

FIRST DRAFT

Fruita's first doctor was an innovator and inventor

At the turn of the 20th century, Fruita was a small town bustling with innovation.

- The first automobile arrived in town, not from a far-away dealer but through the craftsmanship of a local man.
- The first observatory was built at a Fruita home, with a locally constructed telescope.
- A company was formed to construct and sell X-ray machines.



BOB SILBERNAGEL

- A small hospital was built to serve railroad workers and others.
- The town's first pharmacy opened.

Most amazing is the fact that one man was involved in all of these endeavors: Dr. James M.G. Beard.

Born in New Hampshire in 1844, Beard taught school in Indiana prior to attending the University of Michigan, then medical schools in Kansas City and Chicago. He practiced medicine in Indiana, Arkansas, Kansas and Saguache, before moving to Fruita in 1894.

Beard and his first wife, Roseltha, had four children. But she died while the family was living in Saguache, and he married his second wife, Mary Ellis, who was known as Mait.

Beard's son, John, joined his father in the creation of Beard and Sons Drug Store. Later, John would be the founder of the Beard family's goat and sheep ranch that operated in the Devil's Canyon area of what's now McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area.

Another son, Edgar, published two early newspapers in Fruita.

Sometime during his early years in Fruita, Dr. Beard decided he wanted an electric automobile. It's not clear how much Beard was involved in the design of the car, which is pictured on this page. But it is known that his friend and neighbor George Newbury, who has been described as a mechanical genius, built the vehicle.

Beard also partnered with Newbury to build a telescope and observatory at his home near McCune Avenue in Fruita. It may have been the first observatory in the Grand Valley.

Beard ordered the lenses for the telescope himself, but returned the first set to



PHOTO COURTESY OF LOWER VALLEY HERITAGE CHAPTER

Dr. James Beard, sitting in his electric car, outside his medical office and hospital, circa 1910. The men on crutches are hospital patients. The man without crutches is Dr. Robert Benjamin Porter.

the company from which he purchased them because they were marred with spots. "I'm not buying a glass map of the Hawaiian Islands," he reportedly said. "I want clear glass for lenses for a telescope."

In the 1970s, long after Beard's death, the six-inch telescope was donated to the Delta County School District, to be used by students there.

Sometime around the turn of the century, Beard became interested in the use of radiation to treat cancer patients and in radiography, or X-rays. Both fields were in their infancy at the time.

Beard reportedly traveled to Unaweep Canyon and mined small amounts of uranium ore, which he ground up and glued into small discs for making radiography images of patients. And according to several accounts, he corresponded with Nobel Laureate scientist Marie Curie in Paris about the use of radioactive substances.

His practical mind became dissatisfied with the existing technology for X-ray machines. So, he turned once again to his friend Newbury, and they designed and patented a hand-crank electric system for his own X-ray machine. By 1902, Newbury and Beard had established a small manufacturing firm to build and sell the machines.

Later, son John Beard worked with Newbury on the venture. However, changing technology soon made the design of their X-ray machine obsolete.

Early in the 20th century, Dr. Beard established Fruita's first hospital, a four-bed facility operated on the second floor of the building that also housed his medical practice, and near the family drug store.

Working under contract with both the Denver & Rio Grande Railway and the Uintah Railway, Beard created the hospital primarily to treat railroad workers. But it was also open to local patients.

Beard operated the hospital

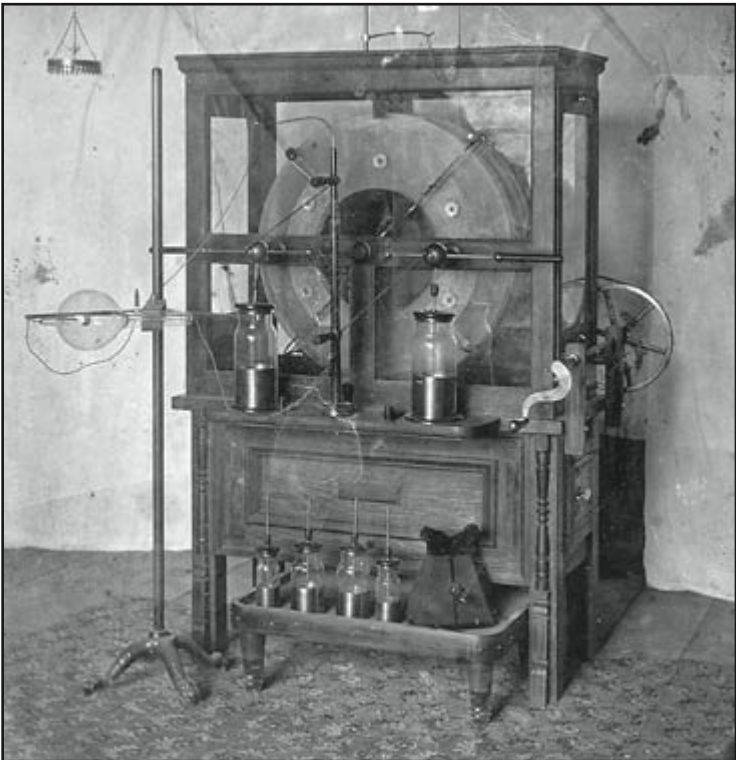


PHOTO COURTESY OF LOWER VALLEY HERITAGE CHAPTER

A hand-cranked X-ray machine designed by Dr. James M.G. Beard and built by Beard and George Newbury.

in partnership with Dr. Robert Benjamin Porter, but the facility closed after Beard's death in 1912.

His death is believed to be related to Beard's years-long research into radioactive materials, and his extensive handling of them. His X-ray machines had open X-ray tubes, which were known to be a health risk just a few decades later.

Obituaries in local newspapers told of Dr. Beard's lengthy fight with an unknown disease. He traveled to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, to seek help, but doctors there could do little to halt his disease. He died at his home in Fruita on April 27, 1912.

But Beard's legacy and family continued in the Fruita area.

In addition to his work at the drug store and with the X-ray machines, son John served for a time as Fruita's town marshal. Additionally, he, and later

his son Irving, first ran angora goats, then later sheep in the area from Devil's Canyon to Pollock Canyon, as well as on Glade Park and Piñon Mesa. Irving and his wife, Dorothy, also had ranch property near Leadville and Fairplay.

John's other son, Wallace Beard, owned and operated a construction company near Fruita for many years.

Edgar Beard, John's brother, operated first the Fruita Independent newspaper, then later the The Fruita Record.

■ Sources: Sheila (Beard) Latta; "Images of America: Fruita," by Denise and Steve Hight; "Profile of Dr. J.M.G. Beard," by Dorothy Beard, in "Echoes of A Dream," historic newspapers from Grand Junction and Fruita; Museums of Western Colorado.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF SHEILA LATTA

Dr. James M.G. Beard.

BLOTTER

COMPILED BY SENTINEL STAFF



SPECIAL TO THE SENTINEL

Police are seeking this man as a suspect in the case of a counterfeit \$50 bill that was passed at a gas station on North Avenue.

Cops seek counterfeiter

Crime Stoppers is looking for help with information in a case involving counterfeit money here in the Grand Valley.

A man attempted to use a counterfeit \$50 bill at Bradley Sinclair gas station, 2903 North Ave. on March 20. Security camera footage shows the suspect is a white male in his late 20s or early 30s, around 5 feet 11 inches tall, with bright pink hair. He was wearing tight blue jeans and a gray striped hoodie at the time.

Anyone with information about this incident is asked to call 241-7867. Information leading to an arrest can earn up to \$1,000 cash reward and you can remain

anonymous. For more information, visit www.241stop.com.

According to the Mesa County Sheriff's Office:

■ A report of irrigation water theft was made on April 23 in the area of Colorado Highway 65 and IE Road.

■ Darla Bruno, 64, was arrested for alleged DUI, leaving the scene of an accident and careless driving on April 27.

■ Timothy Pearce, 28, was arrested on suspected drug charges Friday after deputies contacted him in the 2900 block of North Avenue after receiving a report of suspicious activity in the area.

■ Tiffany Mond, 39, was arrested for suspected DUI on Saturday.

Pick 3 Midday Sunday: 3, 4, 7 Evening Sunday: 9, 2, 0

Cash 5 Sunday: 4, 15, 20, 30 and 32

For information, go to www.coloradolottery.com.

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Subscription and delivery questions:
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ADVERTISING

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The Daily Sentinel (ISSN 1445-8962)
Published every morning at 734 S. Seventh Street, Grand Junction, CO 81501.
Periodical Postage paid at Grand Junction, CO.
Carrier home delivery prices: 13 weeks - \$65.00, 26 weeks - \$130.00, 52 weeks - \$260.00.
Weekend delivery packages: Wednesday thru Sunday - \$244.40, Friday thru Sunday - \$197.60.
Saturday & Sunday - \$163.80, Sunday only - \$163.80.
Weekend Delivery includes the following date in 2018: Nov. 22.
Single Copy: \$1.00 daily and \$2.00 Sunday.
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MEMORIAL DAY ADVERTISING DEADLINES

ATTENTION ADVERTISERS

The Daily Sentinel's advertising deadlines will be moving up to accommodate the Memorial Day Holiday!

This early deadline schedule is designed to help you plan your advertising around the holiday.

Publication Date	Display Advertising	Deadline
5/26, Saturday	5/23, Wednesday, 12 NOON	
5/27, Sunday	5/23, Wednesday, 12 NOON	
5/28, Monday	5/24, Thursday, 12 NOON	
5/29, Tuesday	5/24, Thursday, NOON	
5/30, Wednesday	5/25, Friday, 12 NOON	
5/30, Sentinel Weekly	5/22 Tuesday, 12 NOON	
5/31, Thursday	5/25, Friday, 5 PM	
6/1, Out & About	5/25, Friday, 3 PM	
6/3, Real Estate Weekly	5/25, Friday, 12 NOON	

Classified Liner Ads (Private Party & Commercial)

5/27, Sunday	5/25, Friday, 2 PM
5/28, Monday	5/25, Friday, 3 PM
5/29, Tuesday	5/25, Friday, 3 PM

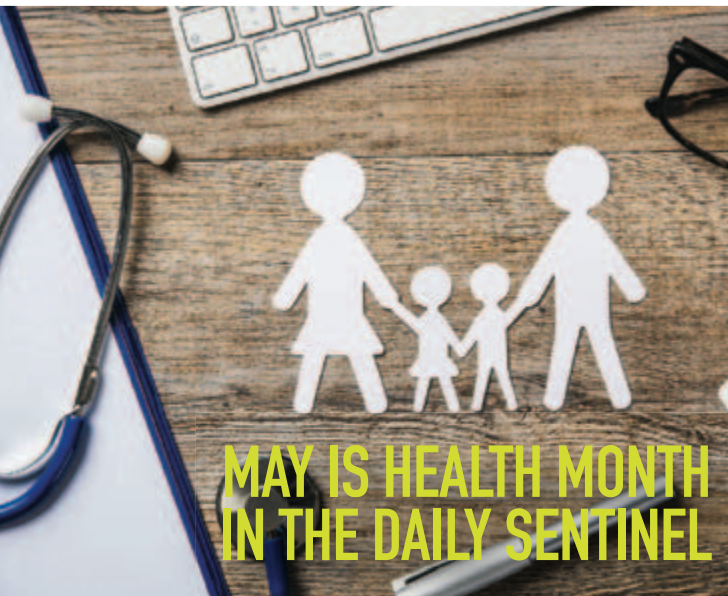
Legals

5/27, Sunday	5/22, Tuesday, 3 PM
5/28, Monday	5/22, Tuesday, 3 PM
5/29, Tuesday	5/22, Tuesday, 3 PM
5/30, Wednesday	5/23, Wednesday, 3 PM

THE DAILY
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attention health care providers



MEDICAL SPECIALISTS USED- past 12 months			
	Mesa County Adults	1 Mesa County Adult	% that read The Daily Sentinel
Chiropractor	22,114	19.3%	66.8%
Corrective eye surgeon	5,416	4.7%	66.4%
Cosmetic surgeon	921	.8%	54.1%
Eye examiner	31,049	27.2%	66.2%
OB/GYN	16,380	14.3%	63.4%
Skin doctor	11,449	10.0%	69.8%
Visiting home nurse	2,268	2.0%	45.8%

Run your 2 col. x 6.75 in., color ad on the Health & Wellness pages on any Tuesday in May, plus one Bonus Day for

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