

HISTORIC DENVER NEWS

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Colorado's ratification of the 19th Amendment on Dec. 12, 1919. Photo: Library of Congress

“WILD WITH JOY!”

BOLD EFFORT BY COLORADO WOMEN PAVED THE WAY FOR NATIONAL SUFFRAGE

by Dr. Marcia T. Goldstein, guest writer

When Colorado women realized their hard-won suffrage victory at the polls on Nov. 7, 1893, Denver’s suffragist editor of *The Queen Bee*, Carolyn Nichols Churchill, captured the mood in this headline: “Western Women Wild With Joy Over the Election in Colorado!” Our “wild with joy” spirit is alive and well in 2020, for this year marks the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which mandates “The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.”

Coloradans can proudly claim that we paved the way – women of this state won the right to vote a full 27 years before the rest of the nation caught up. Equal suffrage did not just “happen” in Colorado. Suffrage leader and Rocky Mountain News reporter Ellis Meredith later lambasted commentators who spoke of the “granting of suffrage in this state as if it were a free gift, won without toil and anxiety and heartburning. This is not true.”

When the territorial legislature of an “uncivilized,” sparsely populated land out West granted full suffrage to its women citizens – Wyoming Territory in 1869 – the suffrage seeds were planted in Colorado. Inspired by Wyoming’s suffrage success, and as statehood for Colorado looked likely in 1876, Mrs. Edward McCook, wife of the Territorial Governor, and her sister Eliza Thompson formed the first Colorado Woman Suffrage Association. The

group elected Dr. Alida C. Avery as the first president, and set their goal to gain inclusion of the right to vote for women in the state’s first constitution. In a disappointing defeat, Judge Henry Bromwell of Denver and Agapito Vigil of Huerfano County were the only two delegates to vote in favor of including woman suffrage in the document.

Two small victories for women emerged from the otherwise disappointing 1876 Constitutional Convention. First, women were granted the right to vote in local school board elections in Colorado. Secondly, the constitution provided for a popular referendum to determine the fate of women’s voting rights. Wasting not a minute, Mrs. McCook and the other women quickly persuaded the legislature to place the suffrage issue before voters in 1877. Crowded suffrage meetings and rallies filled the pews at August Tabor’s long-ago demolished Unitarian Church at 17th & California in Denver (where a small plaque placed in 1976 commemorates the centennial of both statehood and Colorado’s first suffrage campaign).

Colorado women invited Susan B. Anthony, the famous suffrage orator from New York, to campaign across the state in 1877 by train, horse and carriage, and mule, enduring great discomforts and less than enthusiastic audiences made up mostly of male miners convened at saloons. The diary of her trip to Colorado is full of adventure, yet skepticism regarding the attitudes of Colorado’s rough-and-tumble male electorate.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

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TOM'S DINER RESOLUTION

“There had to be a solution that benefited everyone and that’s when we reached out to GBX Group. They were instrumental in protecting the nearby historic George Schleier Mansion, and we knew they could help.”

ANNIE LEVINSKY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Photo by Shannon Schaefer Stage.

On Dec. 21, 2019, news broke that the former White Spot Diner, currently operating as Tom’s Diner, had been listed on the National Register of Historic Places and would be saved from demolition through a partnership between GBX Group, which specializes in preserving and operating historic real estate, and the long-time owner, Tom Messina. As Messina noted in Denverite, he was grateful for “the support that the community has given me,” and that the path forward was “the perfect payout, the perfect scenario.”

The story of the diner and the debate about its future put preservation in the spotlight over the summer, as the building went through the city’s demolition review process. More than 700 people signed a petition asking for the parties involved to find a preservation-minded solution. Community advocates filed a local designation application – a step the review process required at the time so that dialogue could continue. They later withdrew the application as the search for a win-win continued.

Historic Denver waded into the fray as a resource to community advocates, and to bring ideas, resources and contacts to the table for the community and the owner. Executive Director Annie Levinsky noted, “There had to be a solution that benefited everyone and that’s when we reached out to GBX Group. They were instrumental in protecting the nearby historic George Schleier Mansion, and we knew they could help.”

Together, the partners have already listed the building on the National Register of Historic Places, a status for which it qualified in 2009. The listing makes the building eligible for state and federal tax credits, preservation grants, low-cost construction loans, and protection through preservation easements. More details on the plans for the building are expected this spring.

The diner debate drew attention to an in-progress examination of how Denver’s

demolition review process could work more effectively and encourage more win-win outcomes. In late September, City Council approved a set of updates to the Landmark Ordinance that now emphasize collaboration much earlier in the demolition review process, rather than the binary outcomes of designation or demolition. In the future, the new process will allow time to explore alternatives, and understand preservation incentives and opportunities, leading to positive outcomes for historic places of value and for property owners.

A Little History

Tom’s Diner was first built as part of a local diner chain, White Spot, in 1967. The building’s unusual architecture is an expression of the Googie style that originated with a California coffee shop and became popular along highways and major thoroughfares throughout the country – though it was quite rare in Colorado. The style was viewed as “futurista,” displaying features such as cantilevered and tilting roofs, walls and windows, as well as geometric shapes




and acute angles. The style also used expanses of glass, metal, plastic panels and stone veneers. The architects, Armet & Davis of Los Angeles, are considered the preeminent designers of the Googie style. The building at 601 E. Colfax has long been considered the best example of their work and the style in Denver. ❁

THANK YOU!

Historic Denver appreciates all who were involved in finding a solution, including GBX Group, the long-time owner, and the community advocates who expressed a love for the building and a willingness to find a win-win solution. These leaders included Jessica Couette, Sam Dorrance, Jonel Beach, Kaye Taavialma and Kristin Morales.

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“WILD WITH JOY!” CONT.

Despite the best efforts of Anthony and local suffrage activists, the measure lost miserably by a vote of 6,612 for, and 14,053 against – a margin of more than 2-to-1. Boulder County, stronghold of the early miners’ unions and farmers’ rights movements, proved the only county in the state to muster a majority of its male voters in favor of suffrage.

Although Colorado suffragists were shocked by their far-reaching defeat, one lesson they took to heart was that the women had not been properly mobilized. For the next 20 years, women’s organizations sprung up like vegetable gardens all over Colorado. Literary groups like the Denver Fortnightly Club, charity organizations like the Ladies’ Relief Society (founded by Elizabeth Byers, wife of Rocky Mountain News editor William N. Byers), church groups, garden clubs, and temperance associations met regularly for socializing and organizing a variety of reforms and improvements in local communities.

Colorado women felt a certain momentum in their favor when the Colorado People’s (Populist) Party held its founding convention in July 1892 and nominated labor leader Davis H. Waite in Aspen for governor. Rallying behind the party’s slogan “Equal Rights to All, Special Privileges to None!,” male and female suffrage supporters worked on Waite’s campaign alongside union activists and farmers’ groups across the state. Waite’s stunning third-party victory in November 1892 was the spark that suffragists had long awaited.

While glimmers of hope burned brighter for women’s rights in 1893, dark clouds of economic depression were falling quickly over the entire state. The nationwide “Panic of 1893,” was caused in part by the federal government’s abandonment of the “bi-metal” monetary standard (silver and gold backing U.S. currency), in favor of the gold standard. The action hit Colorado’s silver mining industry particularly hard.

The economic situation had become so desperate that many activist women reluctantly abandoned suffrage work to organize soup lines. However, the women soon learned from their charity work that a population of angry male voters could be tremendous allies for the suffrage cause. The cry went out in the tent camps and soup lines, “Let the women vote! They can’t do any worse than the men have!”

Ellis Meredith and leaders of the newly reorganized Colorado Non-Partisan Equal Suffrage Association (CNESA) declared in early January that “now is the time to strike!” Colorado’s 1893 suffrage referendum campaign was launched with a treasury of \$25, and a handful of 28 dedicated organizers. Elizabeth Ensley, the African American women’s club leader who served as treasurer of CNESA, oversaw the fundraising effort. The group enjoyed an immediate boost when Elizabeth “Baby Doe” Tabor persuaded her husband, mining magnate Horace, to donate office space for statewide suffrage headquarters in the Tabor Block in downtown Denver.

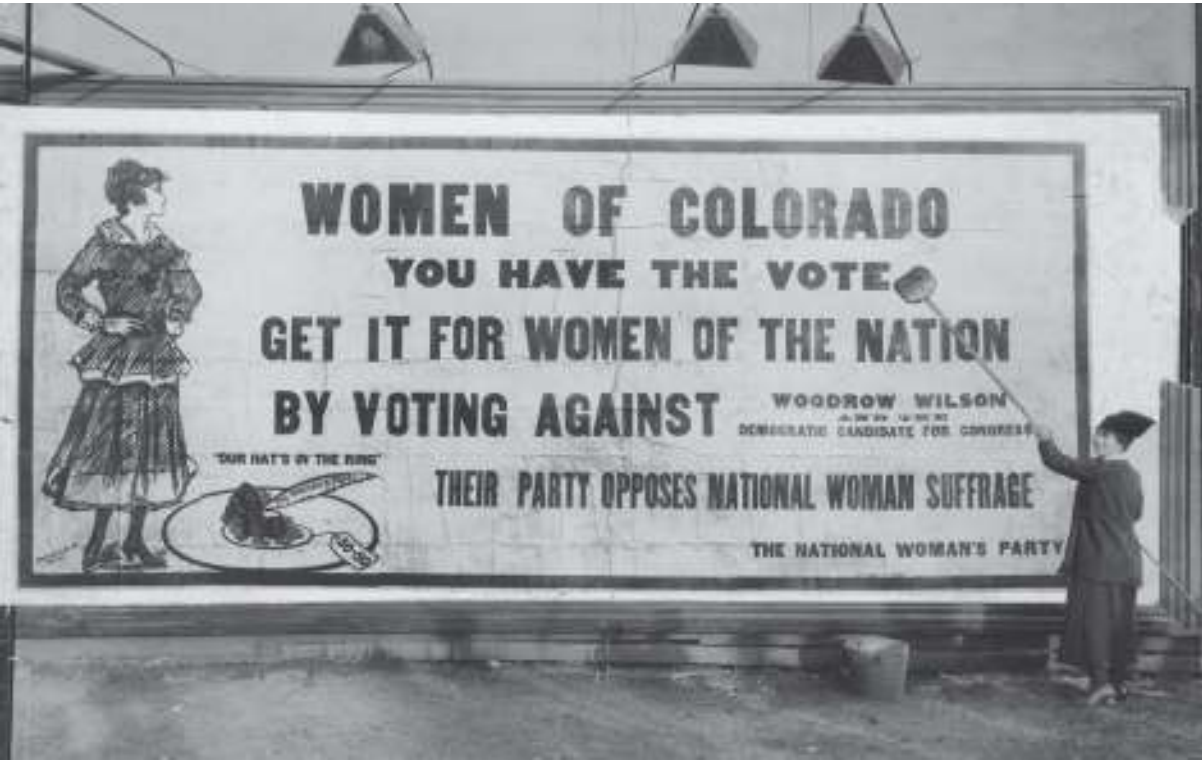
Colorado’s savvy suffrage leaders adopted a winning political strategy, which was to build a grass-roots, broad coalition of all political parties, charity organizations, businessmen, women’s clubs, churches, labor unions, farmers’ organizations, and anyone else who would support the right of women to vote. A confident Meredith boarded a train in the summer of 1893 to attend the Chicago World’s Fair, hoping to gain the support of national suffrage leaders Lucy Stone and Susan B. Anthony. “Equal suffrage was almost fashionable” in Colorado, she told them. “There is not a single particle of organized opposition in the state.”

The momentum spread statewide, with press secretary Minnie Reynolds winning three-fourths of the newspaper editors to the pro-suffrage position. Reynolds also used her position as society editor of the Rocky Mountain News to press the wealthy ladies of Denver’s Capitol Hill for funds and vocal support. Colorado business leaders declared, “. . . the best elements in all parties were for equal suffrage,” and touted the vote for women as a mark of moral stability and the state’s progressive political climate.

One business group vehemently opposed suffrage: the liquor industry. Fearing that temperance women would shutter every saloon, brewery, and liquor store in sight if they won the right to vote, they launched an eleventh-hour, anti-suffrage campaign. Flyers were distributed in Denver saloons in hopes of frightening men away from the polls. “Woman suffrage is a dangerous experiment!” the flyer warned.

On Nov. 7, 1893, campaign workers spread out over the city of Denver like an army. The women flushed voters out of every household, street corner, and saloon. Jubilation broke out when newspapers published the returns the next day. The suffrage measure had passed by more than 6,000 votes statewide!

Why was Colorado’s 1893 suffrage victory so important? Colorado could not claim to



Early billboard celebrating the right to vote in Colorado and urging opposition to the Democratic party for its anti-suffrage views. Photo: Library of Congress.

be the “first” – Wyoming won that honor in 1869 by a majority vote of its Territorial Legislature, and in 1890 when Wyoming became the first suffrage state. But Colorado was second, and the first state to win the vote by popular election. Women united with men of all social strata to build a winning political alliance of Democrats, Republicans, and Populists; businessmen and labor unions; whites and blacks; farmers and city dwellers; miners and mine owners; housemaids and society women; socialists and Methodists!

The sudden addition of thousands of female voters forever changed the state’s political scene. Coloradans elected the first three women in America and the first black man in Colorado to the State Legislature in 1894; they proudly



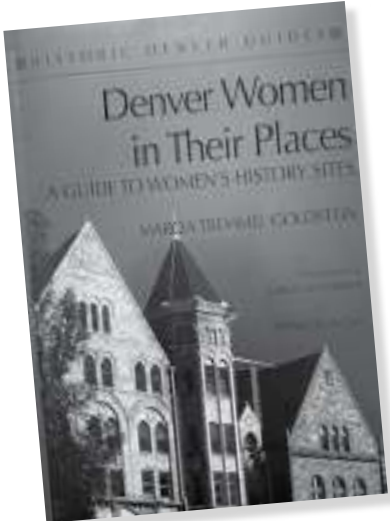
Molly Brown House Museum staff pose on the front porch in period suffrage attire. Historic Denver archives.

took their seats in the newly constructed State Capitol building. By 1900, 10 women had served in the Colorado General Assembly. They introduced and helped pass such social reforms as the 8-hour workday, kindergarten, and welfare benefits for single mothers, predating similar reforms in the rest of the country.

As the century turned, there were still just four suffrage states: Wyoming, Colorado, Utah and Idaho, all in the Rocky Mountain West. As late as 1916, not one state east of the Mississippi River allowed full suffrage to women. Meanwhile, the “Susan B. Anthony” amendment was slowly making its way through the ratification process in the states. Colorado’s newly enfranchised women leaders, including Margaret “Molly” Tobin Brown, became sought-after organizers for other state campaigns, as well as the ongoing national campaign. When the 19th Amendment finally emerged as the law of the land in August 1920, Colorado women celebrated the victory alongside their sisters from coast to coast.

Caroline Churchill summed up the pride that women and men in Colorado felt, and invited people across the land to come see for themselves how the 1893 suffrage victory had changed our state forever: “Come to Colorado and cast in your lot, here the sun shines brightest and there is hope for all women. . . . Come to Colorado now, this shall be the land for women, this shall be the land I trow.” ❁

Dr. Marcia T. Goldstein is a Denver native and author of “Denver Women in Their Places: A Guide to Women’s History Sites” (Historic Denver, Inc., 2002), as well as numerous scholarly articles on Colorado women’s history. Her dissertation, “‘Meet Me at the Ballot Box:’ Women’s Innovations in Party and Electoral Politics in Post-Suffrage Colorado, 1893-1898,” traces the bold footsteps of Colorado’s suffrage leaders.



LEARN MORE

In honor of the women’s suffrage centennial, we are reprinting “Denver Women in Their Places – A Guide to Women’s History Sites” (Historic Denver, 2002) by Marcia Tremmel Goldstein. Grab your copy at the Molly Brown House Museum Store and take a tour of the places where Denver’s influential women made their mark!

Primary Sources: The Queen Bee, Caroline Nichols Churchill, Editor; Ellis Meredith, “Women’s Contribution,” in James H. Baker and LeRoy R. Hafen, History of Colorado (Denver: Linderman, 1927), vol. 3; Colorado Woman’s Suffrage Association Collection, 1876-1881, History Colorado, Manuscript Collection #1247; Susan B. Anthony Papers, Library of Congress, mss11049; Stanton, Elizabeth Cady, Susan B. Anthony, and Mathilda Joslyn Gage, “History of Woman Suffrage” (Rochester: Susan B. Anthony, 1886), Vol. III; Ellis Meredith Papers, History Colorado, Manuscript Collection #427.

SUMMER EXHIBIT AT MUSEUM: “FIERCE FOREMOTHERS, STEADFAST SUFFRAGISTS” OPENS MAY 7, 2020



RIGHTFULLY HERS: EXPLORING THE NATIONAL SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT

As a part of our summer exhibit, the Museum is hosting a temporary exhibit from the National Archives titled “Rightfully Hers: American Women and the Vote.” The exhibit highlights the relentless struggle of diverse activists throughout U.S. history to secure voting rights for all American women. The unique story of Colorado’s women will be told in a companion panel created by the Museum.

“The Awakening” by artist Henry Mayer. Library of Congress.

FOR MORE THAN 140 YEARS OF UNITED STATES HISTORY, women were denied the right to vote based on their gender. While some states adopted women’s suffrage in the 1890s, the 19th Amendment, granting this fundamental right to (most) women, wasn’t ratified until 1920 — 100 years ago this year.

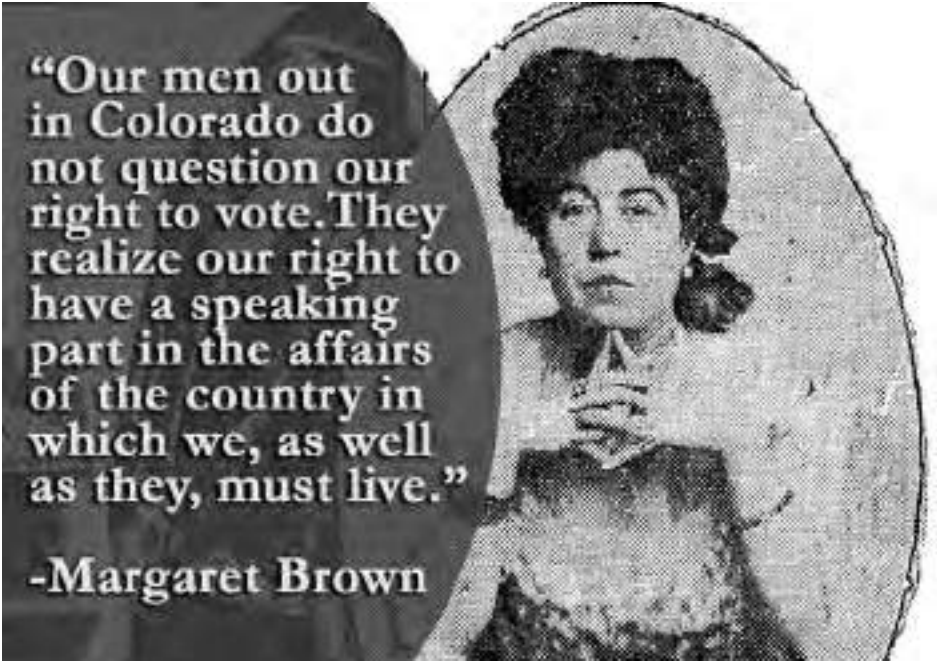
Leading up to the passage of this law, Margaret “Molly” Brown worked closely with prominent women’s rights activists such as Alva Vanderbilt Belmont, Alice Paul, and fellow Coloradan Helen Ring Robinson to extend suffrage to women across the nation.

The summer 2020 exhibit at the Molly Brown House Museum, “Fierce Foremothers, Steadfast Suffragists,” will highlight the stories of these women who were forces in the national suffrage movement. Come celebrate the stories of the fight for suffrage, including a pop-up exhibit presented by the National Archives titled “Rightfully Hers.”

The exhibit features life-sized cutouts of influential figures in the suffrage movement, and includes artifacts such as suffrage accoutrements (clothing, sashes and buttons); photos, articles, letters and other documents; large interpretive panels; and filmed footage including marches. The exhibit will bring forward the history of women’s suffrage, but also invite introspection about how these events impact our modern lives.

Join us as we explore a century-old story of voting rights that empowers us to meaningfully champion democracy today!

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES EXHIBIT, VISIT
museum.archives.gov/rightfully-hers. 📍



IMAGINE 2020 GRANT FUNDS NEW ACCESSIBILITY LOUNGE

Museum guests who are unable to climb stairs now have a comfortable place to wait for their tour group and learn more about Margaret Brown! Thanks to a generous grant from the Imagine 2020 Fund, the Museum has a new Accessibility Lounge with seating, iPad and stand that allows visitors to watch an interactive video tour of the upper floors. In addition to the video, which was created by Museum volunteer William Peters, guests have access to a basket of touchable objects, as well as information and images of the Brown family.



Photo: Jen Kindick



A TITANIC DINNER WITH THE UNSINKABLE MRS. BROWN

April 10 6-9 p.m. | Tickets @ historicdenver.org

Don't miss this unique opportunity to visit the Browns' country home, Avoca Lodge, and welcome the Titanic heroine back to Denver after her harrowing experience! A delicious dinner of Mrs. Brown's favorite dishes will be paired with good company and live music from the dynamic Gatsby Gang Jazz Band, which will play a toe-tapping combination of ragtime and jazz. Avoca Lodge is located at 7595 W. Yale Ave. in southwest Denver.

2020 WALKING TOURS EXPLORE WOMEN'S HISTORY

Beginning in May, visit the places where Denver's suffragists and political leaders made plans, built connections and changed the world! Stay tuned to our website and Facebook page for details about these tours.

Historic Denver Walking Tours highlight the history of our city's unique neighborhoods. Classic daily tours include LoDo, Larimer Square/D&F Tower, Capitol Hill, and Historic 16th Street. Tours run May through October. Some sell out quickly, so grab your tickets today! Many thanks to our sponsor, Live Urban Real Estate.

Tickets @ historicdenver.org



Black American West Museum by Scott Dressel-Martin.

MEMBER-ONLY EVENT: LEGENDARY WOMEN OF AURARIA & CASA MAYAN

Wed., March 25 | 6-8:30 p.m. | Tickets @ historicdenver.org

Historic Casa Mayan, 1020 Ninth Street Historic Park
Join historian Gregorio Alcaro for a tour and stories of great women with diverse backgrounds who were connected to Old Auraria and the historic Casa Mayan, Denver's oldest clapboard house. The tour includes wine and light fare.



Historic Casa Mayan by Shannon Schaefer Stage.

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PRESERVATION BRIEFS

EAST AREA PLAN PROJECTS VISION FOR SIX CORE NEIGHBORHOODS



Denver City and County Building. Historic Denver archives.

In 2018, Denver City Council adopted an update to Blueprint Denver, a citywide land use and transportation plan. As follow-up, the city is now creating plans for collections of neighborhoods across Denver through a process called the Neighborhood Planning Initiative. The East Central Area – which includes a high concentration of historic resources – is currently in draft form and provides an important opportunity to weigh in on how our historic buildings and

neighborhoods can thrive as our city grows and changes.

The six neighborhoods of the East Central Area include North Capitol Hill (also referred to as Uptown), Capitol Hill, City Park West, City Park (also referred to as South City Park), Cheesman Park, and Congress Park. The plan also provides analysis and guidance for Colfax Avenue as the primary commercial corridor in the area.

After thoughtful consideration, Historic Denver supports many of the recommendations in the East Central Area Plan because they clearly reflect the value our community gives to historic places and cultural touchstones, which are critical to a vibrant, inclusive and authentic Denver.

The plan is lengthy, more than 250 pages, but the emphasis on preservation is clear from the outset. The Vision & Community Priorities include preserving significant buildings, incentivizing preservation with existing and new tools, creating an adaptive reuse ordinance to make it easier to put existing buildings to new use, and supporting small and local businesses that make up our historic commercial nodes.

The tools included in the draft reflect a broadening range of methods that can protect buildings and encourage the reuse of our existing resources:

- Require the reuse of vacant institutional buildings as a default policy
- Identify the preservation of character buildings on Colfax as a desirable community benefit
- Encourage renovations and additions rather than demolition by refining zoning standards for residential areas
- Revise standards for new home construction to reduce bulk and massing
- Create attractive options for the reuse of existing homes by allowing up to one additional interior unit as well as a possible Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU), which offers flexibility and housing diversity without demolition or the disruption of long-established character.

The draft plan also takes advantage of Discover Denver survey data, which has been provided through a partnership between Historic Denver and the City of Denver. Much of the East Central Area has been surveyed by the project and its volunteer teams over the last two years. The data provides guidance on areas of potential significance and possible landmarks, which through further community dialogue and process can lead to a variety of outcomes, such as new historic districts, conservation or design overlays, or the application of incentive programs for character preservation.

While there is much to applaud in the plan, Historic Denver has expressed concern about some of the recommendations – most notably, amending the design standards for historic parkways, such as 7th Avenue Parkway which runs through Cheesman Park and Congress Park. We agree that the parkways can accommodate enhanced mobility options, such as protected bike lanes and pedestrian improvements, but we are concerned that the plan is vague about the types of changes that might be made to the design guidelines. The open green space tying our City Beautiful parks together is among the most defining and important elements of our city.

Other key strategies will require refinement and community engagement to ensure that the outcomes meet expectations. Historic Denver is very interested in working to further define criteria and standards for the application of the new tools included in the plan, and to ensure that preservation remains a priority.

Visit our website www.historicdenver.org/current-issues for links to the draft plan and additional detail on Historic Denver’s comments.

RESTORATION WORK BEGINS AT PEOPLES PRESBYTERIAN



Contractors are well on their way to completing much-needed preservation work at Peoples Presbyterian Church at 2780 York St. over the next few months.

Historic Denver partnered with the church to secure a State Historical Fund (SHF) grant through History Colorado to fund front porch restoration that includes brick repointing and repair of the sandstone railing elements. The wood structure of the front porch roof and masonry parapet will also be restored.

Peoples has been an important anchor for the African-American community in northeast Denver, valuing diversity and community. The congregation was first established in June 1906 in the vacant storeroom of a building at 25th & Larimer St. It moved to its current location in 1955 to accommodate its rapidly expanding congregation. The brick Mission-style building was originally built in 1921-22 by Hyde Park Presbyterian, and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2016. 🌿



Above photos: Scott Dressel-Martin.



Proud supporters of Historic Denver



1717 E Arizona Ave. Photo: current owners

Designating your building or neighborhood is a commitment, but worth the hard work to preserve Denver’s soul. To learn more about this process, visit Historic Denver’s website under “Resources.”

2019 MARKED A BANNER YEAR FOR DESIGNATIONS!

By Shannon Schaefer Stage, Preservation Coordinator

Last year, Historic Denver supported and celebrated several new Denver landmarks. These landmarks and districts are an important part of preserving the soul of Denver, as they ensure the stories of people who built Denver are recognized and honored in our fast-changing city.

Last year’s successes began with the designation of the River Drive Historic District, the only historic district in the Jefferson Park neighborhood, which is tied to early Denver history of the railroad and industries such as Zang Brewery.

Historic Denver also assisted three homeowners with their individual designations, which were approved by City Council in the fall. Two of these landmarks, 1168 S. Gilpin St. and 1717 E. Arizona Ave., are early homes designed by J.J.B. Benedict in East Washington Park. The third landmark, located at 2288 S. Milwaukee St., was the first home on the eastern block of Observatory Park, and designed by Glen Wood Huntington.

Though Historic Denver helps with designations, there are many who choose to navigate the landmark designation process on their own. Special thanks to these community members who worked on the following landmarks and historic districts in 2019:

- Armour Building, 5001 Packing House Road
- Samsonite House, 637 Galapago St.
- Cableland, 4150 E Shangri La Drive
- Tilden School for Teaching Health Historic District (includes the Bosler House at 3209 W. Fairview Place, plus two other buildings at 3249 W. Fairview Place and 3279 Grove St.)
- 4431 E. 26th Ave. in North Park Hill

PLEASE NOTE

The City of Denver’s Landmark Preservation Department reviews designation applications and handles design review.

You can find more information on their website at denvergov.org/preservation.



Bosler House, part of the Tilden School for Teaching Health Historic District. Photo: Shannon Schaefer Stage



River Drive Historic District. Photo: Shannon Schaefer Stage



This North Park Hill home, nominated for designation by its owners, was approved as a local landmark on Jan. 27. Photo: Lyn Berry-Helminger

DISCOVER DENVER:
UNCOVERING THE FASCINATING STORIES
BEHIND DENVER’S BUILDINGS

By Beth Glandon, Director of Discover Denver

Our Discover Denver volunteers were very busy in 2019, documenting buildings in the West Capitol Hill, Congress Park, and West Colfax neighborhoods. This citywide building survey project – a partnership between Historic Denver and the City of Denver – made several interesting discoveries along the way, including the following buildings and their histories.



Photos by Discover Denver staff.

West Capitol Hill: Automobile Sales Corporation Building

The three-story commercial building at 1156 Broadway was constructed in 1921 for owner Frank C. Cullen, who also built the Cullen-Thompson Motor Company building – now known as the Sports Castle. A concrete viaduct connected the second story of 1156 Broadway to Lincoln Street, allowing for the easy transport of cars to different levels of the building. It was home to automotive dealerships for more than 50 years, including Marcus Motors (1930-1965), Capital Chevrolet (1965-1970), and Russ Vento Chevrolet (1970-1978). In 1978, current owner Howard Lorton Inc. purchased the building and built a new addition to the north, designed by the California-based architecture firm of Payne & Bischoff. The Howard Lorton Galleries, originally located at Speer Boulevard and Acoma Street, was founded in 1927.



Congress Park: Leyner House

With at least 32 homes to his credit, Andreas Eriksen was a prolific homebuilder in Denver during the first two decades of the 20th century. Many homes in the Congress Park neighborhood were constructed by Eriksen, particularly in the St. James Heights Addition. He built all of the homes on Milwaukee Street between 13th and 14th avenues. Born in Norway in 1876, Eriksen immigrated to the United States with his family when he was 10 years old. One of Eriksen’s most notable homes is the Leyner house at 2830 East 13th Ave., one of the first homes in Denver to feature an asphalt shingle roof. Following his building career, Eriksen retired as a farmer in Jefferson County.



West Colfax: The Dickinson Library

Andrew Carnegie’s philanthropic legacy is apparent in Denver, namely through the city’s many local libraries. In fact, the McNichols Building located in Civic Center Park was the city’s first Carnegie library. By 1920, Carnegie had donated \$160,000 to construct seven other branches, including the Dickinson Library located at 1545 Hooker St. in Denver’s West Colfax neighborhood. The building was designed by architect Maurice Biscoe and completed in the summer of 1913 along with three other branches: Roger W. Woodbury, Sarah Platt Decker, and Henry White Warren. Originally called the “West Denver Branch” it was later named for Charles E. Dickinson, an investment banker and original member of the Denver Library Commission. Due to the neighborhood’s Jewish history, the branch purportedly held notable Hebrew and Yiddish collections. In 1953, the branch was burglarized and set on fire along with Lake Junior High. Denver Public Library could not recoup the costs of repairs, and closed the Dickinson Branch in 1954. In the latter half of the century, the building was owned by private tenants, and is currently occupied by a local architect. The building has been painted, but ornate architectural features such as the large rounded arch windows, classical details, and red tile roof remain. 🌿

GET INVOLVED!

Discover Denver is a citywide building survey focused on identifying the buildings that help tell Denver’s story. The project relies on community volunteers to help document buildings and research their histories. To learn more about the project, visit our website at discoverdenver.co .

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Pictured Above: The Richthofen Castle in Montclair, Sold by Casey in 2012.

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MOLLY BROWN HOUSE MUSEUM



Molly Brown House Museum staff and volunteers dressed in suffrage attire on the steps of the Colorado capitol. Historic Denver archives.

CELEBRATE WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH!

March 8
Margaret and Alva: Great Women Tea
Two seatings: 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. | Molly Brown House Museum
Register at historicdenver.org.

When Margaret Brown moved to Denver, ladies’ tea parties were a required social activity in Victorian high society. For Mrs. Brown, taking tea was a way to raise charitable funds, launch political campaigns, and support the women’s suffrage movement. Join us for tea, treats and inspiring conversation at one of our suffrage-themed teas.

March 18
Colorado Women’s Hall of Fame Induction Gala
5:30 p.m. | Hyatt Regency, 650 15th St.
Register at cogreatwomen.org

Did you know Margaret Brown was inducted into the Colorado Women’s Hall of Fame in 1985 as a historic inductee? Come honor the 2020 class of unsinkable women who have shaped our state and nation with courage, intelligence, compassion and creativity!

March 19
Myth on Trial: Women Moving West
7-9 p.m. | Byers-Evans House Museum, 1310 Bannock St.
Register at historicdenver.org.

In partnership with the Center for Colorado Women’s History (CCWH), we invite you to become the “jury” and decide what is true and false. Come sort out the facts about mythologized women – including Margaret Brown – while enjoying a cocktail in a historic house museum!



Historic Denver archives.

LOOKING FOR THE PERFECT FEARLESS FEMALE GIFT?

The award-winning Molly Brown House Museum Store, located in the historic carriage house, is open to the public during all regular Museum hours. Get your “Votes for Women” gear here and be ready for election season!

MARGARET BROWN HELPED SHAPE THE NATIONAL WOMEN’S SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT

By Andrea Malcomb, Museum Director

In the lead-up to the passage of the 19th Amendment, which granted (most) women the right to vote, Margaret “Molly” Brown, worked closely with prominent women’s rights activists to extend suffrage – already granted in the West – to the rest of the nation.

Women’s suffrage in Colorado passed on Nov. 7, 1893. After this victory, Ellis Meredith, the “Susan B. Anthony of Colorado,” continued to write and speak about what it meant to win that right. She said, “It is not we as women, nor we as men who will make this world better, but all of us, working together as human beings.”

As a result, a wave of women began to enter Colorado politics in the following years, including Helen Ring Robinson, who became the first woman elected to the Colorado Senate in 1912. Sen. Robinson and Margaret were friends, discussing suffrage and labor strikes across Colorado at the 1914 Conference of Great Women, held in Newport, Rhode Island, where Margaret was summering.

Suffrage leaders and politicians from across the country attended the conference, in the spirit of the July 1848 Seneca Falls Convention – the first women’s rights convention in the U.S. During the conference, Margaret hosted her old friend Colorado Judge Ben Lindsey, a pioneer in the establishment of the juvenile court system, at her cottage. Both Lindsey and Robinson gave speeches about the miner’s strike at Ludlow, as well as Colorado’s passage of suffrage. Afterwards, many of these women, including Margaret, gave lectures on a national speaking tour called the Hughes Alliance, which visited 28 states and 76 cities.

Alice Paul, a radical suffragist, showed women’s voting strength by protesting against anyone in political office who was opposed to suffrage. She started the National Woman’s Party, which pledged to “hold the party in power responsible” and “punish” those who did not support suffrage. That summer, newspapers across the U.S. reported on rumors that Margaret was considering a run for Colorado Sen. Charles Thomas’ seat, as a part of this tactic to punish the Democrats for not supporting suffrage.

After the “Silent Sentinels” protested in front of the White House for months, President Woodrow Wilson finally announced his support for the 19th Amendment in early 1918. In June 1919, the amendment passed, and on Aug. 26, 1920, the needed three-fourths of states ratified it. While this was a huge win for the women who marched, were arrested, or died for the cause of women’s suffrage, the 19th Amendment really only applied to white women. It wasn’t until the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that women of color were able to vote.

Come learn more about Margaret’s involvement in the national suffrage movement during our 2020 exhibit, “Fierce Foremothers, Steadfast Suffragists,” which opens May 7. To support the exhibit, Museum events throughout the year are exploring the history of women’s voting rights in the U.S., and how that history informs voting today and in the future. Join us as we explore a century-old story that empowers us to meaningfully champion democracy today! ✿



H. L. Standley. Women for Congress campaigners at the Broadmoor Hotel in Colorado Springs, April 1926. Library of Congress.

DENVER WOMEN’S HISTORY AND SUFFRAGE SITES

Visit the places where Denver women have made history!

- Blair-Caldwell African American Library** – 2401 Welton St.
- Denver Woman’s Press Club** – 1325 Logan St.
- Molly Brown House Museum** – 1340 Pennsylvania St.
- Colorado State Capitol** – Colfax & Broadway
- Center for Colorado Women’s History (CCWH) at the Byers Evans House Museum** – 1310 Bannock St.
- Colorado Women’s Suffrage Association Plaque**, Wells Fargo Bank Plaza at 17th & California
- Black American West Museum/Justina Ford House**, 3091 California St.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT:
STEPH MACCARTER

By Kim Popetz, Volunteer and Events Coordinator for the Molly Brown House Museum

Volunteer Steph MacCarter’s first memory of the Molly Brown House Museum was formed when she was just seven years old, as she and her mother stood on the sidewalk in front of the historic home.

“My mother told me the story of the woman who had lived there,” she said. “At that time, it was a gentlemen’s boarding house.”

MacCarter, who was immediately inspired by Margaret “Molly” Brown’s story, started volunteering as a tour guide at the house in the fall of 2003. Sixteen years later, her passion for her volunteer work remains strong. She is looking forward to celebrating the centennial of women’s suffrage this year, as well as sharing Margaret’s contribution to the movement.

She recently shared some thoughts about why she likes to volunteer, and some of her favorite experiences at the Museum.

Q: Why did you start volunteering at the Molly Brown House?

I began volunteering because I was inspired by Margaret’s story – she was a passionate and outspoken advocate for women’s rights, education, miner’s rights and those less fortunate. I read Kristin Iverson’s book [“Molly Brown: Unraveling the Myth”] when it came out in 1999, and started to think about how I could share her story when I retired from education.

Q: In addition to giving tours, what’s your favorite volunteer activity at the Museum?

I have thoroughly enjoyed my work digitizing the Museum’s archives. The photos, letters, and reports have added to my knowledge of Margaret’s story and remind me that many people have worked very hard to ensure the Museum is still here and successful.

Q: What’s your favorite space in the house?

Margaret’s bedroom. It is the place where I can imagine her sitting at her desk and writing to promote her causes.

Q: During your time as a volunteer, is there a particular event or guest interaction that was particularly meaningful for you?

I have had many memorable experiences interacting with the guests who come to tour the house. One that comes to mind happened very recently; in December, I gave an Insider Tour about Christmas in 1900. As a guest was leaving, she shared that she had a significant experience that day. I think we all hope that our guests will come away with that significant experience, and that they will remember something about Margaret that inspires them, as well.

Q: What’s the zaniest question a guest has ever asked?

When the movie “Titanic” came out, we were very busy at the Museum and I enjoyed the opportunity to share the real Margaret with guests whose only knowledge came from Kathy Bates’ portrayal of her. I was surprised when one young girl asked me if Rose and Jack had ever visited Mrs. Brown’s house! 🌸



“MY MOTHER TOLD ME THE STORY OF THE WOMAN WHO HAD LIVED THERE,” SHE SAID. “AT THAT TIME, IT WAS A GENTLEMEN’S BOARDING HOUSE.”

Steph MacCarter, pictured here in period attire at the Museum’s Titanic gala

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS



To purchase tickets to upcoming events at the Molly Brown House Museum, visit historicdenver.org.

The Molly Brown House Museum is located at:
1340 Pennsylvania Street, Denver.



Photo: Rebecca Ann Photography

FREE DAYS

Feb. 15 and April 21

Join us for a special free day at the Molly Brown House Museum, thanks to funding from the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD).

SALON SERIES

“CONSTRICTED BY CORSET: BODILY AUTONOMY AND CHOICE”

April 2 | 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Molly Brown House Museum



Connect current headlines to the historical events relevant to the women’s suffrage movement and Margaret’s activism. Starting with a fun Women’s History 101 lesson, each Salon will be a robust conversation about the issues from 100 years ago that still affect us today.

INSIDE TOURS: TALES FROM THE TITANIC

April 7 | 6-7:30 p.m. | Molly Brown House Museum

Take a closer look at different threads from Margaret Brown’s life including the women’s suffrage movement, Titanic, and more. Together we’ll unravel fascinating stories!



Historic Denver archives

REAL ESTATE SEMINAR: UNDERSTANDING & SELLING DENVER’S HISTORIC HOMES AND NEIGHBORHOODS

April 28 | 12-4:30 p.m. | Mile High United Way, 711 Park Ave. West

Are you involved in real estate, or do you wish you knew more about Denver’s historic neighborhoods and homes? This half-day seminar covers topics such as Denver architecture, neighborhoods with specific styles, historic designation, historic home maintenance, and more! Realtors can earn CEC credits.



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