

Mrs. Phoebe Bishop
1529 Claremont Ave.
Pueblo, Colo. 81004

October 24, 1984

Mr. Seymour Rosen
1804 north Van Ness
Los Angeles, Calif. 90028

Dear Mr. Rosen,

A copy of your book, In Celebration of Ourselves, came across my path and I must admit that I am impressed. But most importantly I am pleased that there are a few people left who see the beauty and uniqueness in the things that other people can do.

I am especially interested because as you will read in the following information. My husband is doing a most unique and monumental thing. He is in my estimation one of the most unselfish and brilliant artist i've ever seen. Of coarse I take nothing away from those who deserve the same respect but I sincerely believe that Jim is in a class of his very own at this present time.

To tell you a little history of my knowledge of him I will begin at his beginning. Jim was born in Hawaii on february 24, 1944. His father is from Indiana and his mother is from Pueblo, Colorado, she is slovinian,. Jim is 5'6 or 7" tall and 164 pounds. When he was in the second grade his mother was told Jim had a fatal kidney disease (acute nephritis) and he was given six months to live. He did not attend school for a year at that time and his mother continually forced liquids down him and quite obviously he is still with us. Just two days after he started back to school again he came home with the chicken pox and measles both at the same time.

When he started his third grade he was evaluated as being capable of the fourth grade level and therefore was immediately advanced to that level thus he stayed with his age group. When he was in his early teens he was chased down by neighborhood kids and picked on because of his frail body. He was a good student and made high grades.

In the ninth grade a shop teacher tried to reprimand the entire class for a stealing problem among the classroom. Jim refused to be reprimanded for something he didn't do thus he used that class as a study hour. The teacher threatened to fail Jim but having had all A's at that point he knew he couldn't be flunked so he told the teacher that he would not accept anything other than an F. He was completely bored with school from thereon and so during the eleventh grade after he turned sixteen Jim quit school for good and went to work in the ornamental iron business with his father. He had started working with his father when he was fifteen so he fit right into the swing of things.

It was when he was fifteen that he purchased the mountain property which is where he is devoting his mind, body and soul. He used to ride his bicycle (regular speed) 45 miles to the mountains and spend the week-end. This made his mother worry quite frequently and this started her looking for a piece of mountain property. When the land was found Jim was approached to make the down payment as he was the only one in the family who had any money. In the process of mowing lawns and such Jim had managed to have saved in the bank before he was fifteen \$500.00. Jim was to young to be a landowner so the land was bought under his parents name. They did not transfer ownership to him until he was 38.

He and his father began to dig the road into the property by hand with wheelbarrow and shovel. Without his apparent knowledge this was the beginning of his destiny.

When he was 18 he was so fed up with his frail frame and he decided to begin a weightlifting program. He was tired of being weak all of the time. He was always battling a cold or bronchitis and this kept him from doing the things he wanted to do.

I met Jim, when he was 22 years old, at a small weightlifting gym. I had a liver ailment which I felt would be less bothersome if I were to build myself up physically. It's still hard for me to believe but it was love at first sight for both of us. We met in September 1966 and were married January 7, 1967. We have three young children and we have spent our life so far always together in everything we do and especially in the construction of the Castle.

When we met the work on the mountain property was still in the digging stages this I started lending a hand in also. In 1969 the footings were started for a stone cottage which we could use as a summer vacation spot but within a few years after always hearing about a Castle being built nearby, which in all actuality people were talking of our cottage, Jim saw the possibilities of a future with our place. From thereon when people asked why we were building it our reply was "for the people!" We said that for so many years that Jim and I decided to actually build a Castle Monument for the people and so that is what we are doing.

In 1983 we formed a non-profit corporation in the name of the Castle and sought a variance from the County to split our property in half, which we did. This year we transferred ownership of the half which the Castle sits on from our private ownership and gave it to the corporation. In June also of this year I created a charity for Newborn who need heart surgery. Therefore the purpose of the construction of the Bishop Castle is to be the vehicle to generate funds for these infants.

The only satisfaction we receive from this is the joy of doing something for a good cause and the notoriety. We get payed in no monetary way for what we are doing. We have a small gift shop on our half of the land and this way we make a meager living in the summer time while we are working on the Castle but we do have to work in Pueblo in the winter time to pay our bills. We are now in the process of seeking tax exemptions for the Castle and Corporation so that we don't have that strain to build under. We do have a donation box on the premises but so far donations are just starting to pay for the material that goes into the Castle itself.

There are no blue prints or plans of the Castle and therefore I am a firm believer that Jim is a true artist and the Castle is a truly unique art form. People do really enjoy coming to the Castle and visiting with Jim as he works and he enjoys it just as much as they do. There is nothing he likes better than to talk of his endeavors. Infact we have a slide show on it's continued construction which we present to schools and organizations free of charge.

In writing this letter to you I hope to peak your interest in Jim's unique capabilities and all I can hope for is that you will have a positive reaction to his endeavors.

Thank you for any time you take to absorb and enjoy any of this information.

P.S. The surrounding communities have benefited monetarily from the Castle more than we do as it is a major draw to highway 165.

Sincerely,


Mrs. Phoebe Bishop