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# HISTORIC DENVER NEWS

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Denver’s City Park has many different components that make it a unique cultural landscape in the city.  
Photo: Western History and Genealogy Department, Denver Public Library

## PLANNING FOR THE “PEOPLE’S PARK”

One of the most iconic images of Denver is taken from the east side of City Park. Looking past Ferril Lake and downtown to the mountains beyond, a viewer might be forgiven for thinking that Denver was greenspace from Ferril Lake to the foothills some 15 miles away. This image captures the essence of Denver – a city nestled in nature, mountains permeating every view and every thought. That persuasive illusion is City Park’s magic. The “People’s Park” is an oasis in the midst of a growing city. Miles of natural trails, grand lawns, lakes, cultural institutions like the Denver Museum of Nature and Science and the Denver Zoo, events, concerts, and marathons all draw diverse users to the park every day. Both users and changing conditions put pressure on the park over time, and raises the question, how can a place so beloved evolve to meet many needs while remaining grounded in its history and identity? An update to the park’s Master Plan and the creation of Design Guidelines will seek to answer this question beginning this spring.

City Park was originally designed by Henry Meryweather in 1882 and formally opened to the public in 1886. Former Denver mayor and first park commissioner Richard Sopris also played a large part in the park’s design. City Park was carefully

shaped and molded to produce the vistas that still span the Front Range, and which are now protected through local view plane ordinances. The park’s many pathways were carefully located to shield visitors from the bustling city that surrounded the park, and trees were planted on the perimeter to create an idyllic haven for visitors.

This original pastoral image was further enhanced by the Olmsted Brothers, who were commissioned by the City of Denver in 1913 to improve the park, in addition to creating the Denver Mountain Park system. *Revitalizing Denver’s City Park*, the 2001 Master Plan, notes that the Olmstead Brothers firm followed the ethos of their father, and envisioned public parks to be “a haven—large and expansive, full of vegetation, walking paths and scenery, and protected from other types of development... [with] a strong emphasis on the visual aesthetic with a transcendental and picturesque ideal of nature, and as sanctuaries for all citizens to find relief from pollution, noise, and overcrowding of the urban city.”

This oasis in the city was further framed by Mayor Speer’s City Beautiful Movement in the early 20th century. The City Park Esplanade, with the Sullivan

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# FROM THE DIRECTOR



Photo: Havey Productions

As spring greets us, with both blossoms and snowflakes, our thoughts naturally turn to the outdoors, and in Denver we are blessed with many opportunities to enjoy warm sunshine and cool breezes, whether it's in a park, on a bike trail, shopping in a streetcar district or dining al fresco. When we do these things we are often engaging with a cultural landscape, a place that has been shaped by humans and that over time has garnered layers of meaning and association.

The Cultural Landscape Foundation, a national group that advocates for cultural landscapes, define them as "landscapes that have been affected, influenced, or shaped by human involvement." They go on to explain that a cultural landscape "can be thousands of acres or a tiny homestead. It can be a grand estate, industrial site, park, garden, cemetery, campus and more. Collectively, cultural landscapes are works of art, narratives of culture, and expressions of regional identity."

Cultural landscapes can be designed landscapes, intentionally shaped to serve a purpose, or vernacular landscape, evolving informally over time. Cultural landscapes can also be ethnographic, representing a particular culture, or traditionally historic for their association with an influential person or event.

Obvious cultural landscapes come easily to mind, like City Park, the topic of our cover story. Given Denver's association with the outdoors, it's not surprising that our only two National Historic Landmarks are Red Rocks and Civic Center, both iconic cultural landscapes. Each of these parks was designed differently, with City Park's pastoral influences, Red Rocks' natural surroundings, and Civic Center's formality, but each was clearly designed in a specific place and time to meet the needs of the city and the users.

Cultural landscapes are not always so obvious. For example, Denver's 16th Street Mall fits the definition as a cultural (and quite linear) landscape, and was intricately designed by the leading designers of the time, I.M. Pei, Henry Cobb, and Laurie Olin. But

what about a regular street, hasn't it too been shaped by human involvement and taken on meaning over time? What about a neighborhood or a set of associated structures and elements, like Burnham Yards or the National Western site? Each is a cultural landscape, but each was created by a different set of evolutionary forces and so faces a different set of challenges as time goes by.

In recent years Historic Denver has faced an increasing number of concerns about cultural landscapes of all types. We've been involved in planning for the National Western site, the 16th Street Mall, Red Rocks, and City Park, including weighing in on the controversial storm water drainage protect proposed for City Park Golf Course. In each case the crux of the matter, and sometimes the disagreement, revolves around managing change in spaces that, almost by definition, evolve. Trees grow and eventually die, surrounding areas develop or decline, and climate changes can put pressures on traditional plantings or uses. Travel modes and technology shift, populations grow and perceptions and needs change. So what do you do with all this change? How do you measure its impact to the cultural and historical value of a space with inter-related parts?

When we look at a building, preservationists are well trained to measure and weigh proposed alterations. Does

the alteration impact a character-defining feature? Is a change reversible? Is it necessary for health or safety or to create a more viable long-term use? Would the building's early owners still recognize it? Some of these questions are just as relevant for landscapes, but are also more complex. What are the character defining features of a space made of living components? What about a landscape that evolved organically, without intentional design, but took on meaning for its cultural associations? These questions are harder to answer, but at the heart, we still ask ourselves, what is it that matters about this place?

We hope you will join us to learn more about cultural landscapes, and dive into discussion about managing change at our May 16 re:Denver forum, Changing Landscapes. The forum will start at 7:00pm at the McNichols Building in Civic Center Park.

You can also follow Historic Denver's advocacy efforts on behalf of cultural landscapes on our website, [www.historicdenver.org](http://www.historicdenver.org), which will get a facelift early this summer!

Annie Levinsky  
Executive Director  
Historic Denver, Inc.



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# PRESERVATION BRIEFS



The Denver Gospel Hall is a landmark in the Cole neighborhood. Photo: Western History and Genealogy Department, Denver Public Library

## DENVER GOSPEL HALL — 1631 MARTIN LUTHER KING BLVD.

Historic Denver has the pleasure of announcing our upcoming activities with two new SHF grant recipients, The Denver Gospel Hall and Bosler House.

The Denver Gospel Hall’s congregation has been an anchor of the Cole Neighborhood for over 60 years, while the historic building has been a beacon for more than 90 years. Today, church members come from all corners of the globe, including South Africa, India, Malaysia, and of course right here in Denver. Denver Gospel Hall was founded in 1951 in the nearby Five Points neighborhood. The congregation purchased the current building and parsonage from Bethany Lutheran in 1956. The small congregation was studious in their mortgage payments to the previous congregation, never missing a payment on their original \$56,000 mortgage. Though a small congregation, the Gospel Hall has fundraised above and beyond its capacity in order to try and take proper care of its beloved historic building. After receiving a 2002 grant from the State Historical Fund to complete a Historic Structures Assessment, the congregation raised almost \$40,000 to restore the stained glass windows, and then shortly after, raised a similar amount to facilitate the reroofing of the building. In 2004, the congregation, in partnership with Historic Denver, received a grant for exterior rehabilitation work and provided a 50% cash match for the project.

The Denver Gospel Hall is now looking to go beyond these earlier projects and perform rehabilitation work that will see the church into a new era. Among the most significant and unaddressed recommendations of the Historic Structure Assessment include sources of water damage that are evidenced in the interior of the church through efflorescence, plaster staining, and plaster cracking. This project proposes to tackle these issues from top to bottom to ensure a tight building envelope and halt further deterioration or further costly repairs.

The drainage system, consisting of the gutters and downspouts, will also be repaired or replaced as they are not properly moving the water down to the ground. Because of sloping issues around the eave lines, water is backing up or overflowing. Downspouts are clogged with debris. All related problems will be addressed. To further the effectiveness of the drainage, the ground on both the north and east sides will be re-graded to ensure moisture is not retained at the building envelope.

Finally, this project also includes an assessment of the chimney, which last year was so clogged with debris that the church had to close its doors for a time as the heating system could not operate safely due to clogged vents. An assessment will be conducted and the result will be a report of the findings, including sketches, showing the location and types of distress observed and include repair recommendations.

This Gothic Revival Church on 32nd and Gilpin has become an integral part of the neighborhood, providing both spiritual and secular support to the community. Many members have taken an active role in advocacy and in the Civil Rights Movement. With the help of the SHF grant and the management of Historic Denver, the Denver Gospel Hall can continue for many years to come in their current location and on their current mission.



The Bosler House in the Highland neighborhood has undergone a dramatic transformation over the last year.

## BOSLER HOUSE — 3209 W. FAIRFIELD PLACE

The Bosler House is among the oldest and most visually prominent homes in Northwest Denver, where it sits high on a hill along the crescent shaped road that wraps Highland Park. Its prominence was for all the wrong reasons in recent years as the property fell victim to significant neglect by a previous owner that garnered multiple media reports, passionate community activism, and unprecedented action by the City of Denver to ensure its preservation. The Bosler House is a single family red brick building, constructed in 1875 by Denver businessman Ambrose Bosler, making it one of the oldest homes in Denver, where few structures from the 1870s remain. It was built in the Italianate style, with a rusticated stone foundation and window sills, hooded windows, and decorative white painted cornice.

The Bosler House was listed as a Denver Landmark in 1984, for its architectural significance as well as its association with several significant Denver residents who greatly contributed to the development of the Highland and wider Denver communities. When built, the home was in the town of Highland, incorporated in 1885. Highland was touted as a cleaner, healthier, and more moral alternative to the rival town of Denver. Although Highland was annexed by Denver in 1896, it maintained a separate identity for decades.

As noted above, in recent years the home has suffered greatly, with neglect and ill-advised and unpermitted interior, window, and roof modifications taking place over the course of the last decade and a half. In 2008, the previous owner, who acquired the house in 1987, began roof repairs and a renovation of the attic space that were not properly permitted in accordance with city law and which were not sanctioned by Denver’s Landmark Preservation Commission (LPC). Following a work-stop order issued by the City of Denver in 2009, the house was left exposed to the elements without a roof or other covering as the then-owner challenged the city’s processes and regulations. Over the course of this time, the owner requested permission to demolish the building, but the Landmark Preservation Commission denied his request, considering it an attempt at “demolition by neglect.”

In May, 2013 the City listed the building on the official Neglected & Derelict Building List and imposed the maximum \$999 per day fine for inaction. By May of 2015 those fines exceeded the estimated value of the house and the City moved to foreclose, placing the home in the care of a qualified receiver. The receiver immediately fenced the property and secured the building to the extent possible. At that time the City also began a Historic Structure Assessment (HSA), funded by the State Historical Fund. In addition, the City received a \$7,000 grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation to complete detailed roof drawings so that the most critical roof-related deficiencies could be addressed immediately upon change of ownership.

The SHF funded HSA provides a roadmap for the rehabilitation of this important Denver landmark. The HSA concluded that more than 20 years of unauthorized modifications and neglect had put the home in fair to very poor condition. Much of

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



# ASSIGNMENT 2017

## PHOTO CONTEST

**What is historic?**  
Show us your favorite historic places, whether they are designated historic landmarks, important to your community or just special to you!

Post your submissions on social media throughout May using #behistoricdenver.

@HistoricDenver @Historic\_Denver\_Inc @HistoricDenver

Grand Prize sponsored by Mike's Camera

DISCOVER DENVER

Discover Denver is a citywide building survey focused on identifying the buildings that help tell Denver’s story. A partnership between Historic Denver, Inc. and the City and County of Denver, Discover Denver is working to identify buildings throughout the city that are historically, architecturally or culturally significant. Volunteers play a significant role in Discover Denver, helping to document buildings, research building histories, and collect stories from members of the community.

No expertise in a particular subject area is required to volunteer with Discover Denver. We have historians, architects and students in history, historic preservation and urban planning that volunteer with us, but many of our volunteers have no formal training in any of these fields. If you love old buildings or history or want to learn about Denver’s unique neighborhoods, we need you!

DISCOVER DENVER HAS THE FOLLOWING  
UPCOMING TRAININGS FOR NEW VOLUNTEERS

Field Survey Volunteer Trainings:  
Saturday, May 20th (9:30am - 1:00pm)  
Thursday, June 22nd (5:30pm - 9:00pm)

RESEARCH VOLUNTEER TRAINING  
Saturday, June 10th (10:00am - 2:00pm)

TO SIGN UP FOR ONE OF THESE TRAININGS  
or to learn more about volunteering with Discover Denver, contact Beth Glandon at 303-534-5288 ext. 3. To learn more about the Discover Denver project, visit our website at [discoverdenver.CO](http://discoverdenver.CO)



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the deterioration resulted from water infiltration due to lack of an adequate roof and window and door coverings, as well as inappropriate alterations. All of the windows on the primary facades were replaced over time with ill-fitting and inappropriate vinyl windows. These replacement windows not only mar the historic appearance of the house, but due to the poor quality and installation method they have contributed to the deterioration of the house by allowing moisture infiltration. Additionally, exterior doors were replaced over time, also with ill-fitting replacements. Therefore, the HSA recommended the full replacement of all previously replaced windows with replicated, double-hung style, wood windows. The HSA also recommended replacing all of the non-historic doors with more appropriate doors.

That is exactly what the new SHF grant, managed by Historic Denver, will do. The new owners, Steve and Jan Davis, are dutifully following the requirements the City created to ensure the immediate attention to critical and serious deficiencies identified in the HSA. The timeline is strict and rapid to ensure that the building does not deteriorate any further. The roof and structural work have already been completed, as well as countless other exterior and interior repairs made necessary from earlier neglect. It is now time to finish the project with the addition of appropriate windows and doors and Historic Denver is looking forward to assisting in these tasks for the benefit of the current worthy owners and all those who meander by this piece of history at the west end of Highland Park. #

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# NEW LIFE FOR HISTORIC HOSE COMPANY NO. 1

The historic Hose Company No. 1 originally served the area known as the “Bottoms”. Now it will be a hotel in the popular Union Station neighborhood.

**O**n May 2nd 1882, a breathless Denver Republican recounted the heroic actions of the ‘boys’ of the Richards Hose Company. At around midnight, the company noticed a fire at the Crescent Flour Mills – reputed to be the largest flour mill west of the Missouri River. They quickly alerted nearby fire houses, who “made a splendid race for the fire.” With the fire quickly contained, it became clear that the blaze was the handy work of an arsonist. In a city devastated by a series of fires in the 1860s, still replacing early frame buildings with brick, and which still had pine boards serving as sidewalks, the specter of a fire-bug was no laughing matter. As the Republican warned of a gang of fire-bugs operating throughout the city, it praised the quick work of the firefighters – volunteer and paid alike – who saved the valuable industrial properties above the Platte River from ruin. Denver’s fire-fighting outfits have remained a vitally important part of the City, and historic fire stations around the city continue to tell the story of these companies.

One historic station in the news recently is Hose Company No. 1 at 1663 Chestnut Place. The two story brick building housed a series of Denver’s earliest fire companies in the 12 years it was an active fire station. Yet it has remained in the community’s memory long after it was decommissioned. The first company to occupy the space was the J.W. Richards Hose Co. Formed in 1881, the company was named after the owner of the Crescent Flour Mills, James Richards (whose mill could not avoid disaster twice, burning down in September 1882 and again in 1949). This company was the last fire brigade in Denver comprised entirely of volunteers – in 1881 the city began phasing in paid firefighting companies, and soon every company in the city received a wage.

The Richards Hose Company moved into the building at 1663 Chestnut in early 1883 – right after the building was completed. An 1882 news article, written in anticipation of the fire house’s opening, noted that the company was “grateful for the improved accommodations afforded [to] them.” Despite their gratitude, the Richards Hose company only stayed in the building for a year. They were replaced by the fledgling Denver Fire Department’s Hose Company No. 1 in 1884. It is from this occupant that the building received its current name. In 1886, the City of Denver officially deeded the land on which the building stands to the Fire Department. Hose Company No. 1 served the area of Denver known as “The Bottoms” – the area of land nearest to the Platte River, and thus the area of the city most likely to be inundated by the frequent floods. The Bottoms were home to some of Denver’s poorest citizens, many of whom lived in makeshift dwellings and faced frequent outbreaks of disease.

In 1893, Hose Company No. 1 moved to the City Hall fire station at 14th and Larimer Street. Steamer Company No. 5 – named for their new steam pumper fire engine – subsequently occupied the building at 1663 Chestnut. Their stay, however, was short lived. Growing rail traffic made the site an impractical location for a fire house, where quick response times were imperative. In 1895, Steamer Company

No. 5 moved out and the building was abandoned as a fire station. Despite the lack of an active company, however, maps as late as 1905 still label the building as a fire house.

In 1907, the building was sold by the city to Bartholomew Finn for \$3,000, who set up shop as the North Denver Transfer and Storage Company. Finn was a successful business man who served as the Denver County President of the Ancient Order of Hibernians and as a delegate in the 1908 Democratic National Convention. Upon his death in 1925, his wife, Mary Finn, continued to operate the company until the 1940s. During this time, the building also housed the National Poster Company. In 1947, the building was bought by Phillip and Minnie Kalmbach. The Kalmbach family used the building as a welding shop and eventually it became home to the Colorado Boiler Company. In 1985, George Kalmbach sought a historic designation for the building, based on its significance as a fire station and as an early commercial-style building in an area of town with few surviving examples.

The building was sold for only the third time in 2000 and at the time it was both vacant and without a plan for its reuse. Without an occupant, Hose Co. No. 1 fell into a state of disrepair. In 2004, it was placed on the City of Denver’s Neglected and Derelict Building List. In 2010, the owners of the property applied to demolish the structure, citing significant structural problems and safety concerns. Historic Denver, concerned with the potential loss of such an important piece of Denver’s early history, reached out to the owners, hoping to find a preservation solution. Historic Denver offered our services to assist in efforts to stabilize the building. As a part of this effort, Historic Denver contacted a structural engineer from Atkinson-Noland & Associates to observe the building and make preliminary recommendations. With approval and access permission from the owner and gracious assistance from the engineer, those observations of both the interior and exterior were conducted in January 2011. At that time, it was observed that stabilization could occur without extraordinary measures. In February 2011, Historic Denver followed up by applying for and receiving a grant in the amount of \$5,000 from the National Trust for Historic Preservation to assist in monetary efforts for a larger structural assessment of the property.

Focus Property Group, the current owners of 1663 Chestnut, have since initiated stabilization methods to Hose Co. No. 1 and in December of 2014, announced a project which would incorporate the landmark into a much larger 12 story Hilton Garden Inn. The project was designed and approved as a part of the Landmark Preservation Commission process. Hose Company No. 1 will be converted to a restaurant. While being connected to the hotel, the restaurant will retain its own identity and entrance from the street. In January 2017, it was announced that a groundbreaking would take place this year. We are very excited for the renewed activity and attention to this long neglected building. The adaptive reuse of this building will ensure its protection – a fitting result for a property which used to house some of the earliest protectors in our city. ❁



The 16th Street walking tour is the newest offering from Historic Denver’s Walking Tours program.  
Photo: Shannon N. Schaefer



JOIN US ON A WALK IN  
DENVER’S ICONIC NEIGHBORHOODS

These Walking Tours are led by rigorously-trained expert tour docents. Tours run 85-90 minutes long and cost between \$15-20. To view tour days, times and to purchase tickets please visit, [historicdenver.org/programs/historic-denver-tours/](http://historicdenver.org/programs/historic-denver-tours/). Advance ticket purchase is required.

TOUR SCHEDULE  
MAY 1 — OCTOBER 31

- LODO
- Monday 10:30 am
  - Friday 10:30am
  - Saturday 10:30am & 1:30pm

- CAPITOL HILL
- Tuesday 10:30am
  - Wednesday 10:30am
  - Thursday 10:30am & 1:30pm
  - Saturday 10:30am
  - Sunday 1:30pm

- LARIMER SQUARE
- Thursday 2:00pm
  - Saturday 2:00pm

- 16TH STREET (LAUNCHES JUNE 3RD)
- Saturday 9:30am

WALKING TOUR UPDATE  
FOURTH SEASON OF HISTORIC DENVER’S WALKING  
TOURS KICKS OFF MAY 1ST!

Historic Denver’s Walking Tours return for a fourth season on May 1st and will run through October 31st! This year, our original and highly popular LoDo Walking Tour will continue to explore around Denver Union Station. The Capitol Hill Walking Tour will tell the stories of the Movers & Shakers – Denver high society – and industrialists who helped established Denver and where they once lived. Back again this year, the Larimer Square Walking Tour continues to travel through Denver’s first Historic District while ending the tour with an exclusive access tour of the Daniels and Fisher Tower! New to launch in 2017 beginning in June, is the 16th Street Walking Tour – the ever-evolving “Main Street” of Denver.

INTRODUCING THE NEW 16TH STREET WALKING TOUR

On this tour, guests will learn how 16th Street won the title of Denver’s “Main Street” in the late 1800s, when commercial buildings began moving away from Larimer Street and onto 16th Street. This thoroughfare grew to be a destination for retail and entertainment, as well as a being an important transportation axis. Guests will observe how architectural styles seen along this “Main Street” reflect the ever-evolving functions of the street, from historic buildings that have been adaptively reused to contemporary buildings which filled a void in the streetscape and functionality of the street. Whether you have walked the street a million times or you are new to the city, join us on this guided tour and see the 16th Street in a new light. ☘



# MOLLY BROWN

## HOUSE MUSEUM



### OBJECT CONSERVATION AT THE MOLLY BROWN HOUSE MUSEUM

The Molly Brown House Museum maintains a collection that adorns the house in a style and fashion similar to that of J.J. and Margaret Brown’s, but not every object on exhibit was directly associated with Mrs. Brown or her family. It is especially important then to conserve the artifacts in the collection which did in fact belong to the Browns. The Museum follows the AAM Code of Ethics for Museums which states that the “stewardship of collections entails the highest public trust and carries with it the presumption of rightful ownership, permanence, care, documentation, accessibility, and responsible disposal.” The scope of the Museum’s collection is two-fold: 1) We collect any and all artifacts that belonged to Margaret Tobin Brown or her immediate family; and 2) We collect artifacts dating from the time the Browns lived at 1340 Pennsylvania (1894-1912), with a specific focus on items the Browns would have had in the house.

When conservation is deemed necessary for significant objects, the treatment goal is to prevent damage, not correct it, and to stabilize physical condition rather than trying to improve cosmetic appearance. Original Brown family objects in the collection are a high priority for conservation based upon the Museum’s ranking system: (1=take immediate action; 4=action is a low priority)

LEVEL 1	Nationally or internationally significant, few if any duplicates in this or other collections, rare, irreplaceable.
LEVEL 2	Significant historical value, few similar examples in this or other collections, uncommon and difficult to replace.
LEVEL 3	Historical value, similar examples are held in this or other collections, moderately difficult to replace.
LEVEL 4	Historical value, common in this or other collections, can be easily replaced.

Several Brown family artifacts in the collection have already undergone conservation including the Helen Henderson Chain painting, the teakwood tray, and the tapestries. Current conservation needs include the Blackamoor statue, silver punch bowl, a lampshade, and the Leisenring scrapbook. Margaret Brown’s knack for being in the right place at the right time, her independent mindset, and her extraordinary life experiences make her life a powerful teaching tool. Her historic home and the collection at the Molly Brown House Museum are essential in telling her story and connecting the public to the past. By prioritizing conservation needs, the Museum will ensure that future generations can connect to Mrs. Brown’s story and the important historical themes of her lifetime.

### HELEN HENDERSON CHAIN PAINTING

Helen Henderson Chain (1849-1892) was one of Colorado’s first female resident artists whose life splashes color onto the typical conception of a Victorian woman. The Chain painting owned by the Museum features a view of the South Platte River meandering in the foreground framed by looming, snow-capped mountains. The picture is incredibly realistic because Helen, an avid mountain climber, painted the scene from true life. The painting was donated to the Museum in 2001 and was believed to be acquired by the donor’s great-grandmother at the estate sale held in 1932 after Margaret Brown’s death. Both the painting and the frame required conservation upon acquiring the work. Superficial grime was removed as well as

the degraded natural resin varnish. Dents and bulges were carefully humidified and weighted to smooth out the surface, and losses were filled and in-painted. The frame was stabilized with missing areas recast and finished to match the original surface.

TOTAL COST FOR THIS CONSERVATION WAS \$2,200.

### TEAKWOOD TRAY

Purchased by the Browns during their world tour to India, China, and Japan, this tray exemplifies how the Browns brought the world back home with them. It has an incised mother of pearl inlay design of a woman being pulled in rickshaw. The tray had warped and cracked over time resulting in small losses to the piece. These cracks and losses were stabilized with minimal infill of an appropriate conservation material and is on exhibit in the formal parlor.

TOTAL COST FOR STABILIZING CONSERVATION WAS \$200.

### TAPESTRIES

The two tapestries in the dining that flank the china cabinet can be seen in several photographs of the home circa 1910. These machine-woven hangings have undergone several conservation processes since being returned to the Museum in 1973. The tapestries were donated by descendants of Ellen Geis, the last housekeeper employed by Margaret Brown before her death in 1932. Most recently in 2016, the mounting system was updated so that they no longer sagged and are supported overall. The conservator also reinforced previous conservation efforts and cleaned them using a passive vacuuming technique. The tapestries have now been rehung in the dining room just as Margaret had them displayed 100 years ago.

TOTAL COST FOR THE MOST RECENT CONSERVATION WAS \$1,100.

### ART LEISENRING SCRAPBOOK

Received in late 2015, the scrapbook collected by former House of Lions owner Art Leisenring contains photographs, ephemera, and newspaper clippings. In early 2016 the Museum worked with a local paper conservator to remove the floor plan hand-drawn by Brown daughter Catherine Ellen and a letter from her son James Benziger. The next step in the conservation process will be to remove and collate the remaining ephemera, reduce adhesive residue as much as possible, and reduce staining as much as possible with controlled, local application of solvents on select items. Ephemera still in the scrapbook include the original Landmark proclamation for the house, autographs by such celebrities as Harv Presnell and Carol Channing, and pieces relating to the Denver debut of the film The Unsinkable Molly Brown.

ESTIMATED CONSERVATION COSTS: \$2,400 - \$5,000.

### THE BLACKAMOOR STATUE

This statue is one of the original blackamoors that Margaret Brown owned, as evidenced in a photograph dating to 1910 of Mrs. Brown’s entryway. The tradition of Blackamoor statues originally developed in Venice, Italy in the late 17th Century to reflect the influence of Moorish culture in the region. The Blackamoor statue is on permanent display in the entryway of the house and is among one of the first artifacts that visitors see when visiting the Museum. Margaret’s Blackamoor statues give her home an exotic feel. Margaret collected her statues on one of her trips to Italy and cherished them until she died in 1932, at which time they were sold and removed from the home. It was not until 1990 that a Museum volunteer happened upon one of the original statues at an antique store here in Denver. Funds were generously donated to purchase the statue and return it to its place in the home. The statue is in need of a second round of conservation to repair extensive losses and damages to its paint and wooden structure. The Greenwood Fund generously supported an assessment in 2014.

ESTIMATED CONSERVATION COSTS: \$10,000. ❁







Expert docents lead guests throughout Denver, sharing the stories behind some of Denver’s most interesting buildings.

BACK STAGE ACCESS  
JOIN HISTORIC DENVER FOR A SUMMER OF FUN!

Our Members have the exclusive opportunity to join us on fun and interesting events held every other month. Recently, we’ve toured the Sheedy (Grant Street) Mansion, the Daniels & Fisher Tower and enjoyed an exclusive Happy Hour at Capitol Hill Bed and Breakfast before a members-only tour of Victorian Horrors at the Molly Brown House Museum. We also held VIP Members only tours last summer, visiting active rehabilitation projects throughout the city. We saw the McNichols Building during its renovation, hosting a hard-hat tour complete with wine and cheese. We toured the Historic Elitch Theatre which is also currently under renovation, and we ended the season with a tour of the Epworth Building in Curtis Park which has been repurposed into a Bridal Boutique and a Landscape Architecture firm. Denver’s historic places have so many interesting stories to reveal to us. We have all learned a great deal on these member events, and we’re looking forward to hearing more stories revealed this year!

For our next member event in April, we will be hosting a presentation and discussion about the Gio Ponti Building at the Denver Art Museum followed by a Happy Hour in the Golden Triangle. In June we will have an exclusive “collections” tour of the Molly Brown House Museum with our Curator of Collections, Stephanie McGuire, who will give us an insiders scoop on materials in the collection that make the Museum. We are sure to learn all kinds of juicy new information! Stephanie will also be providing a class on Archival Box Making for family keepsakes. Stay tuned for more information on that members-only class. In August, we will be taking an exclusive backstage tour of the Red Rocks Amphitheatre!

We are always looking for new opportunities for our members to be a part of a community that is inspired by and enthusiastic about historic preservation and what makes Denver unique. We need your support to do the preservation and advocacy work that we do, but we also want you to feel connected to that work. It doesn’t hurt to have a great time while we’re at it! For those of you who have been thinking about joining Historic Denver as a member, there has never been a better time to get involved! 🍷



Thank You  
TO HISTORIC DENVER’S NEW AND  
RENEWING SUPPORTERS  
SUPPORTERS JANUARY - APRIL 2017

- |                                     |  |                                |
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| Thomas J. Giovale                   | Ted and Jane Obrecht                     | Laura Wurtz                    |
| Sue Giovani                         | Dan and Joyce O'Donnell                  | Michael Zoellner               |







Ferril Lake is just one of many historic features found in City Park.  
Photo: Western History and Genealogy Department, Denver Public Library

CONTINUED FROM COVER

Gateway at its terminus, creates a grand entrance to the park (with several smaller, yet still impressive entrances along other park edges). This deliberate sculpting of the entrance was part of a citywide effort to shape the urban landscape, in order to inspire morality and good citizenship in local residents.

Despite civic leader’s lofty ideals, citizens of Denver continued to claim the park as their own and use it to meet recreational needs. The “People’s Park” was a place to get outdoors and participate in numerous activities – ball games, horse racing, and carriage rides turned into bike rides, volleyball and kickball tournaments as the decades progressed. More passive activities – exploring the Box Canyon and Lily Pond, strolling along the meandering walking paths, or picnicking in the expansive meadows have remained popular from the outset. For over 130 years, City Park has been the backdrop to millions of moments of bonding between families, neighbors, and community members.

All this history, the thoughtful design, its evolution, and all those memories, make City Park not just an open space, but an archetypal cultural landscape. As defined by the national non-profit, the Cultural Landscape Foundation, a cultural landscape is a “work of art, narrative of culture, and expression of regional identity.”

Like most cultural landscapes, City Park has changed and evolved, and that evolution has often come with its fair share of controversy, whether over competing uses, parking, crime or construction. A 2001 Master Plan provided the first comprehensive approach to managing the Park’s evolution. The Plan, titled *Revitalizing the Legacy of City Park*, has guided more than \$60 million dollars in park investment on projects such as the restoration of sculptures and fountains, improved conditions at Ferril Lake and Duck Lake, and working with institutions in the Park to create parking solutions. During the past fifteen years the City has also undertaken additional park studies, and the neighborhoods around the park have grown and changed.

Recognizing the need to revisit the current condition and future of City Park, in July 2014 Historic Denver convened a group of community stakeholders, including the Department of Parks & Recreation, to talk about City Park, and to explore questions about what the park’s past means for its future. After several months of exploration about historic park management, including community meetings and presentations to Registered Neighborhood Organizations, the ad hoc group recommended an update to the 2001 Master Plan, including the development of City Park-specific design guidelines.

The Master Plan update will seek to understand the Park as it is today, as well as the needs of users – active and passive, local and out-of-town, individual and institutional – encouraging the community to develop a shared vision for the park that can provide both consistency and flexibility so that the park evolves to meet current needs while honoring its deep history and iconic spaces. The effort will also explore how potential changes that may be necessary or desirable can be accommodated in ways that are sympathetic and compatible to the park as a cultural landscape.

A set of City Park-specific Design Guidelines will outline guiding principles for possible physical alternations. The guidelines will include guidance for both the rehabilitation of existing features that contribute to the Park’s history and identity, as well as establish the criteria with which new features or additions would be evaluated. Examples of the guideline content for additions, modifications or

enhancements could include guidance that they respect the park’s spatial composition, honor important vistas, be of appropriate mass and scale or reflect the level of material quality found elsewhere in the park.

The goals of the master planning project are to provide an inclusive and transparent planning process guided by community and partner input and to produce a shared vision for the park that identifies current and future needs and provides a framework to manage the park’s evolution while honoring its historic character.

The Master Plan Update and Design Guideline project was conceived in 2015, and as budgeted and funded, will only address the portion of City Park south of 23rd, and therefore will not address the City Park Golf Course. There is currently an on-going planning effort for City Park Golf Course related to the Platte to Park Hill Storm Water project. Historic Denver has actively participated in those conversations as an advocate for the Golf Course as a cultural landscape in its own right.

In order to fund this undertaking, Historic Denver, in partnership with the Department of Parks & Recreation, applied for a grant from the Colorado State Historical Fund, earning \$100,000 in late 2015. The grant required a matching component, which has been provided by the Department of Parks & Recreation, with significant contributions from the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, Historic Denver, the Denver Zoo, and the City Park Alliance. Donors from City Park Friends and Neighbors and dozens of individuals also provided invaluable support.

The public will have numerous opportunities to participate in the Master Plan Update process, and Historic Denver is actively involved in the project as co-leader of the Stakeholder Working Group. Watch for announcements in your local neighborhood newsletter, on Historic Denver’s website and on a new City Park Master Plan webpage. 🌿

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Curtis Park 1890 Victorian Renovation  
Photo: Vantage Architectural Imagery



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11

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS



## MOTHER’S DAY AFTERNOON TEA

SATURDAY, MAY 13  
11:00am, 1:00pm, 3:00pm  
\$24 Members & Children | \$26 Nonmembers  
Honor Margaret Brown and all the great moms, including yours. Show your appreciation by inviting her to tea at Molly Brown’s house and include a little shopping for her in the Museum Store. Gift certificates are available! Suitable for ages 6 and up.

## THURSDAY, MAY 18

SALON SERIES #1  
THE ART OF THE  
VICTORIAN NUDE  
7:00 – 9:00 pm  
\$15 Members | \$18 Nonmembers  
How vulgar! How scintillating! Join us as we take a VERY close look at the evolution of nude and naughty photos. From the invention of the camera to today’s representation of the nude form we’ll explore the aesthetics and the scandals associated with bearing some skin. Paired with a local craft brew, this event just might get you in the mood! Must be 21+ to attend.

## THURSDAY MAY 25

COLORADO CORKS &  
CUISINE  
5:30 - 8:30 pm |  
Four Mile Historic Park  
\$35 members of Four Mile  
\$45 non-member  
Relish the fruits of local breweries, distilleries, wineries, and culinary artists while supporting Colorado history education. Proceeds from this event allow Four Mile to provide discounted or free field trips to underprivileged students in the Denver metro region. Sponsored by Rickenbaugh Automotive Group.

## SATURDAY, JUNE 10

THE AFTERLIFE OF  
MARGARET BROWN:  
IS THE HOUSE OF LIONS  
HAUNTED?  
7:00pm | \$89 Admission | \$129  
Admission + Intimate Spirit Gallery Reading  
Discover what spirits inhabit the historic Molly Brown House during an intimate evening of paranormal investigation. Chris Moon and Paulette “Mamma” Moon, world-renowned psychic mediums and paranormal researchers, will take us beyond the earthly realm. Ticket sales support the stewardship of Margaret’s home. Afterlife is sponsored by Capitol Hill Ghost Tours. Suitable for ages 16 and up.



## SATURDAY, JUNE 24 FABULOUS AND FRILLY HAT WORKSHOP

1:00 – 3:00pm | \$49 Fee  
Just in time to help celebrate Margaret’s 150th birthday in style, create your own outrageous millinery masterpiece with the help of our historic fashions experts. We’ll provide the hat, materials, and refreshments, you provide your creativity. A tour of the museum is not included. Suitable for ages 12 and up.

## SATURDAY, JULY 1

INDEPENDENCE  
CELEBRATION  
Four Mile Historic Park | 5:00-10:00 pm  
You only turn 241 once. Come celebrate the nation’s birthday with live music, old-fashioned games, historic demonstrations, and horse-drawn wagon rides. Bring a blanket and stick around for the Glendale fireworks show!

Food trucks and a beer garden (valid ID required) will be on site. Last entry to the Park is at 9:00 pm. Admission is free; charges apply for food, refreshments, and some activities.

## SUNDAY, JULY 16 150 & FABULOUS: A LEGACY CELEBRATION BLOCK PARTY

12:00 – 4:00 pm | \$5 Members  
\$11 Adults | \$9 Seniors, Military,  
College Students | \$5 Children 6-12  
In 2017, Historic Denver is celebrating Margaret Brown’s 150th birthday milestone in the spirit of Margaret’s Carnival of Nations, an event held in 1906 that highlighted the diverse cultures settling the west. Denver’s own leading lady, the unsinkable Margaret “Molly” Brown, will be throwing a block party and inviting all of the amazing cultural organizations in our community to help celebrate her 150th birthday and highlight what makes our city so unique. Join us for a block party carnival of Titanic proportions!

## THIRSTY THURSDAYS A YOUNG PROFESSIONALS GROUP



Meet up with other young professionals and enjoy a risqué look at life in the era of the unsinkable and outspoken Margaret “Molly” Brown. Exploring topics *too taboo to talk about in the daylight*, this bi-monthly speakeasy features signature cocktails and salacious vignettes perfect for history geeks and gossipmongers alike.

Just \$15 per person! For ages 21-45, must be 21+ to attend.

## JUNE 15 Turn on your Red Light: Prostitution & Poppies in Denver



The ladies of Market Street beckon you as we take you into the dark world of prostitution and opium dens in early Denver. Learn about the rise of Hop Alley and the red light district by making some illegal backstreet deals. Be on your guard for the Denver Police as they patrol these parts! Addicting treats and seductive cocktails await you on this forbidden night. Just \$15 per person! For ages 21-45, must be 21+ to attend.

## AUGUST 17 The Great Margaret Brown Urban Adventure Race



Lace up your sneakers and gather your team (or go solo) following clues leading you through Denver. Learn about Margaret’s life and influence as you meet Capitol Hill characters guiding you through the race. The race culminates with a chance to meet the lady herself, Margaret Brown. Winners receive awesome trophies and amazing prizes. Recharge on tasty treats and sip on energy-infusing cocktails.

## DECEMBER 7 Christmas Through the Looking Glass



“I wonder if the snow loves the trees and fields, that it kisses them so gently?”-Lewis Carroll. Celebrate Christmas in a whole new way as we descend down the rabbit hole into the world of Alice and her friends. Beware as the Queen of Hearts, the Cheshire Cat and the Caterpillar, and even the Mad Hatter may be lurking about! And, be cautious with your curious appetite as you indulge in strangely labelled tarts, treats, and mind bending cocktails!

TO PURCHASE TICKETS  
to upcoming events at the Molly Brown House Museum,  
visit [mollybrown.org](http://mollybrown.org).  
Events are held at the Molly Brown House Museum,  
1340 Pennsylvania Street, Denver.