

John A. Howell

November 6, 1911 – March 7, 2000



John (Jack) Howell was born and raised in Worland, Wyoming.

In 1934, Howell attended the University of Wyoming.

Howell moved to Denver in the late 1930s. He joined the Army and was stationed in Okinawa where he ran a PX (a general store of sorts) and served in the Pacific from 1943-1946 during WWII.

In the late 1940s, Howell began his lifelong career as a Landman in the oil business.

John married Margaret Hellier in 1947; they raised four children and stayed married until John's death.

John's daughter Cathy remembers in late 1950's that her dad played chess frequently at the YMCA in downtown Denver at the Denver Chess Club. She recalls, "My mom would drive downtown w/me & Liz, and she would park and have us run into the YMCA, up the staircase to an upper floor, and find Dad in the chess room, which was quite smoky & ill-lighted."

Highlights of Howell's contributions to Colorado Chess:

Howell was CSCA President from 1964-1965.

John was a member of the Denver Chess Club for over 25 years. In 1963 the Denver Chess Club fell on difficult times; financing was non-existent and membership dropped to 14 men. John launched a drive to save the Club and during the next 8 years, held every office on the Board of Directors from President to Playing Team Captain. John also followed through with CSCA's negotiations with the Heart O' Denver for permanent meeting quarters there for the Denver Chess Club. In 1975, Howell stepped in again to bail out the floundering Denver Chess Club which had gone through a number of hardships including mismanagement, embezzlement, and loss of a meeting place. Also in 1975, Howell copyrighted the Denver Chess Club name.

Howell made numerous trips to the USCF Headquarters in New York to lay the ground work for the 1968 US Open at Snowmass at Aspen. Along with John Harris, Michael Ohnmact, and Dr. Harold Harvey, Howell was influential in promoting the 1968 US Open at Snowmass at Aspen.

John was the USCF Region VII Vice-President from 1965-1969 and arranged for simulms in Denver during this time by Sammy Reshevsky (twice), Larry Evans (twice), Bobby Fischer (1964), William Lombardy, Anatoly Lein, and Laszlo Szabo.

He was a liaison between Denver Chess Club and Denver Petroleum Club to sponsor the Colorado Junior Championship (1967-1974) and because of contributions from sponsors, no entry fees were required.

Howell was Co-Chairman to General Chairman Caswell Silver for the 1971 Fischer-Larsen World Championship Quarter Final Match in Denver, held on the Temple Buell College Campus (today Denver School of the Arts). Howell and Silver wrote the checks to help get the match in Denver. This was first of its kind event held in the U.S. and made the cover of *Life Magazine* and was also featured in *Sports Illustrated*.

John acted as chairman of the 1977 U.S. Junior Invitational Championship held at the Denver Petroleum Club.

For his endless efforts to promote chess Howell was the recipient of the 4th Annual Appreciation Award from CSCA in 1977.

Howell was the founder of the Sheridan, Wyoming YMCA chess program and for many years in the mid-late 1990s, he generously donated a scholarship for an underprivileged child to attend Todd Bardwick's Rocky Mountain Chess Camp.

Howell was a Class A rated player and as a TD, he directed the 1970 Denver Open.

John Ashby Howell, Jr. died of cancer on March 7, 2000, at the University of Colorado Medical Center in Denver.

Denver lawyer and Howell's longtime friend, Walter Gerash, had this to say when John passed away:

"I was honored to help make his last ten years enjoyable by playing each other informally at our homes. He always encouraged many young people to play chess and supported them in their efforts financially. John and I aided Alex Fishbein with his transportation costs and entry into European tournaments so that Alex could attain GM status. John was courteous and a kind gentleman in all his personal and chessic endeavors. He will be sorely missed."

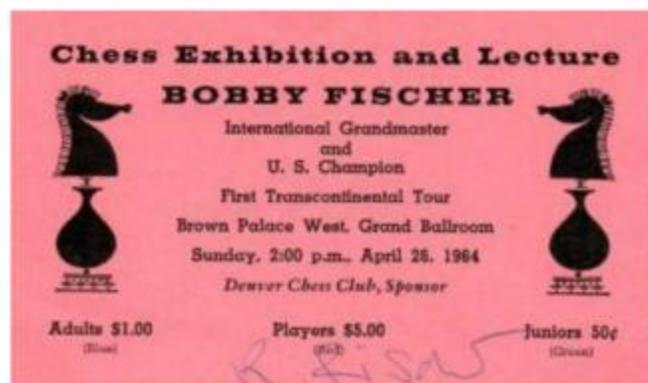
Grandmaster Yasser Seirawan also had many kind words about John in an email he sent to Todd Bardwick:

"Yes, I remember John Howell very well. His wife Margaret and daughter Cathy showed me such kindness in my visit there in 1977. And yes I did stay at their home. I also managed to see him in the 90's on a trip or two through Denver."

He was a marvelous man and I loved his stories. Remarkably, he never ran out of them either. Yes, he had some nice ones about Bobby (Fischer) and the comment I loved went like:

"All these folks were warning me about Bobby. Don't do it, don't get involved! You'll regret it! Well Bobby was fine, he was more than fine, I had no trouble with Bobby. You know why? Well I'll tell you why, I just gave him everything he wanted. When he ordered one steak, I bought him two! Of course winning 6 - 0 helps a lot ..."

Please do convey my deepest condolences to Margaret and her family. Let them know I cherish my memories of their hospitality and how enormously appreciative I am of their many kindnesses to me."



Autographed Fischer Denver Simul entry card

John A. Howell Always A Leader
 by Patrick Wallace



John A. Howell has been a chess player, chess a leader, winner of the Fourth Annual Association Award presented by the Colorado State Chess Association. John has been a member of the Denver Chess Club for more than 25 years. Back in 1952 the Club had an excellent starting membership, membership had dropped to 14 men. John launched a drive to save the Club and during the next 3 years he held every office on the Board of Directors from President to Playing Team Captain. There were years of solid growth for Colorado Chess during the tough "Three P's" days.

John managed successfully for a 2 year term as Vice President of the United States Chess Federation, representing Region VII. He was among the first of the clubbing Grandmasters and their families and chess-related activities (Law, Baker, Clark), Larry Davis (Clark), Bobby Fluharty, William Lombardy, and most recently, Assembly tasks.

John was President of the Colorado State Chess Association during 1988-92. Making national news in the USCF Headquarters in New York, John was the grandmaster for our first national chess, Colorado's hosting of the US Open Championship of December 1998. Working closely with Carroll Wilson, John was a driving force behind Colorado's hosting of the special event for the 107th World Championship between Bobby Fischer and Paul Morphy. He was Co-Chairman of the Year Committee for that event.

In 1988 the Annual Junior Chess Olympiad of Colorado was one year old. John worked with other leaders, such as John Penick, George Pillingford, Bob Steery, Garrett Oliver and George Kelly to guarantee continuity of Junior Chess in Colorado. He arranged playing sites and the accompanying food for Denver Chess Club and the National Institute. Within 3 years the Junior Tourney was starting more than 200 young players, with no registration fees and cost less than \$2,000 to produce.

By 1991, through tireless leadership, the Denver Chess Club was up to 80 members and the "Fischer Book Store" was operating. More important, Colorado had become a better place in the National Chess scene. John moved into the club facilities, he devoted more time to his chess business between the Petrushev Plaza, and worked from the background, always available as a consultant when the need of it needed his experience.

Then, in 1993 the "Fischer Book Store" moved and the club started over. Their ambitions had diminished, the Denver Chess Club board itself started with 40%, instead of 70, more quarters, curtailed by entertainment, but all practical progress made. John stepped in again. He worked tirelessly with a limited staff when he should've taken interest over the club. He followed through with the COCA's negotiation with the Nease '93 Deane for guaranteed rent with when he should've taken interest over the club. He followed through with the COCA's negotiation with the Nease '93 Deane for guaranteed rent with when he should've taken interest over the club. He followed through with the COCA's negotiation with the Nease '93 Deane for guaranteed rent with when he should've taken interest over the club.

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John A. Howell (continued from page 3)

ent meeting quarters there for the Denver Chess Club. He copyrighted the club name to insure continuity. Within two months the debts were paid and the club equipment was saved, within two years the membership has grown to 80 and the financial structure is sound. Tournaments and Grandmasters are again being hosted.

During any discussion with John on Chess, he keeps returning to the young people...the youth...the youth...the strength of the new young players...he can recite the ratings and national standings of the top half dozen of the young Colorado players. He enjoys their successes and avidly follows their Chess careers.

John's brand of leadership reminds me of Eric Hoffer's lines on "creativity": "A creative organizer creates an organization that can function well without him. When a genuine leader has done his work his followers will say, 'we have done it ourselves', and feel that they can do great things without a great leader."

John has again turned over the reins and "retired" to the background. But it's comforting to know he's still keeping watch, still available. Colorado Chess owes John Howell a tremendous debt: 40 years a chessplayer, always a leader.

April-May 1977 CSCA Bulletin - page 3



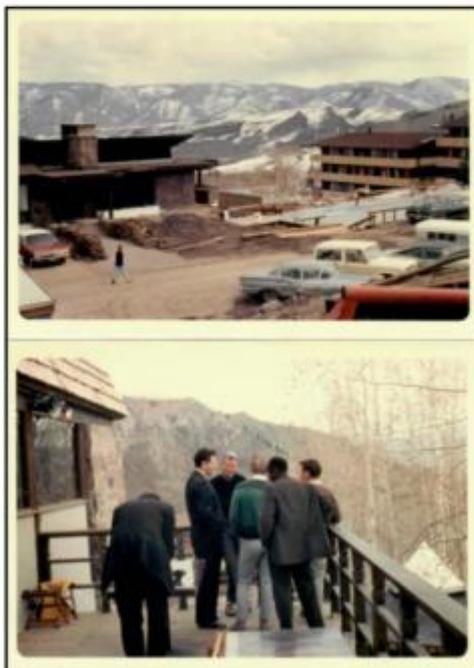
May 1975 - taken at the Heart of Denver Hotel



Bob Shean vs. John Howell - Nov 1976 - Denver Chess Club



John Howell - 1935



U.S. Open in Aspen Snowmass 1968



Planning the 1968 US Open from program book



Harris and Howell - 1977 DCC Breakfast Banquet



John Howell - Oct 1976 Denver Chess Club

"A Tribute to Worland... In Memory of Jack Howell"
Program Agenda - June 18, 2000

1. Helen (1906) and Ashby (1902-3) come to Wyoming in their own ways. (Deborah Hansson, Coley Howell, Larry Howell, Liz Howell)
2. Worland History - the Early Days. (John Davis, Historian)
3. Jack Howell is born (Nov. 6, 1911); Growing up in Worland. (Jackson Chastain, grandson)
4. Out of School and Off to Work (with one year at UW), 1928-1943.

1929-34 - Worland - selling shoes, photographs to tourists, working in the sugar beet plant, road construction.
1934 - Attends University of Wyoming, "Farm boy" track star.
1935-41 - Moving to Denver, working his way up to Division Manager for Service Station Equipment Co. **1940** - Dale Carnegie course in sales training and human relations.
1941 - Marries Louise (divorced 1946).
1942 - John Ashby Howell, III, is born.
1943-45 - Works his way up to Shift Foreman for the Remington Arms Company.

- v. **1945-46** - Joins the Service, off to the Pacific (Coley and Larry Howell)
- vi. **1946-49** - Begins his lifelong career as Landman in the oil business.
- vii. **1949-80** - The Mature Years, Denver Colorado

1925-2000 - Played a lifetime of great chess.
1947 - Marries Margaret Hellier, 1948 - Catherine Alice is born, 1950 - Elizabeth Coburn is born.
1963 - Denver City Club Chairman
1964 - English Speaking Union Vice Chairman
1971 - Through Bobby Fischer to Denver.
1977 - Lifetime achievement award from the Colorado Chess Association.

viii. **Family of Jack Howell** - November 6, 1911 to March 7, 2000 (Og Bradford)
 ix. **Invitation to all to Share your Memories about Jack Howell**



Rocky Mtn News - May 2, 1954, John Howell seated on the left

Monday, April 3, 2000

Chess pioneer Howell dies

Colorado chess pioneer John (Jack) Howell died March 7 after a short illness. He was 88. Howell's contributions to chess in the 1960s and 1970s won't be forgotten.

Todd Bardwick
 Colorado Chess

He was Colorado State Chess Association president from 1964 to 1965 and United States Chess Federation Region VII vice president from 1965 to 1969. During his tenure, he brought Grandmasters Sammy Reshevsky, Larry Evans, Bobby Fischer, William Lombardy, Anatoly Lein, Bent Larsen and Laszlo Szabo to Denver.

Howell was co-chairman for the 1968 U.S. Open, held in Snowmass, and the 1971 Fischer-Larsen World Championship Semifinals, held at the old Colorado Women's College. He also was chairman for the 1977 U.S. Junior Championship, held at the Denver Petroleum Club.

He received the fourth Appreciation Award from the Colorado State Chess Association in 1977.

Tribute to Howell—Rocky Mtn. News

COLORADO CHESS LOSES PIONEER JOHN HOWELL

BY TODD BARDWICK

Colorado chess pioneer, John (Jack) Howell, died peacefully March 7 after a short illness. He was 88. Howell's contributions to chess in the 60's and 70's will not soon be forgotten.

Mr. Howell was Colorado State Chess Association President from 1964-1965, and United States Chess Federation Region VII Vice-President from 1965-1969. During his tenure, he brought grandmasters Sammy Reshevsky, Larry Evans, Bobby Fischer (1964), William Lombardy, Anatoly Lein, Bent Larsen, and Laszlo Szabo to Denver to give simultaneous exhibitions.

Howell acted as co-chairman for the 1968 U.S. Open held in Snowmass at Aspen and the 1971 Fischer-Larsen World Championship Semifinals held at the old Colorado Women's College. Howell also acted as chairman for the 1977 U.S. Junior Championship held at the Denver Petroleum Club.

Howell was also an officer of the Denver Chess Club from 1962-1970 during which time he copyrighted the club's name.

The 4th Appreciation Award from the Colorado State Chess Association was bestowed upon Howell in 1977. Howell also helped found the Sheridan, Wyoming, YMCA chess program.

Walter Gerath, Howell's longtime friend, had this to say: "I was honored to help make his last ten years enjoyable by playing each other informally at our homes. He always encouraged many young people to play chess and supported them in their efforts financially. John and I aided Alex Fabishev with his transportation costs and entry into European tournaments so that Alex could attain GM status. John was courteous and a kind gentleman in all his personal and chess endeavors. He will be sorely missed."

Grandmaster Yasser Seirawan also had many kind words about John in an email he sent me: "Yes, I remember John Howell very well. His wife Margaret and daughter Cathy showed me such kindness in my visit there in 1977. And yes I did stay at their home. I also managed to see him in the 90's on a trip or two through Denver. He was a marvelous man and I loved his stories. Remarkably, he never ran out of them either. Yes, he had some nice ones about Bobby (Fischer) and the comment I loved went like: "All these folks were warning me about Bobby. Don't do it, don't get involved! You'll regret it! Well Bobby was fine, he was more than fine, I had no trouble with Bobby. You know why? Well I'll tell you why, I just gave him everything he wanted. He ordered a steak I gave him two. Of course winning 6 - 0 helps a lot..." Please do convey my deepest condolences to Margaret and her family. Let them know I cherish my memories of their hospitality and how enormously appreciative I am of their many kindnesses to me."

Like Yasser, I will never forget John's chess stories about Bobby Fischer and other chess greats from times past. I remember John as always being a gentleman and a leader since my childhood when I first met him back in the seventies. Every year he graciously donated a scholarship for an underprivileged child to attend the Rocky Mountain Chess Camp.

Colorado chess owes John Howell many thanks for all his hard work and contributions.

July 2000 Colorado Chess Informant

Obituaries

John Ashby Howell, Jr.

Award for his forty years as a chess player.

Chess played an important role in Jack's life as he has served as the Vice President of the United States Chess Federation and was a Past President of the Colorado Chess Assn. He was the driving force to obtain the semi-final chess match in Colorado of the World Championship in 1971 between Bobby Fischer and Bent Larsen.

His other hobbies included an intense interest in world travel, world events and the history of Wyoming.

Jack was preceded in death by his parents; his brother, Robert; and his sister, Catherine Howell Pemberton.

He is survived by his wife, Margaret, of Denver; one son, John A. Meyer and two children of Warwick, R.I.; three daughters, Clara Creighton Howell of Brunswick, Maine, Catherine Alice Howell of Denver, and Elizabeth Coburn Howell and her son Jackson of Story.

Cremation has taken place.

A memorial service will be held at the Washakie Museum in Worland at a later date.

Memorials may be made to the Washakie Museum or to the Sheridan YMCA Chess Program at 417 N. Jefferson, Sheridan, Wyo., 82801.

Veile Mortuary of Worland is in charge of arrangements.

MORE CHOICES

Compassionate Staff

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Howell helped his father start the Worland Mercantile Co., later known as the Howell's Store, Inc.

On August 24, 1947, he married Margaret Whitney Hellier at Sheridan. After their marriage, they maintained homes at Denver, Scottsdale, Ariz., and Story, Wyo.

He served in the U.S. Army in the Pacific Theater during World War II and moved to Denver following the war.

Jack was a member of the Denver Petroleum Club, Rocky Mountain Petroleum Pioneers, the Sheridan Elks Lodge, the American Chess Assn., the Colorado State Chess Assn., of which he was honored with the 1977 annual Chess Appreciation