What is legacy? That question was top of mind during the selection of this year’s award winners, who will be honored at the upcoming 52nd Annual Dinner & Awards Program on October 13, 2022 at The Brown Palace.

Three individuals were selected for our highest honors: Former Sen. Polly Baca has devoted many years to civic life in all its forms; Dr. Renee Cousins King has shown initiative, creativity, and commitment in preserving the history, culture, and architecture of Denver; and Dennis Humphries, the recipient of our Keystone Award, has made significant contributions to historic preservation throughout his career.

These three honorees fully embody the concept of legacy:

Polly Baca’s accomplishments are that of a woman who would be first to open doors, but wouldn’t be the last to walk through them. She was elected to the Colorado House of Representatives in 1974 and was the first woman of color to chair the House Democratic Caucus. She became the first woman of color to serve in the Colorado State Senate beginning in 1978, where she also chaired the Senate Democratic Caucus — the first Latina in any state to serve in leadership in both branches of a state legislature.

Polly was shaped by experiences facing racism when she was growing up in the Northern Colorado communities of Greeley and greater Weld County. Her parents both came from Spanish families who first set foot in the Americas in 1598. But even though they’d been “American” for hundreds of years, her family was forced to sit in the segregated section of the church on Sundays.

She was introduced to politics as a college student during the 1960 “Viva Kennedy” campaign to elect John F. Kennedy. Her activism only grew during the Chicano and Civil Rights movements of the 1960s. With a career that has spanned positions in politics, work with the United Farm Workers and the Democratic Party, and national service under three presidents, Polly’s heart still belongs to Colorado and to effecting change for low-income communities of color.

Polly was selected to receive Historic Denver’s Molly Brown Award, created to honor the women embodying Margaret Brown’s spirit today. Polly has devoted years of her life to civic engagement, to helping women gain power through their voice and their vote, and to improving the lives of women and girls. She also sees historic preservation as “one of the keys to preserving our democracy, because it is the stories that are told through the buildings that gives us an idea of where we’ve been.”

That ethos — that buildings can be keepers of our stories — aligns with Historic Denver’s ongoing work in the community and our continued commitment to uncover new and diverse stories within the walls of our own Molly Brown House Museum. Legacies, after all, are often bigger than one person or one building.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3
As chair of the Historic Denver Board of Trustees, I am excited to provide you with a year in review in this final issue of Historic Denver News for 2022.

Though the COVID-19 pandemic presented unprecedented challenges not seen in our 52 years as an organization, we were able to continue our mission and emerge with our Historic Denver family stronger, more flexible, and focused. Even through the times we had to close the museum and advocate remotely, the Molly Brown House Museum remains the cornerstone of Historic Denver and serves as a catalyst for preservation throughout the region. Thanks in large part to our supporters like you, we continue to celebrate recent accomplishments.

Our Molly Brown House Museum’s Heroes of Titanic exhibit thrilled audiences with artifacts including the Egyptian ushabti Margaret gave to the captain of the Carpathia, and the binnacle from Olympic, Titanic’s sister ship. These artifacts represent a huge undertaking to secure loans from other institutions across the U.S. on display at the museum for the first time.

The focus of our preservation efforts continue to be fueled by community conversations. During the 50 Actions for 50 Places campaign, people across Denver told us which places mattered most to them and why. The response was incredible and further demonstrates that Denverites care about our heritage, our places, and the stories that make Denver Denver.

Recent 50 Actions accomplishments include community organizing in Elyria and West Colfax, the first steps toward viable preservation efforts, and an upcoming vote by City Council to decide on landmarking the Irving P. Andrews house. We also supported the Welton Street Cafe, a community gathering place and one of just a handful of Black-owned businesses left on the Welton Street corridor in Five Points, with securing $40,000 in funding from the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s Backing Historic: Small Restaurants Grant Program. Be sure to stop in for a good comfort meal and visit with the Dickerson family!

Our Discover Denver team continues their work and is busy surveying structures and collecting stories from community members in the Westwood neighborhood in southwest Denver. They will next focus their efforts in the Five Points, Whittier, Clayton, and Skyland neighborhoods, all areas with important African American cultural heritage. Other recent accomplishments include working with the La Alma Lincoln Park community to win Denver City Council’s unanimous approval in designating by ordinance the La Alma Lincoln Park Historic Cultural District as a district for preservation. The designation has received national attention, including recognition from the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions.

After 19 years with Historic Denver, including 14 as executive director, Annie Levinsey stepped down to join History Colorado as Chief of Staff. As a leading voice for preservation in the region, Annie led Historic Denver in successfully advocating for the preservation of hundreds of buildings that hold a special place in the hearts of Denver communities, including historic districts and individual landmarks. Although we were sad to see Annie go, it was a great opportunity for her; and she is not far away. We will continue to collaborate on our preservation efforts.

The Board of Trustees began the transition plan with Annie before her departure, and she was invaluable in giving advice and staying engaged through her last day. Once again, our staff and the board have stepped up over the past several months to keep things moving seamlessly. We engaged an executive recruiter and she first interviewed Annie, staff, the board, community, past board members, and our supporters for insight and advice as we entered our next leadership chapter. She then cast a wide net in the preservation and museum communities. The Executive Transition Team has been immersed by the caliber of candidates who have responded.

Our future CEO & President will inherit a thriving organization with these recent achievements and ongoing programs that connect Historic Denver to the community.

I am looking forward to seeing familiar faces at our 52nd Annual Dinner & Awards Program on October 13th at The Brown Palace. I am always awed and inspired by our individual leadership award winners and the project awards that demonstrate how historic buildings are relevant and infinitely adaptable in a changing world. And if everything goes as planned, I will be introducing you to Historic Denver’s new President and CEO.

See you at The Brown!

John R Lucero
Chair, Historic Denver Board of Trustees
Like the awards named for Historic Denver formothers, our Keystone Award is also about the legacy of spirit. It is presented annually to an individual whose life’s work supports preservation for the people of Denver. This year’s winner, Dennis Humphries, has been a leading architect and preservationist in the city for nearly 40 years. When he started out, Dennis may not have imagined he would go on to design 125 libraries or serve three terms on Denver’s Landmark Preservation Commission (LPC). During his time there, including a longtime stint as LPC chair, Dennis oversaw the creation of new historic districts, individual landmarks, and the assurance that future citizens would be able to understand Denver’s past while enjoying its present. His passion for preservation and work on many civic buildings led him to initiate the Denver Architecture Foundation and also to serve on Historic Denver’s Board of Trustees for six years.

Over his career, Dennis has guided the rehabilitation of several notable historic structures, including the McNichols Civic Center Building, a Neoclassical-style former Carnegie Library situated at the northern edge of Civic Center Park. Other impressive feats include the restoration of the gold-leafed Colorado State Capitol dome and the Streamline Moderne American Woodmen Building in the Whittier neighborhood, where his firm had its offices for nearly 10 years. Dennis isn’t satisfied to stop with structures, however, and has also mentored and trained a number of architects in preservation work.

Polly Baca, Dr. Renee Cousins King, and Dennis Humphries have each had an impact on Denver as we know it. Their contributions will be celebrated when more than 400 of Denver’s civic and business leaders, design professionals, and preservationists gather to celebrate the city’s cultural and built environment.

We hope you’ll join us at the Annual Dinner & Awards Program on October 13. Each year, we begin the evening by taking over the Grand Lobby of Denver’s iconic Brown Palace Hotel for our cocktail hour. This rare honor, in such a stunning historic setting, brings together those most passionate about preserving our city’s unique identity and diverse stories. And yes, legacy, too.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT: MIKE ERICKSON

We are pleased to welcome — or welcome back! — Mike Erickson (he/him) to the Historic Denver team as the new Volunteer & Event Coordinator, based out of the Molly Brown House Museum. Mike joins us from the Center for Colorado Women’s History, formerly the Byers-Evans House Museum, where he worked as Education Coordinator. Before that, Mike was an intern and part-time staff member at the Molly Brown House Museum from 2014 to 2017. During his time with History Colorado, Mike worked with staff and volunteers on revising tours and programming at the Byers-Evans House Museum.

Mike grew up in Eastern North Dakota and found a passion for our local history upon moving to historic Capitol Hill in 2013. Denver quickly became home and he now lives in the Golden Triangle neighborhood with his partner and their golden retriever, Molly. When Mike is not engaging with volunteers or patrons of Historic Denver, he can be found gardening, on his balcony or searching throughout the state for the next best hot springs. He graduated from MSU Denver with a degree in history focusing on the American West, largely crediting the stories of Margaret Tobin Brown as an influence on his career path. Mike feels there is always more to learn and his passion to share the stories of Denver’s historic built environment will further guide him in his role as Volunteer and Event Coordinator.
Hannah Bachus, a University of Colorado Boulder student, recently wrapped up her 10-week paid internship for Historic Denver. The Molly Brown House Museum was honored to host Hannah as part of the Diversity in the Arts (DITA) Internship Program. Hannah, who is visually-impaired, welcomed visitors, wrote donor thank you letters, and also created the Colorado Day Scavenger Hunt in partnership with the Governor’s Residence Preservation Fund.

Hannah’s final project was conducting research about one of the authors featured in this year’s Victorian Horrors — Denver author Mary Coyle Chase, who lived at 532 W. 4th Avenue in the Baker neighborhood. Victorian Horrors will take place on October 14-16, 20-22, and 27-29, with an accessibility-friendly, in-person performance on October 16 at 4pm. Actors and an ASL interpreter will perform five chilling tales for guests in an ADA-accessible room. For those who prefer to stay at home and watch from behind a pillow, we offer a video option featuring the same five stories from the same fear-inducing actors. At $20 per family, this makes for a fun watch party option! Tickets are available at MollyBrown.org.

MARY COYLE CHASE

by Hannah Lauren Bachus, Diversity in the Arts Intern

Mary Coyle, later Mary Coyle Chase, was born to Irish immigrant parents in Denver, Colorado, on February 25, 1907. Her parents came out West seeking wealth but, after her father landed a job as a salesman for a flour mill, Coyle Chase grew up as part of Denver’s lower middle-class. From a young age, she developed a passion for reading, writing, and storytelling. She grew up surrounded by the folktales and lore from her Irish family, which would heavily influence the stories she created later in life.

Coyle Chase proved herself to be a talented student after graduating from West High School at the age of 15. Between 1922 and 1923, she attended both the University of Denver and the University of Colorado Boulder, but left school before she could complete a degree to work as a reporter for the Rocky Mountain News. While working there, Coyle Chase cultivated her skills in journalism by reporting on a wide variety of topics. She had quite a flair for the dramatic and was known around the office as an imaginative, witty, and prank-loving woman. It was here that Coyle Chase met her husband, Robert Lamont Chase, a fellow reporter who would go on to be the paper’s managing editor.

After her departure from the Rocky Mountain News, Coyle Chase turned her attention towards two things: raising her children and focusing on personal writing projects. She dabbled in freelance writing and began her career as a playwright during these years. Coyle Chase channeled her Irish upbringing, unpleasant college experiences, and journalistic skills into all the plays she wrote. Her first produced work, Me Third, appeared on Broadway but did not achieve even a fraction of the success that her most popular work, Harvey, saw.

Written amidst the early years of the Second World War, Harvey was Coyle Chase’s response to the devastated people she saw around her and an attempt to bring joy back to their lives after having lost so much. Coyle Chase was fortunate to see the success of her work when Harvey won a Pulitzer Prize in 1945 and was made into a movie in 1950 starring James Stewart. Chase wrote numerous plays in the two decades that followed, though none of them achieved the same level of success. She then transitioned into writing stories and plays for children.

Coyle Chase was an active member in Denver society, lending her support and expertise to such organizations as the Bonfils Theater, the Denver Center for the Performing Arts, and the Dramatists Guild. Her success as a writer and activist was widely recognized across Denver both during her life and following her death. In 1947, the University of Denver awarded her an honorary doctorate degree. Coyle Chase was also given a lifetime membership to the Denver Woman’s Press Club. She died in Denver in 1981 and is buried at Crown Hill Cemetery in Wheat Ridge.

The mission of Diversity in the Arts is to create a pipeline of leaders in the arts who will represent communities of color and other populations generally underrepresented in Colorado’s arts organizations and to normalize equity and diversity within these organizations.
HISTORIC DENVER WALKING TOURS

Did You Know We Offer Private Tours?

This year we’ve introduced incoming college students, alumni groups, and at least one group of conference goers, among others, to historic places throughout the city. Gather your group and keep us in mind for your next team-building, active adults group, homeschool outing or whatever else strikes your fancy. History-themed birthday party? We’re in!

We’re also taking advantage of Colorado’s 300 days of sunshine and extending the season for our popular walking tours. Public and private tours are still going on throughout the fall, including the holiday favorite Sunset Tower Tours at the Daniels and Fisher Clocktower across multiple dates in December.

Contact Alison or submit an interest form on the Support Us section of the Historic Denver website: historicdenver.org/support-us/volunteer

Photo: Scott Dewsw-Martin

WANT TO BE A HISTORIC DENVER DOCENT?

Interview this fall to become a walking tour guide. Training takes place on Saturdays over the winter. Guides of all ages, genders, backgrounds, and physical abilities encouraged to apply! Tours are typically 90 minutes long and many take place along flat routes that are friendly to walk or roll.

Contact Alison Salutz at salutz@historicdenver.org or 303-534-5288 ext. 24 to learn more.

Photo: Denver Public Library
CADILLAC LOFTS IS NEWEST DENVER LANDMARK

by Annie Levinsky, former Executive Director

In celebration of its 100-year anniversary, the owners of the Cadillac Lofts building at 1090 Cherokee in the Golden Triangle neighborhood spent the past year preparing an application for local landmark status. With Historic Denver’s technical assistance and research by consultant Kristi Miniello, the storied structure was presented to Denver City Council in August and approved as Denver’s newest landmark. It is now one of only a few protected buildings in Golden Triangle, where many structures have been lost over the decades and where surface parking lots are fast-transforming into apartment buildings.

While its early history is distinctly automotive, the Fisher & Fisher-designed structure has a pioneering residential past of its own. In the 1980s, the property became an early adaptive reuse project—the work of developer Mickey Zeppelin, who is known for seeing the potential of quirky existing structures. The building transformed from its original use into popular residential condos that demonstrate how old buildings can serve new purposes and avoid the environmental impacts of scrape-and-build.

For a building with a history rooted in car-culture, it’s an impressive evolution.

Constructed for the Cadillac Automobile Company in 1921, it was closely associated with the one-time Automobile Row, located nearby on Broadway. Known as the Cadillac Service Building, it was state-of-the-art and offered a comprehensive menu for Cadillac customers, including a service salesroom and departments for quick service, repairs, painting, and trimming. And it was a short, convenient drive from neighborhoods like Denver Country Club, where Cadillac owners dominated.

In addition to customer amenities, the building was designed to improve the working conditions of employees by providing a club room, lunchroom with cafeteria style meals, and a library stocked with technical books. Every work stall had an outside exhaust pipe so gas fumes wouldn’t fill the interior and there was even a building-wide vacuum cleaning system.

Once one of the largest buildings in the neighborhood, ensconced by one- and two-story homes and commercial blocks, Cadillac Lofts is now surrounded by buildings as tall as 30 stories, with nearby cranes indicating the continued vertical climb of the neighborhood. The landmark designation ensures the history and evolution of the neighborhood is not forgotten and is a case study in how old buildings can continue to be a part of our changing city.
This Historic Denver Award was created to honor people who have made significant contributions over their lifetime to historic preservation in Denver.

**Dennis Humphries**

Architect Dennis Humphries “sort of fell into preservation by accident.” Humphries, who co-founded Humphries Poli Architects in 1994 (it merged with the international design firm RATIO in 2019), had a number of clients who didn’t initially understand the value and potential for development in older buildings.

Humphries first developed a love for architecture while growing up in the Midwest. Over the span of his 40-year career, he became a regionally recognized architect. Locally, he has guided the rehabilitation of such city landmarks as the dome on the Colorado State Capitol and the Streamline Moderne-style American Woodmen Life Building, where Humphries Poli had their offices for many years. Humphries was also instrumental in the renovation of the McNichols Building in the Civic Center Historic District.

He “believes a public building must represent a community, not simply exist within it,” so it’s no surprise that Humphries has been the principal architect for more than 125 public library commissions, more than any other architect in Colorado!

In addition to serving the community through purposeful design, he’s served as the longtime chair of the Denver Landmark Commission; founded the Denver Architecture Foundation, where he started Doors Open Denver; was Vice President of Denver’s Civic Center Conservancy; and served on Historic Denver’s Board of Trustees for six years, including serving as the Vice Chair of the Capital Campaign. Humphries is currently serving on the State Historical Fund Advisory Board and also continues to work professionally as Consulting Principal at RATIO, where he has trained many young architects in the principles of preservation work.

**Dr. Renee Cousins King**

Family and community roots run deep for Dr. Renee Cousins King, a retired pediatrician with continued connection to Denver’s Five Points neighborhood. Many buildings along Welton Street bear the Cousins family name, including Charles R. Cousins Plaza, located outside the Blair-Caldwell African-American Research Library, and the Alta Cousins Terrace apartment building. Dr. Cousins King’s grandfather, Charles L. Cousins, moved to Denver in 1909 and, along with his wife, Alta, began building both existing buildings and erecting new structures throughout Denver’s “Harlem of the West.” Though his son and Dr. Cousin King’s father, Charles R. Cousins, developed his own career as a successful real estate magnate and Black entrepreneur, Dr. Cousins King initially followed a different path and went into medicine. Dr. Cousins King attended medical school at the Mayo Clinic, followed by a two-year residency at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore before eventually returning to Denver.

Upon his death in 2009, her father bequeathed nearly a dozen properties to Dr. Cousins King, including the Arcade building (now home to Rosenberg’s Bagels). In 2011, Dr. Cousins King oversaw a complete restoration of the Alta Cousins Terrace at 26th & Welton. The 1905 Classical Revival-style building was named for her grandmother after Charles R. Cousins purchased it in 1924. Not only is Dr. Cousins King an owner of historic properties, but also an ardent supporter of historic places. This support includes substantial contributions toward renovation projects at the Black American West Museum, which is located in the former home of a pioneering physician and important community figure: Dr. Justina Ford, Colorado’s first licensed African-American woman doctor.
MOLLY BROWN AWARD

The Molly Brown Award was created to honor women who live in Margaret “Molly” Brown’s spirit today by devoting many years to civic life in all its forms, actively engaging themselves in politics, philanthropy, arts and cultural endeavors and historic preservation.

POLLY BACA

Though they were the descendants of Hispánico colonists who first came to the Americas in the 1600s, one of Polly Baca’s earliest memories is her family being asked to sit at the back or the side of the church on Sundays. Former State Senator Baca was born on a farm in Weld County, grew up in Northern Colorado, and discovered her love of leadership and politics while attending Colorado State University in Fort Collins. Owing to those early memories of segregation, she has made it a mission throughout her life to change how people treat Mexican-Americans, Latinos, and other Hispanic peoples.

Following graduation, Baca went on to work for Bobby Kennedy during his presidential campaign and was there the night he was assassinated. She worked with and marched alongside Cesar Chavez and attended the 1963 March on Washington with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. She worked as a public information officer for President Lyndon Johnson, as the regional coordinator for President Jimmy Carter’s failed 1980 re-election campaign, and as both Special Assistant for Consumer Affairs and Director of the United States Office of Consumer Affairs under President Bill Clinton.

Baca was the first Latina elected to the Colorado State House and Colorado State Senate. She founded the Latin American Research and Service Agency (LARASA) in 1964 “to lead and influence change to improve the quality of life for Latinos through advocacy, capacity building, and education.” Baca recently participated in Girls on the Run, a documentary about women of color running for office, part of which was filmed at the Molly Brown House Museum. She currently runs her own consulting firm, advising on such issues as diversity, government relations, leadership and political campaigns.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION AWARDS

The Community Preservation Awards are given annually to a handful of projects, institutions and individuals that have made an exceptional contribution to the preservation of Denver’s heritage. These projects exemplify high quality restoration, the careful consideration of the city’s historic fabric and a commitment to community. The winners of these awards are essential to Historic Denver’s mission and the organization takes great pride in recognizing those who assist us in enhancing Denver’s built environment.

DENVER ART MUSEUM MARTIN BUILDING PROJECT

In preparation for the 50th birthday of the iconic building designed in 1971 by Gio Ponti, the Denver Art Museum (DAM) undertook a multi-year restoration. When it reopened in 2021, the building is state of the art, design combines historic preservation with full modernization, preserving all the key architectural details while prioritizing residents and making it state of the art, sustainable, and energy efficient.

PANCRATIA HALL LOFTS

Once a vacant classroom and dormitory building at the Loretto Heights campus in southwest Denver, Pancratia Hall Lofts is an excellent example of adaptive reuse conversion. The Pancratia Hall building, originally completed in 1930, now provides 74 affordable family apartment units. Units range from studios to 4-bedrooms to serve households earning up to 80% area-median income (AMI). The building, which is on the National Register of Historic Places and is now a Denver Landmark, utilized Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, in combination with State and Federal Historic Tax Credits, and soft funding from the City of Denver, State of Colorado, DHA, CHFA, and Westside Investment Partners. The building’s design combines historic preservation with full modernization, preserving all the key architectural details while prioritizing residents and making it state of the art, sustainable, and energy efficient.

REnilai Award Winner

BENZINA

A former muffler and brake repair shop, owner Brad Anderson spent three years transforming the auto-oriented, three-bay building into a restaurant. Benzina, which means gasoline in Italian, is situated along the edge of the Park Hill neighborhood. Anderson reused the protruding triangular awning of the mid-century building to create a unique alfresco dining space. The garage bays open to merge the indoors and outdoors along a section of East Colfax that is walkable, community-oriented, and home to a large swath of small businesses.

COLBURN HOTEL

The Colburn Hotel is perhaps most famous for its association with Jack Kerouac. It was designed by William Bowman and opened as a residential hotel in 1928. The building has been low-income housing — particularly serving those that had experienced homelessness — for decades. In 2018, after Gorman Associates bought the building, they continued that commitment and invested in major infrastructure upgrades to ensure the building remained viable and livable. They nominated the building to the National Register of Historic Places and used historic preservation tax credits to help finance the rehabilitation. Work was completed in 2020 and residents were not displaced during construction.

THE SLATE DENVER, TAPESTRY COLLECTION BY HILTON AT EMILY’S ALLEY

The 140,000-square-foot Emily Griffith Opportunity School (also known as the Emily Griffith Technical College) has been transformed into The Slate Hotel. Mortenson and 4240 Architecture worked as the design-build team for Stonebridge Companies as they redeveloped the historic site into a mixed-use property. The school, which operated at 1250 Welton St. between 1926 and 2015, was designated a Denver Landmark in 2016 as a result of Historic Denver’s advocacy, which enabled the project to access Historic Preservation Tax Credits. In addition to the 250-key hotel, the project also reuses buildings on the Glennarm side of the block for retail and office spaces, supporting about 37,500 square feet of mixed-use space.
by Michael Flowers, Director of Preservation Action

In 2021, Denverites nominated dozens of sites for Historic Denver’s 50 Actions for 50 Places. The campaign is designed to identify the places our communities cannot imagine Denver without, especially those that have been under-recognized in the past and those that reflect the full depth and diversity in our city’s story. After the submission period, the list was narrowed to 50 sites for which we’ve been actively working with community members and property owners to develop preservation actions of all kinds, from research projects, to interpretive plans, to publicity efforts, to local and National Register designation applications. As actions get underway or are completed, we’ll report the news in these pages and on our social media accounts.

WHAT'S THE STORY WITH THE WELLSHIRE INN?

The Welshire Inn, pictured above, was designed by G. Meredith Musick and the Tudor style structure was completed in 1927. It was designed to operate as the clubhouse for the Welshire Golf Course, which was opened just a year earlier. The course was designed by renowned golf course architect Donald Ross and was privately owned at first. In 1936, both the golf course land and associated buildings were sold to the City and County of Denver, and have remained a public golf course since. In addition to serving the golf course at the Golfer’s Pub and Patio, The Welshire Inn provides rental space for events, golf-related or otherwise, and weddings. As part of our action, we researched the Inn to determine its eligibility to be included in any local, state, or national nominations. Next steps are still being determined.

NEW LIBRARY NAMED FOR DENVER’S “NON-STARRYING ARTIST,” BOB RAGLAND

This was the home and studio of famed Denver artist Bob Ragland, who was well known in Denver’s arts community. One of his paintings was presented to the White House and then-President Jimmy Carter and a 2016 portrait of Ragland is on display at the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery. Ragland’s works can be seen locally at the Kirkland Museum of Fine and Decorative Art and at the Ford-Warren Branch Library near his home in Whittier. In addition to creating numerous works, he was a mentor and career coach for artists where he championed the “non-starving artist” program, educating artists on how their artwork could provide for their livelihood.

Following his death in April 2021, Ragland’s legacy lives on through his artwork, the artists he influenced, and now the newest Denver Public Library branch in RiNo ArtPark in Five Points, which was renamed the Bob Ragland Branch Library earlier this year. We are thrilled to see Ragland receiving citywide attention once again and look forward to leveraging this energy into support around Mr. Ragland’s longtime Denver home.

DO YOU KNOW THE HISTORIC ELLICHT GARDENS CAROUSEL HOUSE?

One of the remaining elements of the original Elitch Gardens still pays homage to the history of Denver’s amusement park industry. Perhaps not as well-known as the Historic Elitch Theater, the Historic Elitch Carousel House stands near 38th and Tennyson in northwest Denver. The dome was erected in 1926 for a new carousel and the original carousel was moved to Burlington, on the Eastern Plains. The Carousel House is one of the few remaining pieces of the original Elitch Gardens and its twelve-sided shape, bell roof, colonnaded cupola, and arched dormers make it easily recognizable. Though the original 1905 carousel is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places, neither this structure nor the carousel it once housed — located near the entry of the current Elitch Gardens — have been designated at the National, State, or Local level.

Staff continues to develop a suitable action for this site and its unique stories. We hope to recognize and bring awareness to this historic place, which may involve designation, collecting memories and photos, or making more citizens aware of this cultural treasure.

WHATLEY CHAPEL ADDED TO DENVER SCHOOL OF THE ARTS CAMPUS

Whatley Chapel was built to serve the students at the Colorado Women’s College in 1962. Designed by Stanley Morse in the Formalist style, the chapel features 39 stained glass windows. Colorado Women’s College merged with Denver University in 1982, and then Johnson and Wales took over the campus in 2001. Currently the Whatley Chapel is owned by Denver Public Schools and will soon be incorporated into the Denver School of the Arts, a comprehensive arts magnet school for middle and high school students.

One goal of the 50 Actions campaign was to highlight and make projects like this more visible. This building will be re-used thanks to Denver Public Schools and will continue to serve the Denver community as it has for 60 years.
by Richard L. von Luhrte, special to Historic Denver News

The 16th Street Mall was initially a consolation prize, gifted by the Urban Mass Transit Administration (UMTA, now the Federal Transit Administration) after Denver did not receive funding for a light rail system in the mid-1970s. The UMTA instead supported pouring millions of dollars into the local bus network, under the requisite that Denver was to build a transit mall, one of only two in the country. (The other was built in Minneapolis).

I was the project manager when the Mall, designed by internationally renowned architect I.M. Pei, launched as a signature public project for the city, with its distinctive pattern, inspired by Navajo rugs and rattlesnake skin.

The Mall, from its inception, was less for pedestrians and more a right-of-way for free shuttles, designed for 20,000 people per hour to travel in energy-efficient electric buses. By the time Downtown Denver Partnership and RTD engaged in a plan to update the Mall, the transitway was carrying over 80,000 people and the small buses had been replaced by oversized vehicles that exacerbated wear and tear on the pavers lining the Mall, with annual maintenance reported by RTD estimated at $1 million per year.

It is ironic that a project designed primarily as a free bus route succeeded so greatly that it was dying from overuse.

In America, our solution to problems is often to throw away and start over. New is trumpeted as better and we’re told it is worth the cost to completely rebuild. Yet in cities across Europe and the Middle East, roads that have been there since the Romans remain follow the same routes as historical figures on the very stones they walked on over 2000 years ago.

But that is not the case for the 16th Street Mall, even though it has become the skyline and defining iconic feature of Downtown Denver. It is the most visited destination of any city, for countless visitors and for our residents, and also one of the most important projects by I.M. Pei’s office, with significant contributions from Henry Cobb and landscape architect Laurie Olin as well. Pei started his career in Denver, with such signature projects as Mile High Center and the Zeckendorf Plaza, before William Zeckendorf became his patron and whisked him off to New York City to become one of the greatest architects of the 20th century. And the Mall has become the centerpiece for the remaining retail in downtown, which was terribly depleted due to both population loss resulting from the mid-20th century. And the Mall has become the centerpiece for the remaining retail in downtown, which was terribly depleted due to both population loss resulting from climate change, these pavers should have been repurposed in countless ways.

Though some elements will be retained — namely the use of granite, the replanting of trees, and the reinstallment of light fixtures remanufactured but with updated technology — these are cold comfort when there remain so many issues and the loss of a truly unique public work. Even viewing the mockup on display at 16th and Welton streets makes the complete inconsistencies of pattern, color, and construction technique between what was promised and what the original design was abundantly clear.

To this end, we continue to ask the city to revisit the new basketweave pattern made of smaller pavers, as well as color differences and pattern inconsistencies between the transit way pavers and the pedestrian zone pavers. We also continue to request that the old pavers be reused in various new applications. Instead, they have been summarily bulldozed into rubble, with the only known reuse being crushed roadbed. These paving stones, which could have been laid on each cross street to support design integrity and also offered up for community use, are instead being demolished, destroying several hundred thousand square feet of granite that embodies millennia of carbon. Historic Denver has long preached that the most sustainable building is one that exists today, and, in this time of climate change, these pavers should have been repurposed in countless ways.

Information about construction, including the new paving stones that are about 1/10th of the size of the previous ones, is located on the corner of 16th and Welton streets. Photo: Leah Charney

Richard L. von Luhrte is a retired architect and an AIA Fellow, the highest membership honor bestowed by the American Institute of Architects. He is a member of Historic Denver’s Board of Trustees and chair of the Historic Denver Board Preservation Advocacy Committee.
Thank You
New and Renewing Members July 1, 2022 - September 19, 2022

Kathy Augstner
Steve Augstner
Ann-Alexandra Leggett
Mary Beth Ambroziak
DJ Araujo
Gail Baird
Mark Bartelmez
Rhonda Beck
Tad Benedict
Lyn Berry-Helmsberger
Brandon Benton
Ginger Bhee
Michele Billingsley
Gwendolyn T. Black
Scott Bogart
Carey Borchert
Pamela Bradley
Teddy Briggs
Kathleen Brinker
Carol Burt
Vincent Buenrostro
Marcela Cambridge
Leah Chamney
Nathan Church
Sheila Cleaver
Kristin Collins
Elise Connolly
Scott Convery
Mike Craznow
Nate Craig
Tom Croucher
Renee Cusick King
Hoole Crumpler
Hail Cyrus
Elise Daehnick
Heather Debacks
Audra Dayhoff
Pat Dacek
William DeGroot
Kimber Dempsey
Karen Dennisich
Karen Dunning
Karen Easterling
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Lynn Evers
Dovros English
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Ruth Falkenberg
Greg Fasing
Bonne Fegan
George Fegan
Jerry Fitzgerald
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Jordan Gostmaker
Karen Grable
Jennifer Greving
Erica Gutierrez
Lucy Hamilton
Debbie Harris
Karen Harrison
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Susan Heitzman
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Frode Jessen
Julia Johns
Hayden Johnson
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Roderick Marshall
Bruce Martin
Cullen McNabes
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Lesia Miller
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Robert E. Montgomery
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Andrew Riggio
Ryan Risse
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Mary Salas
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Cindy Schevitz
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Clark Wilson
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Chris Wasko
Janet Walters
Diane Wiltch
Kim Walz
Connie Walker
Dale Weible

SUPPORT HISTORIC DENVER / MOLLY BROWN HOUSE MUSEUM THROUGH THE FOLLOWING MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS:

MONTHLY KEYSTONE MEMBERSHIP

- $5/mo
- $10/mo
- $20/mo
- $100/mo

YEARLY MEMBERSHIP

- Senior discount is 30% off the following membership levels
- Individual $45/yr
- Dual $65/yr
- Family $80/yr
- VIP Associate $125/yr
- VIP Contributor $250/yr
- I would like to make an additional donation of $ ____________________________

Name(s) to appear on membership card(s):

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Address ___________________________________________________________________

City ____________________________ State ___________ Zip  ______________________

Phone  ____________________________________________________________________

Email  ____________________________________________________________________

Card Number: _________________________________ Exp. Date: ___________ ________

Check Credit Card: ___ Visa ___ MasterCard ___ AmEx ___ Discover

Email  ____________________________________________________________________

Phone  ____________________________________________________________________

City ____________________________ State ___________ Zip  ______________________

Address ___________________________________________________________________

Name(s) to appear on membership card(s):

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Email  ____________________________________________________________________

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Email  ____________________________________________________________________

Phone  ____________________________________________________________________

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Address ___________________________________________________________________

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COMMUNITY BOOK CLUB
Sunday, December 4 • 7-9pm • Virtual or in-person at the Center for Colorado Women's History • Free
Join fellow book and history-lovers in a spirited discussion of Pulling Harvey Out of Her Hat: The Story of Mary Coyle Chase by Mimi Pockross.

SUNSET TOWER TOURS
December 4, 11, 18 • 4:30pm • Daniels and Fisher Clock Tower • $17 Member • $20 Non-Member
Experience the holiday lights at sunset from the vantage point of Denver’s 1911 skyscraper, the Daniels and Fisher Clock Tower. This guided tour will include history of the tower, as well as views from the 20th floor balcony.

COLORADO GIVES DAY
Tuesday, December 6
Schedule your Colorado Gives Day donation starting November 1 at coloradogives.org to give where you live!

REALTOR SEMINAR: UNDERSTANDING & SELLING DENVER’S HISTORIC HOMES
Wednesday, December 7 • 12-4:30pm • Virtual • $55 Member • $70 Non-Member
This popular 3-credit course covers 150 years of Denver architecture, an exploration of the various types of historic protections, maintenance pointers for homeowners, and sales tips. We are offering the course virtually; in order to join and receive all 3 of the education credits you must have video capability and remain present for the entirety of class.

YULETIDE TEA
December 10 and December 17 • 1pm and 3pm • Molly Brown House Museum • $36 Member • $40 Non-Member
Create holiday memories at the Molly Brown House Museum with our Yuletide Tea! Make us a part of your family’s holiday traditions as together you explore the holiday decorations and enjoy delicious yuletide treats with a hot cup of tea in our tearoom. Suggested for ages 6 and up. Our Yuletide Tea take place on the 3rd floor of the museum, which is only accessible via stairs.

To purchase tickets to upcoming events visit: historicdenver.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

52ND ANNUAL DINNER & AWARDS PROGRAM
Thursday, November 17 • 7pm • Virtual or in-person at the Center for Colorado Women’s History • Free
Join fellow book and history-lovers in a spirited discussion of Pulling Harvey Out of Her Hat: The Story of Mary Coyle Chase by Mimi Pockross.

ART ON PENN.
Thursday, December 1 • 5-7pm
Molly Brown House Museum • $20 Member • $25 Non-Member
Sumi-e is the ancient art of Japanese ink painting. Sumi-e captures, in a pure and simple way, the timeless beauty of the natural world. Margaret and J.J. Brown traveled to Japan several times and brought back artifacts, some of which are still in the house today. We will be taking a closer look at the Sumi-e art form and virtually travel with Margaret to view the art of Japan through her eyes. We will also create our own beautiful bamboo scroll paintings.

ORGAN TOUR
Saturday, December 3 • 9-10am • Daniels and Fisher Clock Tower • $17 Member • $20 Non-Member
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