental Art Form now and will get much greater continually as long as Jim can continue to work and turn all of his ideas into reality.

All of the rock is handled by Jim from rock slide to pickup truck to block and tackle lift to scaffolding and finally mortared into place in the Castle.

This is a list of unique facts about this project. It is hand built - mostly by one man - no education as far as formal schooling - no heavy equipment (such as cranes) - no blueprints - a true unique art form - very little government control - an exercise in freedom - always open to the public on a true donation basis (as a museum, interfaith chapel, hall with pipe organ for weddings, dances, art shows and tours of the Castle). It will be used in its entirety by the general public. Our personal living quarters will be the cottage (the once metal shed).

We have set up a not for profit organization and are continuing to work on a trust fund for charity. We are trying to qualify for tax numbers and exemptions so that the Castle will eventually end up as a Colo. State Museum or whatever. If not we are working ourselves toward a property tax burden and we don't want to start charging a fee to people just to pay property taxes. This tax exempt status would also protect the Castle from falling into the hands of money people who might take credit for it or take advantage of the public. Furthermore our family could not lose it by sale or mortgage and it will always carry the Bishop name.

So far the Castle is totally debt free and will stay that way. We are striving to get more and more independent and strong against any economic period. For instance Jim built a sawmill from parts and he logs by the simplest of equipment (a one man tripod) to produce beams and lumber. We just cannot afford to do it any other way.

Jim's father created an all wheel drive articulating terrain vehicle. It serves as a portable welder and power plant, snow blower, cement mixer and small dump truck. The cement mixer attachment has provided all the concrete and mortar mixing for the Castle. Willard is quite a mechanically inclined genius. He built all the machinery in the shop in Pueblo and a lot of the ideas Jim has implemented in the Castle were Willard's ideas. Just think of how much more Castle there would be closer to a finish IF he (Willard) would have devoted as much time and work (which was agreed upon in the beginning) as Jim has.

There are no utility companies providing any electric or anything else at the Castle and we want to remain independent that way too.

There are 7 Bishop's (6 at this time) involved in this project. The other 4 being Jim's wife Phoebe and their 3 children, Daniel 11, Valerie 9 and Roy James 6 months of age.

Phoebe is quite capable and has done some of the cement and rock work, mostly on the cottage,. She does all of the duties of a mother and housewife as well as farming (chickens), hunting (deer and elk and she bagged a black bear one season) and general repairs and maintenance on our Pueblo rentals. She also bakes custom cakes and sews.

The older children help very much and have a serious energy toward this Castle project. Their grandmother (Jim's mother) Pauline manages the business in Pueblo and does a lot of the paper work concerning the Castle.

A Pipe Organ mentioned, set up in the main hall (in the future), is a result of Willard's love of music and pipe organ collecting hobby. He has three of them.

Castle building on a full scale basis is very difficult on a meager income. Working half the time or more to earn a living is the toughest part. These earnings are our only means of funding, other than our donation box and gift shop at the castle, (which isn't even a supplement at this time) to financially support it. That is why we are interested in any kind of publicity on a national level. It could boost our donation moneys considerably and enable us to continue our work.

We are aware of much credit going to many people over national television. We were told by a man from channel 4 (N.B.C.) Denver that you can't toot your own horn. Well, we intend to toot our own horn loud and strong from now on. This castle project stands firm on it's own merit. All we can ask for from anyone is fair treatment. Thank you for listening.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REPRINT AND USE ANY OF THIS MATERIAL

Jim Bishop
(Castle Builder)

Sincerely,
James R. Bishop (Castle builder)
Phoebe M. Bishop (Jim's wife and constant encourager)

Phoebe M. Bishop

P.S. This year of 1984 a charity was formed by Bishop Castle Non-Profit Corporation, the brainchild of Phoebe Bishop, it is known as BISHOP CASTLE FOUNDATION FUND FOR NEWBORN HEART SURGERY. The fund is already established in the Greenhorn Valley Bank in Colo. City, Colo.. One hundred dollars was the contribution by Jim and Phoebe and since then 25% of the daily donations received for the construction of Bishop Castle is deposited into the account for Newborn Heart Surgery. ON OCT. 20, 1984 THE ACCT. IS \$ 513⁰⁰

A varience was granted the Bishops to split their land in half and thus they transferred the deed of private ownership of the Castle and the land it sits on from their private names and gave it to the Bishop Castle Non-Profit Corporation. So that in effect the Castles purpose now is to generate funds for Newborn Heart Surgery.

(THE CASTLE IS THE VEHICLE TO RAISE FUNDS FOR THE BISHOP FOUNDATION)
We also have other functions at the Castle to raise funds for other (CHARITY) needy organizations with no charge to anyone.

Anyone wishing to use the Castle and or it's grounds for a picnic, wedding, reunion, fund raiser or whatever within reason are welcome to do so with prior planning at no set charge to them. We do accept donations however.

THE CASTLE CORP. HAS A BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF 5 AND A GOOD CHANCE DELORES GRIFFIN WILL BE ADDED IN THE NEAR FUTURE. WE FILED ALL OF NECESSARY PAPER WORK ACCORDING TO 501-C-3 OF IRS CODE APPLYING FOR TAX EXEMPT NUMBER. AFTER WAITING 4 MONTHS WE WERE DENIED OUR EXEMPT STATUS ON THE 12, OCT. 1984. BY THE IRS. AND WE ARE APPEALING THAT DECISION NOW! WE ARE TRYING TO PRESERVE THE CASTLE, MONUMENTAL ART FORM FOR POSTERITY NEVER TO BE A COMMERCIAL TOURIST TRAP. BUT PERHAPS A STATE PARK OR WHATEVER APPROPRIATE FOR CHARITABLE PURPOSE'S