

# Chess Colorado Chess

**ROBERT G. SHEAN**, computer expert and chess master, died Sept. 20 after a long illness. He was 47.

Services for Mr. Shean, a staff engineer for Lockheed Corp. at the time of his death, were Sept. 25 in Denver. He worked for several aerospace firms in Denver and California.

He moved to Denver at an early age and graduated from West High School in 1957. He earned a mathematics degree from the University of Colorado in 1961.

Born in Victor, Colo., Mr. Shean was the first Colorado native to earn a master's rating by the U.S. Chess Federation. He won numerous local tournaments, including Colorado state champion in 1963 and 1964; Denver city champion in 1959 and 1983; and Denver Chess Club champion in 1974, 1975 and 1977.



Robert G. Shean

He served as president of the Colorado State Chess Association in 1972-73 and again in 1976-77. He was on the U.S. Chess Federation publicity committee from 1972 to 1975 and was especially active in supporting the development of younger players.

He is survived by his mother, Ruby Shean of Denver; a sister, Mary Helen Hubbard of Chicago; and his grandmother, Mary Lehr of Denver.

Contributions may be made to the American Diabetes Association, 2450 S. Downing St., Denver 80210.

(The following is the profile of Bob Shean in Dr. Timothy Jovick's "History of Colorado Chess," supplied by John Harris.)

Robert G. Shean, an engineer and senior computer analyst, was "around" in the earlier days of Colorado chess. His heyday was the late 1950's and early 1960's. He was Denver City champion in 1959 and again in 1983. Bob achieved a master's rating in 1963 and took State Championship in 1963 and 1964, both with  $5\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$  scores. He then left the state for five years, and since his return has been largely involved in the organizational aspects of the Colorado State Chess Association. (He expressed some regrets that his playing never again reached the level he had in the early 1960's.) One of Mr. Shean's main contributions has been the initiation, during his 1972-73 presidency of the Colorado State Chess Association, of proceeding for certification of the CSCA as a non-profit corporation. The resulting successful incorporation status was the groundwork for establishing the CSCA as tax-exempt in 1976.

Also, during that 1972-75 time period he served on the USCF Publicity Committee. Mr. Shean was CSCA President once again, in 1976-77, and has been, like many others, very supportive and encouraging of young, strong players. He was Colorado's first home grown chess player to achieve master rating.



## Remembering Bob Shean

by Curtis Carlson

Bob Shean was one of the top players and organizers in Colorado chess in the 70's. Three decades after his passing it's time to share memories. While I believe these recollections are accurate, some old timers may disagree. No one's memory is perfect, least of all mine. There are also many others who did much for Colorado chess who aren't mentioned here. I'm only remembering a friend who expired too young.

Robert George Shean was born on January 3, 1939, and died on September 20, 1986 from complications of diabetes. He was 47. After getting his math degree from CU in 1961 he spent his career at Lockheed and other aerospace firms in California and Colorado. He preferred Denver, but lived in Sunnyvale when needed by his employer. We met on July 3, 1971 when we were paired in the first round of the Denver Open. Our game was drawn (see below) after I survived a bad middlegame. Bob didn't seem unhappy to split a point with a lowly B player! He saw all six Fischer-Larsen games, which were played that summer.

After returning to Denver, Bob was a regular in Colorado tournaments and usually did well. He also played in several US Opens. His best result was an outstanding 8.5-3.5 in Chicago 1963, but he also scored a fine 8-4 in Lincoln 1975. He also did well in Aspen 1968 and Ventura 1971, and in Atlantic City 1972 he defeated upcoming junior Peter Winston (fresh off a victory over GM Walter Browne) with his beloved Morra Gambit. Bob scored highly in the 1973 and 1974 National Opens in Las Vegas. He was well known nationwide. Bob was Denver champion in 1959 and 1983, and CSCA president in 1972 and 1976. He was generous with his time and served with dignity and distinction. Everyone liked him.

I moved to California in 1983 and unexpectedly saw Bob at a LERA Sunnyvale tournament that March. We spoke briefly, and I never saw him again.

He passed three weeks after the 1986 Colorado Open, where his books were being sold. I wish I had purchased some! He must have known the end was near.

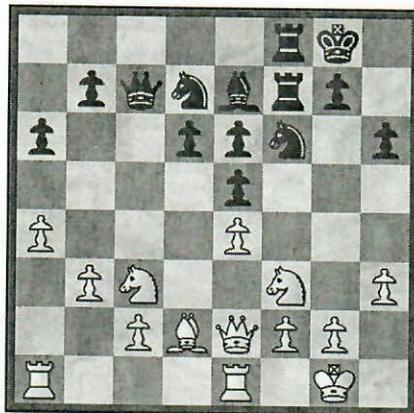
Bob has several games that can be found at *ChessGames.com* and *2700chess.com*. I urge everyone to look up his superb win over Winston. To my knowledge, the following games aren't online.

**Curtis Carlson** (1661) age 17

**Robert Shean** (2006) age 32

1971 Denver Open / Round 1

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 a6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 e5 5.Nf3 d6 6.Nc3 Nf6 7.Bg5 Nbd7 8.a4 Be7 9.Bc4 O-O 10.O-O Qc7 11.Qe2 h6 12.Bd2 Nb6 13.Bb3 Be6 14.Bxe6 fxe6 15.b3 Nbd7 16.Rfel Rf7 17.h3 Raf8



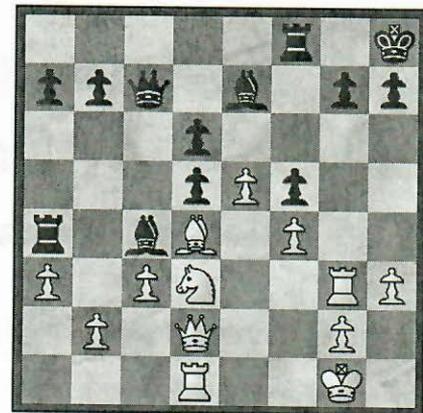
18.Rad1 Nh5 19.Rf1 Nf4 20.Bxf4 Rxf4 21.Qe3 Qc6 22.Rde1 Bd8 23.Re2 Ba5 24.Nb1 Bb6 25.Qc3 Nc5 26.Nbd2 Rc8 27.a5 Bd8 28.b4 Nd7 29.Qxc6 Rxc6 30.c4 b6 31.axb6 Nxb6 32.Ral Nxc4 33.Nxc4 Rxc4 34.Rxa6 Rxb4 35.Rxd6 Bc7 36.Rxe6 Rfxe4 37.Rxe4 Rxe4 38.Re7 Rc4 39.Nxe5 Rc1+ 40.Kh2 Kf8 41.Re6 ½-½. (The last dozen moves were played quickly. After time control was reached Bob accepted my draw offer. He finished 4.5-1.5, winning four and losing only to master Robert Wendling.)

**Robert Shean** (1919) age 33

**Robert O'Donnell** (2059) age 22

1972 Denver Open / Round 4

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 d6 6.Bc4 Qb6 7.Nde2 e6 8.O-O Be7 9.Bb3 O-O 10.Be3 Qa5 11.Nf4 Bd7 12.h3 Rac8 13.Qd2 Kh8 14.Rad1 Ne5 15.Nd3 Nc4 16.Bxc4 Rxc4 17.f4 Qc7 18.e5 Nd5 19.Nxd5 exd5 20.c3 Bb5 21.Bd4 Ra4 22.a3 Bc4 23.Rf3 f5 24.Rg3



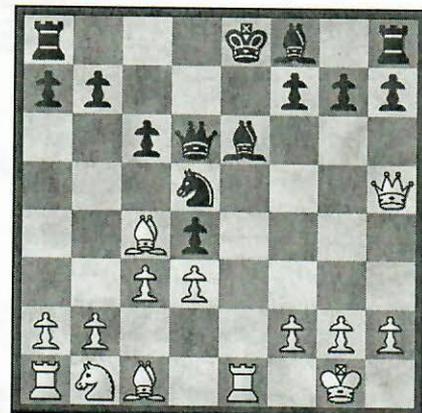
24...Rg8 25.Qe3 Bh4 26.exd6 Qd7 27.Ne5 Qe8 28.d7 Qh5 29.Qf3 Be2 30.Qxe2 Resigns 1-0

**Robert Shean** (1919) age 33

**DeJuan Leggett** (1816) age about 30

1972 Colorado Open / Round 5

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nd4 4.Nxd4 exd4 5.O-O c6 6.Bc4 Ne7 7.c3 d5 8.exd5 Nxd5 9.Re1+ Be6 10.Qh5 Qd6 11.d3



11...O-O-O 12.cxd4 Be7 13.Nc3 Qb4 14.a3 Qa5 15.Be3 g6 16.Qf3 Kb8 17.b4 Qc7 18.Bxd5 cxd5 19.Nb5 Qb6 20.Bf4+ Bd6 21.Nxd6 Rxd6 22.Qg3 Rd8 23.Rac1 Ka8 24.Bxd6 Rxd6 25.Rxe6 Resigns 1-0. (Bob finished 5-1, only half a point behind tournament winner John Watson.)

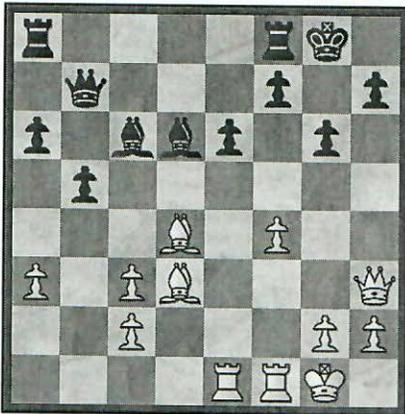
**Robert Shean** (2063) age 34

**Robert Wendling** (2194) age 26

1973 Al Wallace Memorial / Round 4

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 d6 6.Be2 Be7 7.Be3 a6 8.f4 Qc7 9.O-O b5 10.a3 Bb7 11.Bd3 O-O 12.Qf3 Nc6 13.Nxc6 Bxc6 14.Qh3 Qb7 15.e5 Ne4 16.exd6 Bxd6 17.Bd4 g6 18.Rae1 Nxc3 19.bxc3 (19.Qh6! f5 20.Rxe6 Rfd8

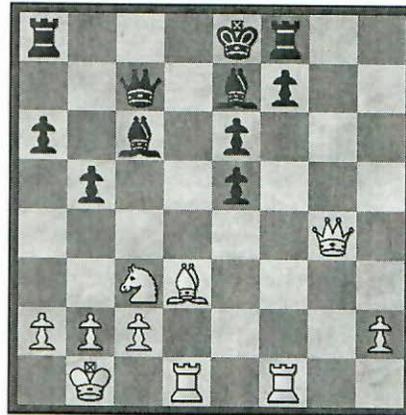
21.Rxg6+ hxc6 22.Qxc6+ Kf8 23.bxc3 gives winning chances.)



19...Bd5 20.Re3 f5 21.g4 Rac8 22.gxf5 exf5 23.Rfe1 Qf7 24.Qh6 Rfd8 25.Kf2 Bf8 26.Qh4 Rd7 27.Rg1 Bg7 28.Rge1 Bxd4 29.cxd4 Be4 30.Bxe4 fxe4 31.Rxe4 1/2-1/2.

(Bob finished 4-1, tying for second behind tournament winner Wendling. His only other draw was against California master Don Sutherland.)

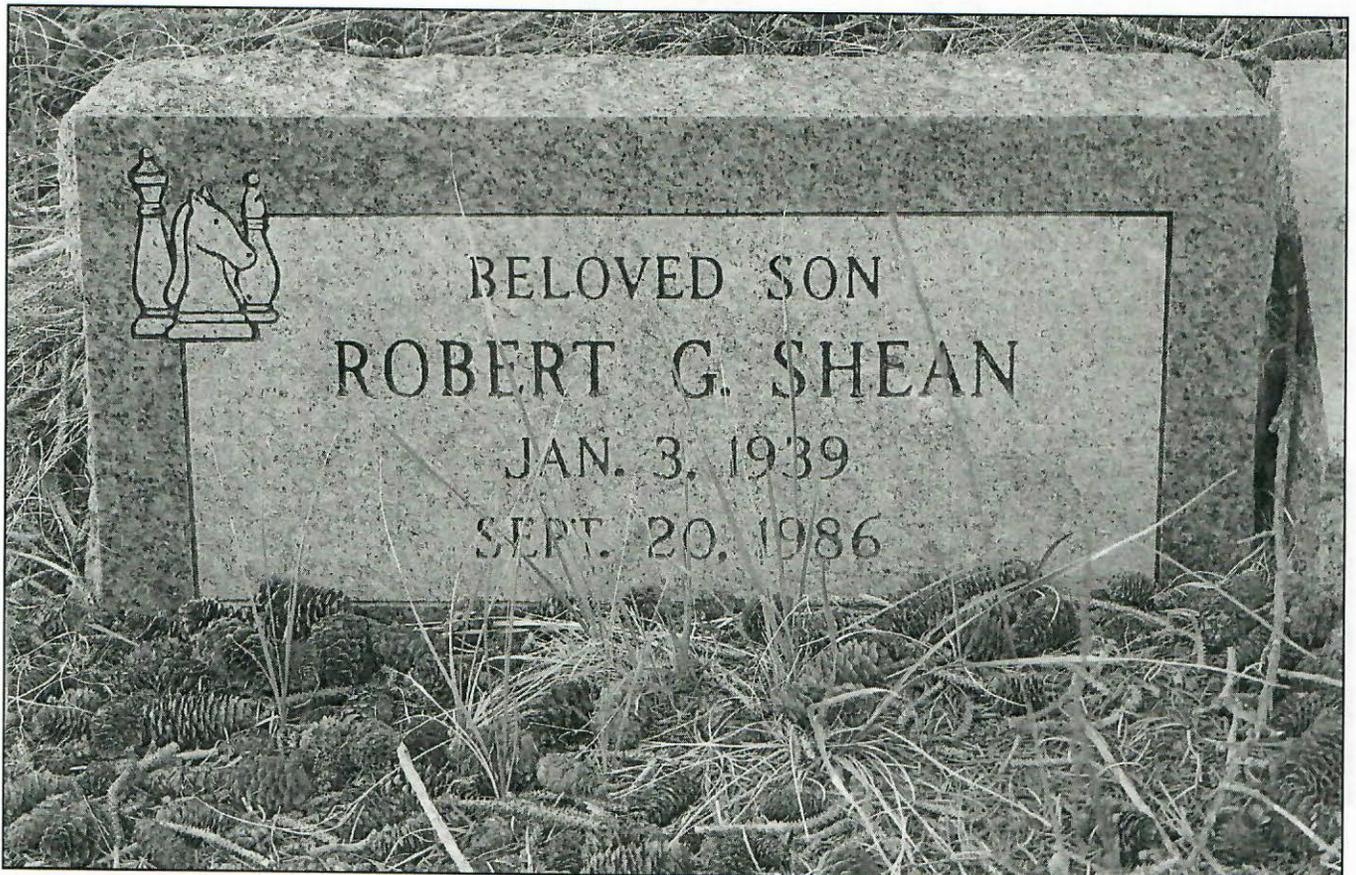
**Robert Shean** (2012), age 34  
**Curtis Carlson** (1960), age 19  
 1973 Spring in Laramie Open / Round 4  
 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Bg5 e6 7.f4 Be7 8.Qf3 Qc7 9.O-O-O Nbd7 10.Bd3 h6 11.Bh4 g5 12.fxg5 Ne5 13.Qe2 Nfg4 14.Nf3 Nxf3 15.gxf3 hxc5 16.Bg3 Ne5 17.f4 gxf4 18.Bxf4 Ng6 19.Bg3 Bd7 20.Kb1 Bc6 21.Rhf1 Rf8 22.Qg4 b5? (22...Ne5 is equal. Now Black gets bashed.) 23.e5! Nxe5 24.Bxe5 dxe5...



25.Bg6! (I completely missed this!)

25...Bd7 26.Rxf7 Rxf7 27.Bxf7+ Kxf7 28.Qh5+ Kf8 29.Rf1+ Resigns 1-0.  
 (A striking game by Bob and an embarrassment for me. Bob's father got much pleasure from watching this game, even if I didn't!)

Bob's tombstone has chess figurines. His love for chess was eternal. He is long gone, but will never be forgotten. If anyone has any questions or remarks about this article I can be reached at [curt2309@comcast.net](mailto:curt2309@comcast.net).

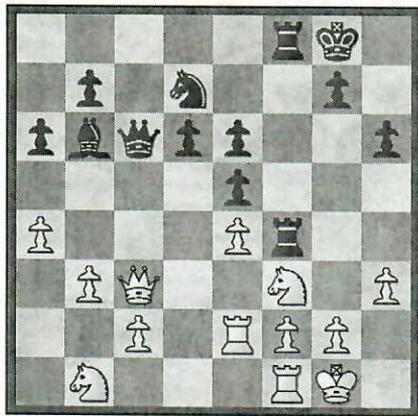


## More Memories of Bob Shean

by Curtis Carlson

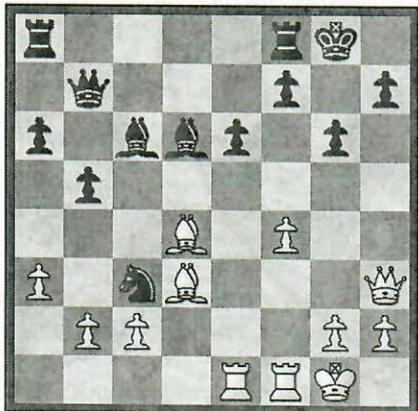
In my article in the July 2016 *Colorado Chess Informant* ([www.coloradochess.com/informant/July%202016.pdf](http://www.coloradochess.com/informant/July%202016.pdf)) page 24, I should have included links to Bob's win over Peter Winston. It's at [www.chessgames.com/perl/chessgame?gid=1472825](http://www.chessgames.com/perl/chessgame?gid=1472825) and [2700chess.com/games/shean-winston-r12-atlantic-city-1972](http://2700chess.com/games/shean-winston-r12-atlantic-city-1972). I prefer graphics at *Chessgames.com*, but 2700 has analysis by Stockfish. I use both (and *Chess24.com*) frequently.

Bob died on September 20, 1986, three weeks after the Colorado Open. Neither of us played; he was too ill, and I was in Denver only briefly for family reasons. I dropped by to see if anyone remembered me - I don't remember if anyone did! It was surprising to see Bob's books for sale, but it didn't occur to me his life would soon be over. I was rightly criticized for poor annotations. In our 1971 Denver Open game Bob had better:



25...Nc5!? allowed 26.Nbd2 where it supports f3 and e4. In time pressure Bob missed 25...Qxc3! 26.Nxc3 Nf6 27.Rd2 Bc5 when Black wins a pawn. There is nothing better than 28.Ne2 (28.Re1 Bb4 29.Rd3 d5 is terrible) 28...Nxe4! 29.Nxf4 Nxd2 30.Nxd2 Rxf4 (30...exf4 31.Ne4) and the pawn down ending is difficult to hold.

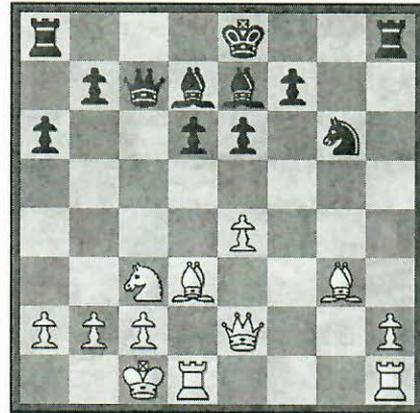
In Wendling-Shean:



I said "19.Qh6! f5 20.Rxe6 Rfd8 21.Rxg6+ hxg6 22.Qxg6+ Kf8

23.bxc3 gives winning chances," but 23...Qf7 is =+. However, 19...f5? loses to 20.Rxe6 Rfd8 21.Bxf5! gxh5 22.Qg5+ Kf8 23.bxc3! which stops ...Ne4 and Black resigns. 2300+ strength Wendling (1947-77) would have played 19...f6. After 20.Qh3! (White must guard g2 before taking on c3) Rae8 (Black can't save the piece) 21.Bxc3 and it's dead even.

My remarks in Bob's second game with me were also bad:



Best is 20.Rhf1, since 20.Kb1 Bf6 21.Be1 Rc8 is equal. After 20.Kb1 Bc6!? 21.Rhf1! Ne5 22.Qf2 f6 23.Be2 O-O-O is +=. If 22.Bxe5 (instead of 22.Qf2) Black holds with dxe5 23.Qg4 Bf8!, covering both f7 and g7. After 20.Kb1 Bc6 21.Rhf1 Rf8? 22.Qg4! my comment "22...Ne5 is equal. Now Black gets bashed," was half right. More accurate was, "White is clearly better. 22...Ne5 seems best (not 22...Qa5 23.Rxf7!), but 23.Bxe5 dxe5 24.h4! is strong since 24...O-O-O? loses to 25.Rxf7! and 26.Qxe6. Black can resist with 24...Bd6 or 24...Bd7 hoping to castle." After 22.Qg4 b5? 23.e5! Nxe5 24.Bxe5 dxe5 25.Bg6 I should have resigned. Three consecutive slips (20...Bc6, 21...Rf8, 22...b5) gave White a winning edge. Spassky said after losing to Karpov that one must respect being beaten. In this game (and many others) Bob earned my undying respect.

Bob and I played about 15 tournament games from 1971-77 and broke even. In blitz, his Morra Gambit took me down many times! Bob was a dangerous opponent and a good friend. It is hard to believe that it has been nearly four decades since we sat down at the same chessboard.

Here's a game I'd rather forget!

Robert Shean (2006), age 34

Curtis Carlson (2054), age 19

Denver Chess League / January 23, 1973

1.e4 c5 2.d4 cxd4 3.c3 Nf6 (the Alapin is a reasonable way to refuse a free pawn) 4.e5 Nd5 5.Qxd4 e6 6.Nf3 Nc6 7.Qe4 f5 8.exf6 Nxf6 9.Qh4 Be7 (probably best is 9...e5. Interesting is 9...d5 10.Bd3 e5 11.Bg6+ Kd7, when 12.Ng5 Qe7 13.O-O Kc7 14.Rd1 is +=. This is what I tried to avoid.) 10.Bd3 O-O 11.Bg5 h6 12.Bxf6 Rxf6 13.Qe4 Rf5 14.Nbd2 d5 15.Qe2 Rf8 (15...Rf6=) 16.Bc2 (+) 16...e5!?! (safer is 16...Bf6 17.Qd3 Ne7 18.Qh7+ Kf7 when g6 is covered. 17.O-O-O is roughly equal.) 17.Nxe5!?! (Black's dark squared bishop and rook now become active. 17.O-O-O Qc7 18.Qd3 Rd8 19.Qh7+ Kf8 when both

20.g3 and 20.Nh4 or 20.g4-g5 are unclear but probably good for White. 20.Kb1 is also reasonable) 17...Nxe5 18.Qxe5 Bg5 19.O-O-O Rxf2 20.h4 Bf4 21.Qd4 (21.Qh5) 21...Bxd2? (exchanging active pieces is ridiculous. Right was 21...Qb6 22.Qxb6 (22.Qxd5+ Be6 is too dangerous) axb6 23.g3 (White must break the pin) Bxg3 (23...Be3 24.Rhe1) 24.Kb1 Be6 when Black is a little better) 22.Rxd2 Rxd2 23.Qxd2 Be6? (this is suicide, Black had to play 23...Kh8 to answer 24.Qd3 with Qg8, although White retains a big advantage after 24.Re1) 24.Qd3 Rc8 (Black should resign) 25.Rf1! Bf7 26.Qh7+ Kf8 27.Qh8+ Ke7 28.Qxg7 Qf8 29.Qf6+ Ke8 30.Ba4+ 1-0. A disaster. I suffered from the beginner's delusion that material and quick development matter most. But as Nimzovich said, it's not necessary for all puppets to participate in the play.

At the risk of repeating myself, (see page 63 of Fischer's *My 60 Memorable Games*) Bob is well remembered and much missed.



June 13, 1975: Bob playing me in a Denver Chess Club tournament.



September 14, 1977 Korchnoi simultaneous exhibition: Bob had Korchnoi thinking! I don't remember the outcome but this was one of the last to finish.

When looking for pictures of Bob I also found one of a 19 year

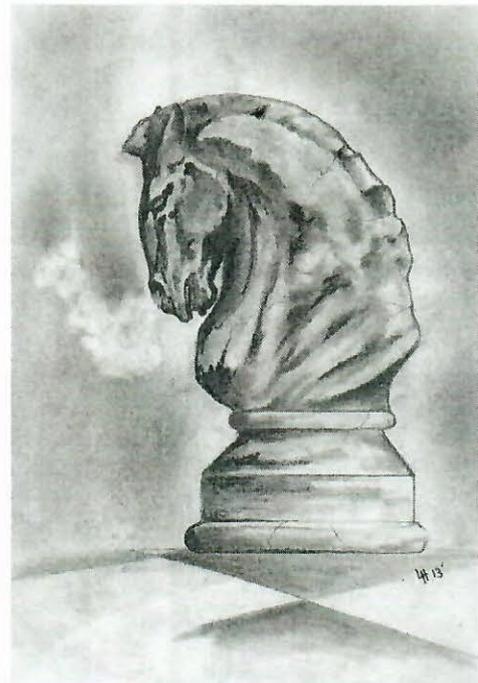
old Brian Wall.

This is from the 1974 Junior Open. Christine Hendrickson (1949



-2005) is on the left, and John Stine (1926-1988) is on the right. Many old friends are no longer with us.

I appreciate the opportunity to share memories. Again, if there are any comments my email is [curt2309@comcast.net](mailto:curt2309@comcast.net).



On the back cover, Curtis has also submitted a game of his from the Paul Keres Memorial in 1976 - check it out!