

# HISTORIC DENVER NEWS

EST. 1970 + VOLUME 36 + NUMBER 1 + SPRING 2010

## Historic Denver is

# 40

1970-2010



## The 80s Issue

See pages 5-6



**HD Book wins CPI Award** — Barbara Norgren and Tom Noel (right), co-authors of *Denver: The City Beautiful*, the best selling book published last year by Historic Denver, accepted one of Colorado Preservation, Inc.'s first annual state-wide awards. It was given jointly to the authors and HD in ceremonies held at The Firefighters Museum. Chris Citron, outgoing CPI board member, and HD Trustee Tyson Dines III are also pictured. photo Jill Vig



Photo courtesy of Denver Public Library

After an explosion in membership, fundraising events and volunteerism in the 1970s, Historic Denver met its second decade balancing public campaigns with a quiet focus on specific advocacy agendas.

Continuing to operate and restore its flagship property, the Molly Brown House Museum, managing the Four Mile Historic Park (owned by the City and County of Denver,) supporting the myriad neighborhood historic districts that would be named that decade, revitalizing one of Denver's oldest neighborhoods—Curtis Park— and remaining true to its grassroots beginnings as watchdog over Denver's threatened places, Historic Denver's 1980s losses were relatively few and successes many.

Advocating for preservation tax credits and facilitating behind-the-scenes and open forum conversation with the city's movers and shakers may not make headlines (and incite passion) like some of those in the previous decade ("Moffat Mansion Demolished!") but HD's efforts laid the groundwork for lots of critically important work, including the passing of the LoDo Historic District ordinance in 1988 - arguably one of the most impactful preservation acts in city history.

But the LoDo historic district came too late to protect many downtown buildings, including the circa 1927 Denver Theater and Constitution Hall, circa 1865. However, Historic Denver's cries to save the Temple H. Buell-designed Paramount Theatre were heard, and today it is the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

**RIP**  
HOTEL METROPOLE  
1891-1984

## SAVE THE DATE

For our grand  
40th Anniversary celebration -  
**Night & Day in Historic Denver**

**August 6 & 7**  
(Details, page 8)

1 "HD Book Wins CPI Award" Barbara Norgren and Tom Noel, co-authors of *Denver: The City Beautiful*, the best-selling book published last year by Historic Denver, accepted one of Colorado Preservation Inc.'s first annual state-wide awards. (image: Norgren, Noel, outgoing board member Chris Citron and HD Trustee Tyson Dines III pictured. Photo credit: Jill Vig)

Purchase Barbara Norgren and Tom Noel's award-winning book, *Denver: The City Beautiful* at Historic Denver's online bookstore [www.historicdenver.org](http://www.historicdenver.org).

2 Hotel Metropole 1891-1984 Designed by Chicago architect Colonel J.W. Wood, the Metropole, located at 1756 Broadway, was one of Denver's three luxury hotels.

3 In 1982, architects Pei, Cobb, Freed & Partners' design for Downtown Denver's defining tourist attraction - the 16th Street Mall - was constructed, forever changing the face, function and foot traffic of downtown Denver. Now one of the busiest pedestrian malls in the country, the 16th Street Mall was recently named to Colorado Preservation Inc.'s Most Endangered Places list. Current debate over the care and maintenance of the Mall's distinctive "rattlesnake pattern" granite pavers leave the future of this feature, central to I.M Pei and Henry Cobb's original design, in the balance.

4 December 24, 1937 "Boys and girls crowd into a hallway of the Paramount Theater designed by Temple Hoyne Buell at 16th and Glenarm Streets in Denver, Colorado."

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The Denver Theater, long before demolition, Photo: Denver Public Library

## IN THIS ISSUE:

### PAGE 1

40th Anniversary 80s decade special

### PAGE 2

From the Director

### PAGE 3

Lady Doctor of Denver - Justina Ford

### PAGE 4-5

Preservation Briefs

### PAGE 6-7

40th Anniversary 80s decade special

### PAGE 8

Historic Denver Happenings

### PAGE 9

Molly Brown House Museum

### PAGE 10

Urban Living

### PAGE 12

Events; Notable Historic Residences for Sale



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# FROM THE DIRECTOR



In a recent conversation with one of Historic Denver's founders, Joanne Dimer, I was reminded of the passion and enthusiasm that motivated a relatively small group of people who started out to save the Molly Brown House Museum in 1970, and were then inspired to imagine a new kind of future for the city- one that included our historic landmarks and our historic neighborhoods.

From a 2010 vantage point I think it's hard to imagine what a revolutionary concept that was, but when you think that saving and restoring the elegant Tabor Opera House was not considered a sane thing to do, or that sixteen square blocks of central downtown were scraped simply to get rid of structures considered too out of date to ever contribute to economic renewal, it becomes clear that the preservation movement of the last four decades has been about a lot more than saving buildings or restoring landmarks, it hasn't been about the past, it's been about our city's future.

A few months ago, during our annual Realtor's Workshop, expert speakers on the city's preservation ordinance, design guidelines, windows, masonry and tax credits all took a turn explaining their particular piece of the preservation world. During the presentation architect and Historic Denver Board Member Chris Murata shared this comment by Richard Moe, President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation:

"Communities can be shaped by choice, or they can be shaped by chance. We can keep on accepting the kind of communities we get or we can start shaping the kind of communities we want."

Historic Denver's founding members understood the kind of city they wanted and they put creativity and countless hours into making it happen. It was a grassroots effort that began with a single project and grew into one of the most significant forces in the city's development for the next four decades.

What's exciting is that it's become a legacy and is still happening. During the last twelve months thousands of Denver residents have put their time, energy and creativity into the proposed new zoning code. I think there are many of us that never imagined we would understand the different implications of rear set-backs, lot-coverage standards or solar-access, but we have learned so that we can understand how to make our city better, and how to make our historic neighborhoods, which are the bedrock of Denver's quality of life, an integral part of planning decisions about the next forty years. And while the new code is no panacea and does not mean that there isn't still a disagreement about how to balance the old and the new, it does acknowledge that our historic resources are essential and desirable, a vastly different premise than was used to create the old code in 1956.

There are also hundreds of individuals participating in the design plans for the 16th Street Mall, asking questions about why the mall has been successful, sharing what they love about it and carefully analyzing the alternatives presented by the mall's steering committee and the Downtown Denver Partnership.

And, everyday our staff receives calls from neighbors, business-people and property owners asking how they can help save a house, rehabilitate a historic facility or find a new use for an old place.

We hope that all these people consider themselves preservationists- and we thank them for carrying the spirit of Joanne and all of Historic Denver's founders.

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Annie Levinsky  
Executive Director Historic Denver, Inc.  
alevinsky@historicdenver.org | 303.534.5288 x 1

## QUARTER I BY THE NUMBERS

We thought you'd like to know what we've been up to. Your dollars make this work happen!

Visitors to the Molly Brown House Museum . . . . .	5,176
School children served with outreach programming . . . . .	788
Special Events & Lectures. . . . .	2
Hours spent on direct advocacy . . . . .	133
Historic sites aided . . . . .	43
Web visitors . . . . .	48,171
Story Trek Users . . . . .	3,734



## HISTORIC DENVER, INC.

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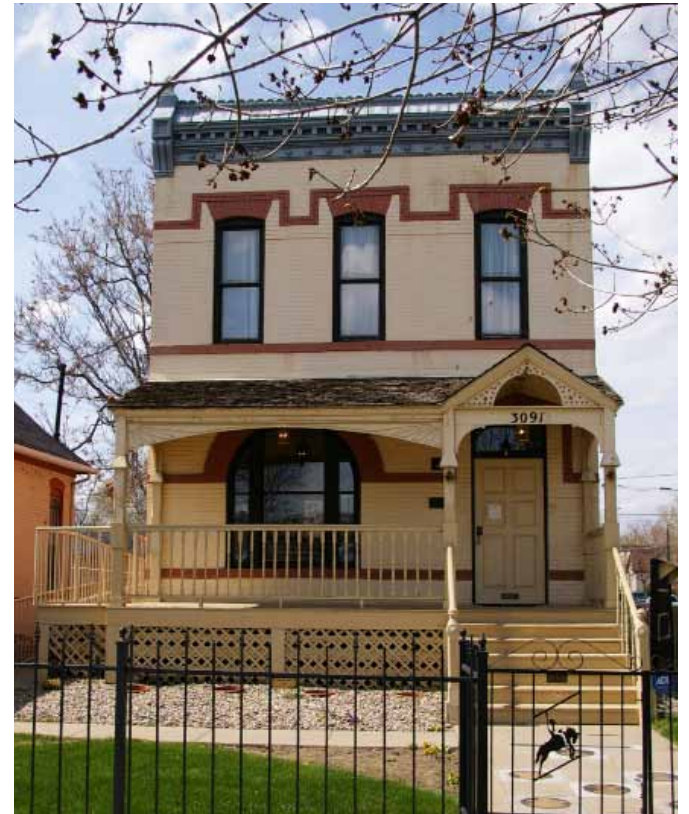
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Historic Denver News welcomes your letters, contents of which may be edited for length and clarity. Please include your name, address and telephone number in correspondence to:

Editor, *Historic Denver News*,  
1628 16th St., Suite 200, Denver CO 80202.





## THE “LADY DOCTOR” OF DENVER, JUSTINA FORD

Given the realities of the time in which she lived, Justina Ford (1871-1952) enjoyed an unlikely life and career as a successful African American doctor who bettered the lives of generations of Coloradans. Her story is inspiring, as is the story of the successful effort to save, protect and repurpose the place she lived and worked.

After graduating from Hering Medical College in Chicago in 1899 and working briefly in Alabama, the young Dr. Ford and her husband, the Rev. Dr. John Elijah Ford, moved to Denver in 1902 where she quickly set up a private practice. Public records indicate she was Denver’s only female doctor until the 1930s and was still the only African-American female doctor practicing in the state in 1950. Her legacy is one of compassion (she was known to never turn away a patient despite inability to pay for services) and her skill is legendary (she once estimated she had delivered nearly 7,000 babies during her lifetime.) “Ford came to assist mostly immigrant and minority patients,” notes the Denver Story Trek program on which the Ford House is now a marquee stop, “and by the time of her death she could converse in seven different languages.” Both she and the people she served – largely low-income and indigent people of all races - were denied access to city medical facilities during most of her career, but she would eventually practice at Denver General Hospital and was admitted to the Denver and Colorado Medical Societies a few years before her death in 1952.



Her dedication to her craft and her humanitarianism changed the lives of thousands during a most challenging time in our city’s history.

The preservation and protection of the place she lived and worked is living testimony to the difference one pioneering person of greatness made in the history of our city. Originally located at 2335 Arapahoe Street, the building that served as Dr. Ford’s home and office was saved from the wrecking ball in the early 1980s by Historic Denver, community and political leaders and the Black American West Museum and Heritage Center (founder Paul W. Stewart). Today, the Museum occupies that historic building. Now listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and a beacon whose light originated with a most original woman.

### LEARN MORE

The Black American West Museum and Heritage Center, located in the historic Justina Ford House at 3901 California Street, is easily accessed by the downtown Light Rail Line, which ends there. The house and museum are a “must see” stop on Historic Denver’s acclaimed Denver Story Trek program. Learn more about Justina Ford and the Black American West Museum at [www.StoryTrek.org](http://www.StoryTrek.org).

Left: 1981 -In one of Denver’s more dramatic preservation moments, the home of one of Colorado’s most distinguished pioneers was rescued and carried across town on a flatbed truck to its current and permanent spot in Denver’s historic Curtis Park/Five Points neighborhood.

Right: The Justina Ford House today, home of the Black American West Museum and Heritage Center



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# PRESERVATION BRIEFS

Historic Denver is proud to announce that three recent construction grant requests to the State Historical Fund have been approved. Two of these are great examples of our continued desire to assist the many Sacred Landmarks in our community and a third is one of the first redevelopments in the highly successful LoDo area of Denver.

## EPIPHANY EPISCOPAL CHURCH



The Epiphany Episcopal Church building on 1st & Colorado is approaching nearly 70 years of age and within that lifespan it has kept the same roof with patches and repairs for nearly forty of those years. This Denver Landmark church went through a transformation of size, architect, appearance, and identity when it received the roof it currently suffers under. Today, the water has found a way through its defenses and it is in desperate need of a new roof to protect the historic gems it holds. Chief among those treasures are a series of hand painted panels and columns in the sanctuary which are covered in beautiful filigree. The goal is to rectify the roof leaks and protect the church with the current grant funds.

## FISHER AND FISHER SYNAGOGUE



In 2001, the JCRS Isaac Solomon Historic Synagogue Foundation began its mission to restore the Fisher and Fisher synagogue building on the campus of Rocky Mountain School of Art & Design as a living testament to its principles and to the memory of those who created, supported and were treated at the JCRS campus in Lakewood, CO. The Foundation plans to see to its renovation and ongoing maintenance as an education center and living history

museum. The Isaac Solomon Synagogue requires extensive re-pointing of its exterior masonry, restoration of exterior terra cotta, repair and restoration of window frames and surrounds, repair to its foundation, as well as restoration of its interior wood floors. This new Historic Denver managed project will now go forward as a vital part of the overall efforts to restore the synagogue by sealing the exterior envelope and ensuring aesthetic and practical durability.

## EDBROOKE LOFTS

The Edbrooke Lofts on 15th & Wynkoop in Denver is the "Pioneer" historic loft project in Denver. On the original site of the Washington Hotel and Studebaker Buggy and Carriage House, this building was constructed in 1906 for the Spratlen-Anderson Mercantile Company. In 1905, Frank Edbrooke, architect of both the Brown Palace and Oxford Hotels, was hired to plan a four-story warehouse to replace the old wood frame building



formerly on this site, and a fifth story was added even before the initial construction was completed. In 1911 a sixth floor was added, also designed by Edbrooke, with detailing identical to that on the fifth floor. The current grant will be used to maintain this historic structure and help reinforce the decision made in 1988 to restore and preserve this great building and convert its use to modern day living.

## LOUTHAN HEIGHTS AGGREGATE REPAIR WORKSHOP

The Louthan Heights Historic District in Littleton is comprised of seventeen Craftsman-style houses that are coated in a unique stucco aggregate. Many of these homes in Littleton's first local historic district are beginning to show the wear of eight decades and portions of the stucco have begun to chip and crack. Some of the wooden window sills and trim has also begun to deteriorate and rot.



Historic Denver teamed up with restoration experts at Building Restoration Specialties, Inc. (BRS) and Spectrum General Contractors to present a repair workshop in order to teach the property owners about appropriate repair tools, techniques, and materials. On October 24, 2009, the entire neighborhood gathered at the home of Mary Ann Kruse, a resident of Louthan Heights, to learn the proper techniques of repairing pebble dash aggregate and deteriorated wood elements. Andrea Mimnaugh, Historic Preservation Planner for the City of Littleton, generously provided the much needed early morning coffee.

The most difficult part of this process was finding comparable materials. The small pebbles were hard to find, but larger gravel was acquired locally that could be pounded down to the correct size. For the stucco, Bart Baker and Rhonda Maas with BRS, Inc. used their expertise to replicate the correct ratio of lime, cement and sand. Bart prepped the area for repair, and showed the neighbors the correct way to apply the coats of stucco and pebble aggregate - who knew the best result came from throwing small rocks at the wall? Next, Ron Sihrer and Joel Sydlow from Spectrum General Contractors demonstrated how to repair a deteriorated section of wood trim. Ron used a soy-based stripper to remove the existing paint, drilled out the damaged portions, and then used an epoxy to repair and secure the wood. The combination of wood repair and aggregate repair demonstrations was incredibly informative, because it has been recommended that those projects be done concurrently.

This workshop was made possible by the Partners in the Field program, a collaboration between the National Trust for Historic Preservation and State and Local Partners. Historic Denver aims to provide technical assistance to Denver's historic satellite communities that are otherwise under-served. Information on future workshops covering topics such as energy efficiency, historic window repair, and state preservation tax credits will be posted on Historic Denver's website for 2010. ♣

# Platte Valley Trolley



## Wanted Trolley Volunteers

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303-458-6255 or [www.denvertrolley.org](http://www.denvertrolley.org)



# OWNER'S MANUAL For Historically Designated Homes & Buildings

## HISTORIC DENVER PUBLISHES A NEW BROCHURE FOR HOMEOWNERS

Many people have questions about the processes, benefits and responsibilities that are a part of owning a building that is either individually landmarked or located in a historic district. Historic Denver received a State Historical Fund Grant from the Colorado Historical Society to answer these questions and clarify Denver's design review process. The cash match for the grant was provided by the Landmark Preservation department within Community Planning and Development at the City and County of Denver. Together with Denver's Landmark Preservation Commission, Historic Denver has produced a brochure that provides an overview of landmark designation, outlines Denver's design review process and explains the difference between national, state and local designation. It also addresses frequently asked questions about energy efficiency and the economic impact of designation and provides a list of resources for owners. In March, the brochure was mailed to nearly 8,500 owners of buildings in historic districts and designated landmarks within the City and County of Denver and is a helpful resource for those who want to make changes to their building and to those interested in buying a designated property. The brochure is available electronically at [www.historicdenver.org](http://www.historicdenver.org) or can be requested in print at 303-534-5288 x 5. ♣



### Historic Designation: What Does it Mean to Me?

You are receiving this brochure because your property is either a locally designated landmark, is located in one of Denver's local historic districts or because you have expressed interest in learning more about historic designation.



We have included a list of important resources meant to help you take care of your historic home.

We hope that you keep this brochure with your other important household documents and reference it when you are planning exterior changes to your property.

### To check if your building

is locally designated or if you live in a designated historic district, visit [www.denvergov.org](http://www.denvergov.org), and click on 'Neighborhood Information' and then on 'Historic District/Landmark Preservation'.



By owning a designated building you are a steward of Denver's heritage. Living in a historic building is the best of both worlds - you can celebrate historic character while enjoying the benefits of modern living.

Historic Denver, a private non-profit, has partnered with the City of Denver's Landmark Preservation Commission to provide helpful information concerning designation and the processes required when making changes to your building. We hope to debunk common misconceptions and clarify the processes, benefits and responsibilities that are part of owning a designated home.

The city's preservation program recognizes the need for contemporary and economical use of historic buildings, and the design review process was put in place to balance the historic qualities with the demands of today. Many successful projects have resulted from the collaboration of the Landmark Preservation Commission and property owners, and the more you know about the process before beginning your project, the simpler it will be. >>>

## WHAT'S THE STORY?



WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR STORY.  
CALL DENVER STORY TREK AT  
**303.562.2407**

Be a tourist in your own town by exploring Denver's historic places on Denver Story Trek. Story Trek is a self-guided tour of the city, with stops organized geographically and by theme. All sites are accessible by foot, bike or auto. Pick up a brochure at the Molly Brown House, the 16th St. Mall Visitors Center or visit [www.denverstorytrek.org](http://www.denverstorytrek.org). Free audio information on each site is available 24 hours a day by calling 303.562.2407.

You can also add your story to the Trek. Simply call 303.562.2407 and follow the instructions.

Denver Story Trek lead sites include the Molly Brown House Museum, Black American West Museum, Byers Evans House Museum, Four Mile Historic Park and Kirkland Museum of Fine and Decorative Art.

CONTINUED FROM COVER

last survivor of the 17 grand theaters that once lined downtown streets. An October, 1985 Historic Denver article about the Paramount speaks to the reality of Denver's legacy of "saves" and "losses", and the importance of our role as guardians of our past: "There's enough nostalgia for lost places and spaces around Denver. The Paramount is a survivor. She'll be with us for as long as we're with her." ♣

## PIECES OF OUR PAST EXHIBIT OPENING

Denver's most iconic buildings, those lost and those saved, tell the stories that define our city's preservation past. The bronze doors from the demolished Denver Theater, a grand torchiere from the renowned Tabor Opera House and other rarely viewed pieces of our city's architectural past will tell Denver's story in an unusually tangible way.

### PLEASE JOIN US

For an opening reception launching Historic Denver, Inc's 40th Anniversary Exhibit - FREE to Historic Denver Members

### Reception

WEDNESDAY, MAY 19, 2010

5-7 PM

THE MOLLY BROWN HOUSE MUSEUM

1340 PENNSYLVANIA ST

### EXHIBIT OPENS TO THE PUBLIC MAY 19

TWO EXHIBITS, TWO LOCATIONS

Denver Public Library, Central Branch, 5th floor  
Molly Brown House Museum.

Details at [www.historicdenver.org](http://www.historicdenver.org) and 303-534-5288



1980

# Buildings Reborn:

## Special Exhibit Examines the Nationwide Phenomenon of Recycling Old Buildings

- HD News, August 1980

We may be greener now, but the creative reuse of historic spaces is not just a hot 21st century topic. This 30 year-old headline illustrates that the “phenomenon” is hardly new. (And the article listed 32 examples of Denver’s “reborn” buildings, which in 1980 included: 5 transportation buildings, 8 commercial and warehouse buildings and 12 private residences.)

Visit [www.historicdenver.org](http://www.historicdenver.org) to read the article in its entirety.

## Historic Denver Awarded \$100,000 for Curtis Park Project.

“The Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service of the Department of the Interior awarded Historic Denver money to begin restoration work in the Curtis Park neighborhood.” *HD News*, June 1980

Many of the homes of Curtis Park were constructed between 1885 -1890, making it one of Denver’s oldest neighborhoods. The residents of Denver’s pioneer streetcar “suburb” built the Italianate, Queen Anne, Gothic and other Victorian style homes that, by the early 1980s, had suffered from neglect. Preservation proponent, educator and Curtis Park resident since 1976, Bill West recalls an early visit to the neighborhood by then, Colorado First Lady, Anne Love: “She was clearly alarmed.” He says. “This was a rough neighborhood in those days.” Historic Denver’s involvement began in the late 1970s with the relocating of three threatened Curtis Park houses. The 1981-82 Face Block Project funded by the Department of Interior (spearheaded by HD Director Barbara Sudler and Board President Jim Bull) revitalized the historic neighborhood monumentally. “It involved a massive number of houses – 50 or 60.” recalls West.

Historian Tom Noel calls William “Bill” West “the bachelor who fathered the Curtis Park renaissance.”



## “It was bulldozer heaven.

Urban Renewal was just a tank going through downtown. But the older buildings that the city had saved were evident against the new, faceless high-rises. This gave people something to rally behind. Buildings they knew; buildings that had character. Well, the public embraced them, so they (Urban Renewal Authority) eventually jumped on the bandwagon. I would say “hooray!” – better the bandwagon than the battlefield.”

- Joanne Ditmer, a Historic Denver founder

“Most were owned by people of a certain economic level who could not otherwise afford to fix these places up. In the neighborhood, it helped erase the visual distinction between the “haves” and the “have-nots.”

By reinstalling sandstone sidewalks, lining the streets with trees and rejuvenating the city’s first park, as well as restoring the street façades of the houses, there is no doubt that Historic Denver’s early involvement in Curtis Park spurred a renewed sense of neighborhood pride that inspired a core grass-roots group of preservation activists, many of whom remain in the neighborhood to this day.



1981



## Paramount Theater Becomes HD’s Next Big Project

*HD News*, June 1981

In 1981 Historic Denver formed the Historic Paramount Foundation and purchased the threatened Paramount Theater, designed by Temple H. Buell, in order to preserve and rehabilitate it. Today, the excellent example of 1930s Art Deco architecture contributes to the 16th St. Mall’s historic character, and is one of very few of Denver’s legacy of grand theaters to have survived the wrecking ball.

CONSTITUTION HALL 1980

## Constitution Hall Comes Down

“Despite HD’s pleas to keep the façade of the burnt 1865 building located at 15th and Blake intact, it was torn down in March of 1980 to make way for a parking lot. Sadly, the historic designation of the Lower Downtown Historic District in 1988 did not occur in time to save this venerable old building.”

*HD News*, May 1980



Photo courtesy of Denver Public Library

DENVER THEATER 1980



## The Demise of the Denver Theater

*HD News*, August 1980

Built in 1927, the Denver Theater was demolished by owner Cheeseman Realty to make way for what, nearly 20 years later became the Denver Pavillions Complex.

Demolition of the Denver Theater, HD Archive Photo, 1980

**TDR Ordinance Passes!**  
*HD News*  
 February 1982

1983

**The Navarre Reopens**

*HD News*, December 1983  
 “Historic Denver, along with the Denver Land and Planning Commission and the Colorado Historical Society, succeeded in passing the TDR ordinance, which allows designated Denver landmark buildings to transfer unused development rights and earn money for them, an important change making rehabs as attractive as new construction.

Thanks to the ordinance, and HD’s efforts, the 1889 Navarre building (a former brothel rumored to have catered to the upscale clientele from its across-the-street neighbor, the Brown Palace Hotel) was saved and repurposed as the private art museum that occupies the space today.

1984

**Historic Denver Receives Piton Grant**

*HD News*, January 1984  
 This \$25,000 grant awarded to fund the Neighborhood Assistance Program allowed HD to provide direct technical assistance to historic neighborhoods on historic preservation issues and projects, strengthening the growing advocacy component of our mission.

**Ford House to be Restored as Black American West Museum**  
*HD News*, July 1986  
 In 1984, Dr. Justina Ford’s former home and medical office, built in 1890, was moved by HD from its original location at 2335 Arapahoe Street to its current location to avoid demolition in 1984. In 1986 HD received a grant of \$97,000 to continue restoration work on the important landmark that now serves as the home of the Black American West Museum, a marquee stop on the Denver Story Trek program. Learn more at [www.DenverStoryTrek.org](http://www.DenverStoryTrek.org).

1986

**Rebirth of the Mayan Theater**

*HD News*, August, 1986  
 With the Landmark Theatre Corporation’s signing of a 10 year lease for use as a movie theater, owner Landon Investments committed to the preservation of the distinctive 1930’s Art Deco theater by architect Montana S. Fallis. The building’s Pre-Columbian decoration and bas relief ornamentation (in multi-color terra cotta ornament by Julius P. Ambrusch of the Denver Terra Cotta Company) remains the distinctive historic structure on this stretch of Broadway.

**Convention Center will Spare Evans School**  
*HD News*, November/ December 1986  
 “After much pleading by HD the 1904 Evans School designed by David Dryden, located at 1115 Acoma St. will not be leveled during the 2nd phase of the Convention Center construction.”

1986

1988

**Wynkoop Brewpub Toast of LoDo**

*HD News*, October 1988  
 “A zany transition promised in the spring has revived yet another warehouse in Lower Downtown for an October 18 opening.”



The Wynkoop Brewing Company team of Russell Schehrer, Jerry Williams, Barbara Schehrer, John Hickenlooper and Mark Schiffler”  
 Photo credit: Roger Whitacre



1930 photo of men posing on a truck in front of the Mayan Theater on the theater’s opening night.  
 Photo courtesy Denver Public Library

**HISTORIC DENVER**  
 MARCH 1989

**Preservation “Dream Team”**  
*HD News*, March 1989  
 Barbara Baldwin, Jennifer Moulton, Barbara Sudler and Dana Crawford  
 “Jennifer Moulton New HD President”

HD the (

When “fabric” of urban development...  
 Moulton and new city and give cities from...  
 A pra of the Pres ed preside instrument declare Le she has al fabric in r efforts, bo chitectural

1988



Mayor Federico Pena signs LoDo’s landmark designation papers.  
 HD Archive Photo

**Lower Downtown a Historic District at Last!**

*HD News*, April, 1988  
 Along with the efforts of many organizations and individuals, 180 buildings in 22 of the city’s most historic downtown blocks were protected by guidelines designed to preserve the city’s original commercial district.

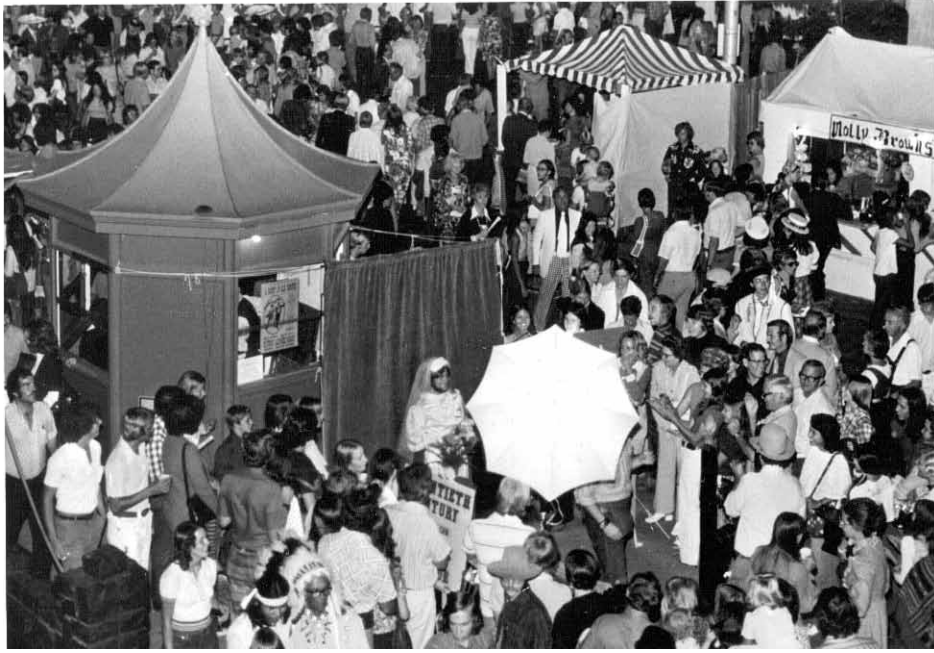
**State Tax Credit Proposed to Restore Preservation Aims**

*HD News*, February 1989  
 Historic Denver will work for passage of the preservation bill and is urgently requesting its members to contact state senators and representatives in support of SB 1076.” Learn more about The Colorado State Rehabilitation Tax Credit is a reality. Visit [www.historicdenver.org](http://www.historicdenver.org) + Save a Building + Tax Credits to learn all about it.

**The 100th birthday party for the Molly brown House Museum**

was held July 17 on the lawn and gardens of the Phipps Tennis House. With Honorary Chairman Ann Love, Chairman Inky Ratcliff, and a corps of talented volunteers, benefit proceeds easily topped the \$110,000 goal of the Molly Brown Capitol Campaign.”  
*HD News*, July 1989

# HISTORIC DENVER HAPPENINGS



Night in Old Denver crowds, circa 1975

## SAVE THE DATE!

### NIGHT & DAY IN HISTORIC DENVER AUGUST 6 & 7

Many longtime HD faithful will remember a grand 1970s Denver tradition – Historic Denver’s “Night in Old Denver” – a community celebration of Denver’s historic past that we’ll resurrect in spirit this summer to honor our 40th Anniversary.

#### FRIDAY NIGHT, AUGUST 6TH

A summer’s evening gala with music & dancing at historic St. Cajetan’s

#### SATURDAY DAY, AUGUST 7TH

A family-friendly open-air event at the 9th Street Historic Park featuring live music, food, games & activities

#### VOLUNTEERS AND SPONSORS NEEDED!

Whether you were one of the thousands (yes, thousands!) of volunteers from Night in Old Denver in the ‘70s or are a prospective sponsor with an interest in exposure to crowds of historic-minded Denverites, we want you on board! We need volunteers to help with all aspects of Saturday’s event. Please direct volunteer inquiries to Heather Quiroga at 303.534.5288 x 5 or [hquiroga@historicdenver.org](mailto:hquiroga@historicdenver.org) and sponsorship opportunities to Michael Schlut at 303.534.5288 x 6 or [mschlut@historicdenver.org](mailto:mschlut@historicdenver.org).

#### EVENT RECAP:

#### 2009 LANDMARK REAL ESTATE SEMINAR

Realtors gathered in December for Historic Denver’s 6th annual Landmark Real Estate Seminar. Designed to give real estate professionals the knowledge and information necessary to successfully market houses in historic neighborhoods and districts, attendees also learned about identification of historic architectural styles and old house maintenance issues, and earned 8 credits toward their continuing education via the Department of State Regulatory Agencies. Many thanks to our sponsors, Heritage Title Company and CBIZ MHM, LLC.

Save the Date - December 2010 Seminar, details TBA.



### ONE PAST 5 PRESERVATION HAPPY HOUR – THE MALO MANSION

The circa 1920 Malo Mansion at 500 East 8th Avenue is a historic landmark with as colorful list of previous owners that include milling magnate Oscar Malo, the Catholic archdiocese and millionaire heiress Swanee Hunt. On March 25th, Historic Denver, Inc. and the National Trust for Historic Preservation opened those storied doors for a ‘20s jazz-themed gathering in tribute to the era in which the mansion was built. This latest in our popular series of preservation happy hours was another sold-out gathering.

MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO CONTINUE TO MAKE OP5 A SUCCESS, AND THANKS (ESPECIALLY!) TO OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS:

- Buchanan Yonushewski Group
- KUVO Jazz 89.3 and the Wendy Fopeano/Marc Sabatella Duo
- Lala’s Wine Bar + Pizzeria
- Nordstrom
- Republic National Distributing Company Liquor
- Scarlet Salon
- The National Trust’s Historic Hotels of America

Historic Denver, Inc. and National Trust for Historic Preservation’s One Past 5 events open doors to Denver’s most exclusive historic places, offering the opportunity to network with a dynamic group of the city’s movers and shakers in unforgettable settings. First time attendees receive a free annual membership to both organizations.

Learn more and visit the Malo Mansion (and other OP5 event) photo galleries at [www.historicdenver.org](http://www.historicdenver.org)



Guests at the Malo Mansion One Past 5 Happy Hour. Photo credit: Jeff Pistana



# MOLLY BROWN HOUSE MUSEUM

## THE 1980S WERE GOOD TO MOLLY BROWN!

BY ANDREA MALCOMB

Looking back in the archives from the 1980s, the Molly Brown House Museum was a very active, community-driven space with restoration efforts still in full swing. Celebrating 10 years, the Museum had already hosted 500,000 guests, created programming still in action today and restored most of the first floor and started restoration work on the second floor. It was the decade of "Molly Brown" in Denver, Governor Lamm even declared a state-wide "Molly Brown Week" in July of 1983 in celebration of Colorado's own heroine of the Titanic, two years before Robert Ballard would find its wreckage at the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean.

The 1980s began with the second floor carpet project (carpet we just replaced last year) and an assessment of the bedrooms to determine how to proceed with restoration. They would be restored as we see them today and were completed by the end of the decade. The front porch was stabilized in 1984 with some of the Manitou sandstone on the balustrade being replaced and the porch ceiling and floor tiles restored. A kitchen was built on the third floor to facilitate on-site events, the entryway got its Turkish Cozy Corner and fireplace tiles, and Molly's room got its carpet. All the while, the Museum was open, conducting tours and welcoming as many as 250 guests per day.

With all of the great projects and events at the museum, it is no surprise that there were also notable guests at the museum in the '80s. From the Broadway musical "The Unsinkable Molly Brown", Tammy Grimes visited in 1983 along with actor John Ireland. Earlier in the 1980s Harv Presnell from the "Unsinkable" Hollywood movie had also come to the museum. Descendants of Margaret Brown visited their notable relative's home as several great nieces, nephews and grandchildren came to see the home they had heard of often in childhood stories. One descendant even volunteered for a time working in the store as a cashier.

All of this work was undertaken by a small yet dedicated staff, with lots of help from volunteers and great fundraising

supported by the community. An adopt-a-room campaign in 1984, and later a capitol campaign project in 1988, raised over \$150,000 for the museum's restoration. Foundations such as the Gates, Burlington Northern, American Express, Jack Daniels, Coors and Boettcher all contributed, along with contributions from the volunteers and numerous individual donors. These funds allowed for the completion of many projects including carpet in Molly's room, plexi-glass on the windows and some much needed exterior maintenance.

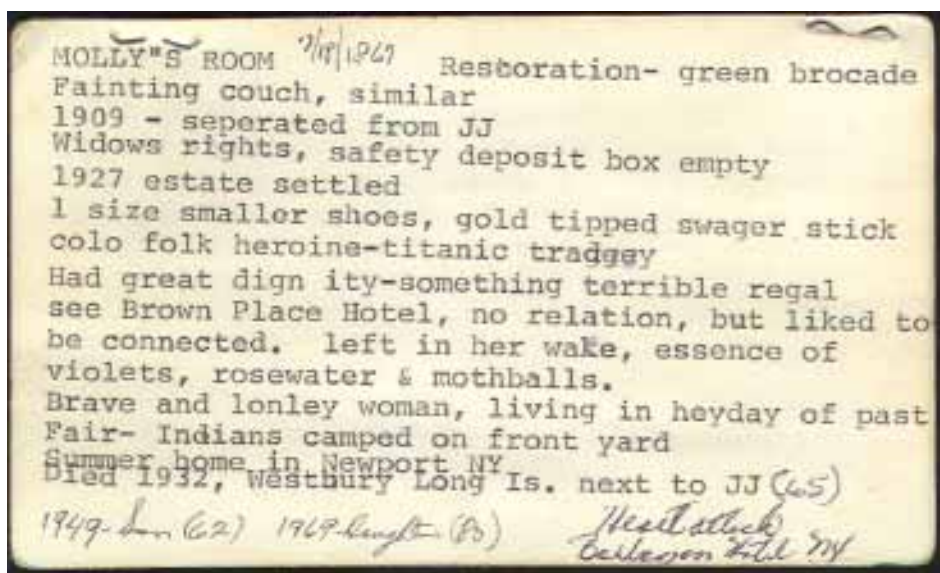
An amazing corps of almost 200 volunteers lead tours, cataloged the collection, managed all the outreach programs, ran the store, held events and fundraisers, and even mowed the lawn. During most of this time, the volunteers accomplished all this from the basement of the museum, as the volunteer lounge area wasn't created on the back porch until 1987. (It would stay there until a State Historic Fund grant helped us renovate the 2nd floor of the carriage house and move everything over in 2004.) These volunteers frequently logged 7500-8500 hours a year for the museum and were the backbone of Historic Denver. Some of the fun events held by the volunteers to raise money included a garage sale, numerous garden parties, a picnic at Riverside Cemetery, and countless teas, luncheons and parties.

Throughout the 1980s, the museum had a solid corps of over 50 docents who led guests through the museum creating the memorable experience of bringing "Molly" back to life. Without the benefit of an accurate biography such as Kristen Iversen's "Molly Brown: Unraveling the Myth," docents were still able to paint a portrait of an educated and outgoing Victorian woman who conquered the world. As today, many docents had note cards they carried with them on the tour as a reminder of all the amazing facts which filled the life of Margaret Tobin Brown and her Denver home turned museum.

One of the most popular volunteer-led programs of the Molly Brown House Museum was called "Fashions from Molly Brown's Trunk." Some 60 volunteers participated in this outreach program, taking it to senior centers, community groups and private functions. Volunteers amassed a large collection of period and reproduction clothing which they used for a fun fashion show of clothing popular during Molly Brown's time. Not bashful, these ladies would easily go from wearing a high society ball gown to a corset and bloomers, all in one show!



Fashions from Molly Brown's Trunk



A docent's note cards from the 1980s



Harv Presnell visits the Molly Brown House Museum in 1981



## PIECES OF OUR PAST

40 Years at the Molly Brown House Museum

*Exhibit Opens*

**May 19**

5-7 pm

Join us in exploring 40 years of restoration, preservation and interpretation of the 1889 home of the "Unsinkable" Margaret Tobin Brown.

Molly Brown House Museum  
1340 Pennsylvania St., Denver CO  
www.mollybrown.org

# URBAN LIVING



Restored exterior of 423 Downing Street

Guest authors Brett and Rona Gilbert love a modern interior. They are also historic preservationists, so making the dream renovation of their 1890 house a reality required balancing their modern sensibility with a respect for the character of their historic block. The result is a happy coexistence of 21st century conveniences and a virtually unchanged footprint and façade that they hope will inspire others in their historic neighborhood.

After relocating to Denver from Columbus, Ohio, where we had lived in a nationally recognized historic neighborhood that was a leader in historic preservation, we searched for an old house with great character. In our old neighborhood the homes were meticulously preserved on the outside with contemporary interior renovations and additions that surprised visitors who were expecting historic museums but instead found vibrant, modern homes in historic shells. We were disappointed to see so many “pop tops” and “scrapes” in Denver that resulted in homes that no longer blended in the neighborhood, and based on our prior experience with historic preservation back in Ohio, we wanted to avoid that at all costs. So not finding an already renovated home that met our needs, we decided to purchase an old house we could renovate ourselves.

The instant we walked into the 1890-built Victorian home at 423 Downing Street, we knew it was “the one.” Although the home was in desperate need of improvements, we were enthralled with the 11-foot ceilings, original wood floors, pocket doors and ornate trim. While our realtor thought we were crazy, we easily envisioned what could be done to transform the house into a modern home to fit our contemporary lifestyle, while still respecting its history.

As we planned our home improvements and interviewed architects and contractors, we were adamant we wanted to maintain the home’s original integrity while adding modern conveniences and expanding the square footage with little to no visible change from the outside. We needed to find the right architect and contractor who not only understood our vision but also shared our passion to infuse modern living into a historic structure that would contribute to a thriving neighborhood community.

We are forever grateful to Jim Mitchell of Mitchell Architecture who helped us plan our vision and Thomas Becher of Meter Matters Construction who made it come to life. Not only did they share our respect for the home’s historic charm, but they were genuinely excited to help us make it happen.

While we ultimately undertook a complete renovation and second-story addition, the house was in surprisingly good shape given its history. Not only had it sat empty for more than a year while on the market, but we later found out that it had been abandoned in the early 90’s. After several break-ins the bank that owned it finally just left the doors open so vandals and homeless people would stop breaking in. Amazingly, no serious damage was done and very little went missing. And while the couple we purchased the home from had done some minor improvements, we knew we needed a complete overhaul to make our vision a reality.

Eight months of construction later, we now live in our dream home in one of Denver’s great historic neighborhoods, Alamo Placita. Very little of the house was untouched during the construction, yet there’s very little hint of change from the outside. One of the best compliments we received after it was completed was from a neighbor who said we had given this beautiful home a new life - and another 100 years.

## WHAT WE DID:

We turned the original 1200 square-foot home - originally 2 bedrooms, 1 bath - into a 2000 square-foot home that’s now 2 bedrooms plus an office, a butler’s pantry and 2 and 1/2 baths.

Unused attic space was converted into an additional 800 square feet with a master suite including a bedroom with French doors leading out to a balcony and large master bath, as well as a guest bedroom and bath. This was accomplished by adding two transoms and a gable and although we did not raise the roof, we still have 9-foot ceilings upstairs.

- The kitchen was completely renovated and expanded. We built an island with bar seating exposed the original brick on one wall while adding a walk-in pantry with washer and dryer.
- With the help of our creative architect, we created lots of closets and storage (a rarity in an old house!)
- A badly needed painting enhanced the exterior, including bringing out the original Victorian accents. We also replaced a tacky canvas awning over the front door with a newly built front awning over the porch that blends with the home’s Victorian design.
- Upgraded plumbing, lighting and electrical throughout the house as well as central air conditioning.

## Not only did we accomplish our goals, but we also made every effort to maintain the home’s historic charm, including:

- Plaster coving was preserved and/or restored during the project.
- Wood base and trim molding was removed when needed, reused and incorporated into the new improvements wherever possible.
- All original interior doors, frames and transoms remain and where they needed to be removed were reused in new locations.
- Original heat vent covers and fireplaces were protected, cleaned and reused.
- Original hardwood floors were restored, and we found the same wood (Heartwood Pine) and used it to build the new stairway to the upstairs addition.

We are so proud of our new home, and we hope our story will help others in Denver to understand how to create a modern living space without compromising the historical context of the home or the neighborhood. We would highly encourage anyone with an historic home to not only consider alternatives to “scrapes” and “pop tops,” but to take into consideration a home’s context in the surrounding neighborhood and design their new home or addition accordingly. Just because a home looks historic from the outside, doesn’t mean it can’t be modern and contemporary on the inside. It may take a little more time - and possibly a little more money - to renovate a home in a historically appropriate way, but it’s worth it. ♣

*Brett and Rona Gilbert’s home at 423 Downing St. was the “Best Interior Renovation” runner-up in Historic Denver’s 2009 Restoration for Living contest. See more photos of their excellent renovation at [www.historicdenver.org](http://www.historicdenver.org).*

Finished master attic – surprisingly spacious, with no change to exterior roofline



Beautiful blending of old and new in the renovated kitchen

*Thank You*  
 TO HISTORIC DENVER'S NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS  
 JANUARY THROUGH MARCH 2010

- |                                   |  |
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OUR SUPPORTERS ARE THE FOUNDATION OF HISTORIC DENVER. THANK YOU.

Please circle a membership level and your preference of benefits within that level. Standard level benefits are included at all membership levels.

**STANDARD LEVEL**  
**STUDENT \$25 SENIOR (65+) \$25 ANNUAL \$40**

Subscription to Historic Denver News  
 Discounts on select events, tours and programs

**FRIENDSHIP LEVEL \$100**

Standard Benefits plus:  
 Two passes to the Molly Brown House [or]  
 Two passes to the Annual House Tour

**SUSTAINING LEVEL \$250**

Standard Benefits plus:  
 Four passes to the Molly Brown House [or]  
 Four passes to the Annual House Tour  
 Higher levels of support are available, please call.

PLEASE CIRCLE WHICH PROGRAM YOU WOULD LIKE TO SUPPORT.

- Molly Brown House Museum      Urban Living  
 Sacred Landmarks                      Preservation Advocacy Efforts

Make a general donation to that program in the amount of \_\_\_\_\_

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If you have remembered Historic Denver in your will, thank you. If you are interested in learning about the benefits of Planned Giving, please contact Annie Levinsky, Executive Director, at 720.891.4957



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# CALENDAR OF EVENTS



## MAY 19

### EXHIBIT OPENING

#### Pieces of Our Past: 40 Years at the Molly Brown House Museum

It may be hard to believe, but the 1889 home of Margaret 'Molly' Brown was almost lost. Fortunately, a group of concerned citizens came together launching a new non-profit organization, Historic Denver, Inc., to purchase the 14-room home. Today, our not-so-humble house museum is one of the country's premier historic sites dedicated to women's history. Join us in exploring the last 40 years during a special exhibit opening in May. And visit the 5th floor of the Denver Public Library for a companion exhibit of Denver's Preservation history.

## JUNE 12

### DOLLIES AND TEA CREAM TEA

#### Molly Brown House Museum

##### 1340 Pennsylvania Street

Bring your best friend to tea and meet new friends at our *Dollies Tea*. You'll see many dollies in the Museum ready to make friends as well. Saturday, June 12, 11:00 am & 1:00 pm. Tickets are \$20 / person, visit [www.mollybrown.org](http://www.mollybrown.org) or call 303.832.4092 x16.

## JUNE 19

### BON VOYAGE TITANIC DINNER

#### Molly Brown House Museum

##### 1340 Pennsylvania Street

Experience the excitement and opulence of 1st Class *Titanic* dining with a seven course meal with wine pairings, costumed stewards, and a candlelit tour of Denver's own *Unsinkable Mrs. Brown's* home. This event includes a membership to Historic Denver, our parent organization. Saturday, June 19, at 6:00 pm. Tickets are \$100/person, visit [www.mollybrown.org](http://www.mollybrown.org) or call 303-832-4092 x. 16.

## JULY 18

### MOLLY'S BIRTHDAY BASH

#### Molly Brown House Museum

##### 1340 Pennsylvania Street

Help the Museum celebrate Molly's 143rd birthday! Enjoy traditional lawn games, birthday cake and other delectable treats. Bring the kids for a laid-back Victorian afternoon with special youth activities and share Molly's passion for helping others by visiting the Denver Dumb Friends League *Pet Caravan* which will be on site. Sunday July, 18, 12:00 - 4:00 pm. Tickets are \$8 for members, children & seniors, \$12 for non-members, visit [www.mollybrown.org](http://www.mollybrown.org) or call 303.832.4092 x16.

## CONGRESS PARK HISTORIC SPEAKERS SERIES 2010

Lectures are on the last Wednesday of each month. The lectures are held at Heitler Hall, National Jewish Hospital, at 7 pm, unless otherwise stated.

If you have questions or would like to help, please contact Carolyn Van Sciver at 303-377-4913 or [cvansciver@earthlink.net](mailto:cvansciver@earthlink.net).

## MAY 26, 2010

### WORKING WITH A CONTRACTOR

What do you need to know to make that renovation project a positive experience for both you and the contractor who turns your dreams into reality? Martin Kajawa has been renovating Denver's old homes for 27 years. Learn about interviewing contractors, writing contracts, paying for work done, - the in and outs of working with contractors.

## JUNE 30, 2010

### CHOOSING PAINT COLORS FOR YOUR HISTORIC HOUSE

Megan Schlegel, the Color People, will guide you through the process of choosing a color scheme for your historic house. Her presentation, using photos of "the good, the bad, and the ugly" demonstrates how to avoid poor color choices for your home. Megan encourages attendees to bring a picture of their house to discuss possible solutions to their color dilemmas.

## JULY 28, 2010

### SOLAR POWER FOR YOUR HISTORIC HOME

Solar power can be seamlessly integrated into your home and still maintain its classic charm, while including modern technology. Jon Sullivan, from Simple Solar, will show 3 examples of solar systems on historic homes...including his own 1926 Denver Bungalow. Come learn if your home is appropriate and how you can benefit.

## AUGUST 6-7 2010

### NIGHT & DAY IN HISTORIC DENVER.

Emerging details at [www.historicdenver.org](http://www.historicdenver.org).

## AUGUST 25, 2010

### CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF STAINED OR LEADED GLASS WINDOWS

Stained or leaded glass windows were a very popular decorative element in turn-of-the-century homes in Denver. Mike Delva, Denver Art Glass, will discuss the basics of maintaining the historic leaded glass windows in your home and answer questions about when and why to call for professional help.

## NOTABLE HISTORIC RESIDENCES FOR SALE



Photo: Melissa Belongea

### THE SHERMAN HOUSE

The Sherman House is a 20th century modern gem spotlighted by a members-only Historic Denver tour in January, and has been featured in *Modern in Denver (MID)* magazine. Its renowned Denver architect, Eugene Groves (the subject of a documentary in production), has seven buildings on the National Register of Historic Places and six on the State Register, but this home is not landmarked. One of only three single-family homes of Groves' design built entirely of concrete, a hallmark of the architect, it features an incredible space with Groves-designed cabinets and fixtures. Just reduced in price to \$324,900, this historic residence at 2733 West 41st Avenue is a jewel in the hot Sunnyside/Potter Highlands neighborhood.

For more information, please contact: Charles Murphy, Epic Realty, 303.433.9101 [epic1crm@msn.com](mailto:epic1crm@msn.com)



### 740 WASHINGTON STREET

The 2009 winners of Historic Denver's Restoration for Living Awards were recognized in the category of Best Interior Renovation for bringing 740 Washington Street - a historically important, circa 1893 3-story stone mansion by well known Denver architects Ernest Varian and Frederick Sterner - back from the brink of disrepair. (Other notable buildings by Varian and Sterner include the Tears-McFarlane House and the Denver Athletic Club.) Offered at \$1,496,000, this impressive Quality Hill, (Governor's Park/Capitol Hill) home is completely updated while retaining much of its original, historic charm.

For more information, please contact: Tom McHenry (owner/broker) at 303.478.2565 or [TomMcHenry@msn.com](mailto:TomMcHenry@msn.com)