

Pangrazi reminisces, discusses modern life-styles

—by Katharine Otto

Her reputation for delectable orange and tasin-rhubarb pies precedes her, even though she doesn't do much baking anymore. "I'm slower than I used to be," she confides, "and cooking takes up a lot of time."

Her white hair neatly combed back, blue eyes alternately sparkling and serious, Speranza Pangrazi, 80, talks of Telluride's transformation (and that of society in general) since her arrival here 58 years ago. Speranza and her husband, Prännewyeds, left their native Pränncorno Tirol (then in Austria and now a part of Italy) to come live in America. Things were different then," she says in her thick (but easy to understand) Italian accent.

"I was a housewife and my husband worked in the mine. Don't ask me anything about the mine," she laughs. "They wouldn't let the ladies in the mine, they said it was bad luck. Now there are ladies who work in the tunnels."

Following his mining career, her husband moved the family to Matherhorn (near Trout Lake), to Ophit, and in 1945 back to the house in Telluride where Mrs. Pangrazi still lives. "I stayed home and took care of the children," she says. She has three daughters; Katherine Reece, a familiar face in the clerk's office at the County Courthouse; and two others in Durango and Montrose.

"I taught myself English with

the girls when they started school, did some sewing for people and some gardening." Smoothing a wrinkle in the hand-embroidered and crocheted floral tablecloth she did "a long time ago", Mrs. Pangrazi says "I still love to sew."

One of modern society's more regrettable aspects, she says, has been the usurping, by work, travel, or "commodities", of free time. "People don't have time for things anymore," she says pensively; they buy canned food because they don't have the time to cook. "Look at that wood-work," she says, pointing to the carved trim around her front door—"They don't have time to do that kind of thing anymore."

She reminisces over evenings spent with friends playing cards, listening to music or singing. There doesn't seem to be as much of that either anymore, she sighs.

Then, laughing: "Don't write down all these complaints," she tells me. "People will think I complain too much."

The mountains are what keeps her here, she says. They remind her of the Alps in her native province. But, she adds wistfully, letters from relatives tell her things have changed there, too—ski areas "and all that stuff" have been built there.

Even though she has stayed, Mrs. Pangrazi misses the many oldtimers who left the Telluride area and moved to places like Grand Junction, Montrose and Durango when the young people started moving in, she says. "A

lot of the oldtimers, they moved away. They didn't like the style. I don't mind it, but I have some complaints. You don't like everything either, do you?

"I can't buy shoes I like here. They only have those heavy shoes. Heavy shoes are fine for some people, but I can't wear them." She points to her white support shoes—"All the styles are for the young people. You don't like my style, I don't like yours," she says smiling.

"People don't stay here long. They stay four or five years, get tired and move away. They travel all the time."

"People don't believe me when I tell them we used to cook on a wood burning stove. They can't understand what it was like without all their commodities. There are so many commodities," she says with a serious look, and, for emphasis, repeats the last sentence.

Her concern over some innovations is evident. Federal programs, young people's seeming unwillingness to work, luxuries, and credit are, to her eyes, way out of hand. But, she concedes, the prices, particularly for land, are so high now, no one could afford to buy a house without credit.

The "junk" around town bothers her, too. "People don't clean up their back yards," she says in a low tone. "Their front yards look all right, but you look in the back, you'll see what I mean. I think they should take all the junk and fill up that big hole in the east

end of town with it. Don't you think that's a good idea? That hole is ugly and dangerous."

A mention of her baking fame brings a smile, and she admits to several male friends who have, at with you."





Too soon we find there are stories
to be told,
But the best are the memories we've
shared with those who cared.

-Carlie McKnight-

In appreciation of the love, caring and giving shared by her daughters and their families, we are hosting a 90th birthday salute for our mother, Speranza.

You are cordially invited to attend a Luncheon Reception on December 6, 1987 from 1:00-3:00 p.m. at the Montrose Elks Lodge, 801 S. Hillcrest Drive. We request no gifts. Our hope is that you may have special memories, pictures, recipes, or thoughts you would like to share of your friendship with mother and mail to Sylvia Blackburn, 208 Halto Via Circle, Durango, Co. 81301 by November 15 to be inserted into a Memory Book.

Since her birth ninety years ago in Pracorno, Tyrol, Austria (now Italy) on December 6, 1897, Speranza has had a very fulfilling life in that the path she chose to travel has brought her many different experiences and challenges. She feels fortunate in being blessed with so many friends and family who have helped her grow in accepting the many changes which have taken place down through the years and often expresses her gratitude.

Speranza was married July 19, 1919 to Fiore Pangrazi in Pracorno with the promise they would come to the United States. This promise was fulfilled on December 23, 1920 when arriving in Telluride, Colorado. After spending one month in Telluride they moved to Matterhorn, Colorado into a one room log cabin (still standing) where Fiore worked one year for the San Bernardo Mine before its closing. They then moved to Ophir Loop and purchased a home at the foot of the Ophir Needles where their three daughters were born. These were very busy years along with some hardship due to the depression. She was busy being a homemaker, which included painting, papering, gardening, canning, embroidering, crocheting, knitting, baking and sewing. Many times she would be found washing and scrubbing clothes on a washboard plus mending for miners. She was a seamstress for many of the neighbors. With the help of her daughters she taught herself to read, write and speak the English language; served as Secretary for the School Board and boarded several of the schoolteachers; served on the Election Board, and cared for two bachelors who were suffering from silicosis. In 1945 they moved to Telluride where Fiore worked in the mine and as a carpenter's helper. Here she was able to pursue her love for sewing and spent many enjoyable hours on her favorite hobby, which included high school pep club uniforms; altering and sewing for women, men and children; drapes for the Telluride Elks Lodge, and altar clothes for St. Patrick's Catholic Church. She was left a widow in 1959 and lived alone until 1984. She now spends the summer in Telluride with Katherine and winter in Montrose with Ida and Carlie. In the last three years she has crocheted fifty afghans and made many other handcrafted articles, takes her daily exercises and walk, listens and gives advice when asked for. Many times we hear her say, "Thank God for all his blessings--I have many."

May it be possible for you to attend this special day in celebration with our other.

Sylvia, Katherine and Ida