

# HISTORIC DENVER NEWS

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The mayor’s office and city council chambers are housed at the City & County Building. Photo: Jay Homstad

## MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS SPECIAL SECTION

The 2023 municipal election is upon us, with ballots due by 7 p.m. on Tuesday, April 4. Historic Denver does not endorse any candidate. However, we are keenly aware of the influence a mayor and city council members can have on policies related to our built environment and our historic and cultural treasures, and we are watching the election closely.

With this in mind, Historic Denver queried the candidates regarding the issues we know you care about, such as preservation, sustainability, and the intersection of historic buildings and affordable housing.

Historic Denver sent questions to those running for city council and mayor using publicly available email addresses pulled from their public websites. Recipients received the questionnaire, as well as two reminder emails, over a 10-day period. Of the 17 candidates for mayor and 40 candidates for the 13 council seats, 44% of those on the ballot responded to the questionnaire by our deadline, plus five write-in candidates.

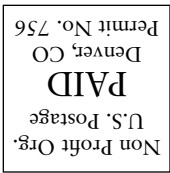
Responses printed below are lightly edited to condense them. Due to space constraints, only candidates on the ballot are included here, with the candidate names listed in alphabetical order. We encourage you to view the full list of questions and responses online at [historicdenver.org/2023-election](https://historicdenver.org/2023-election)

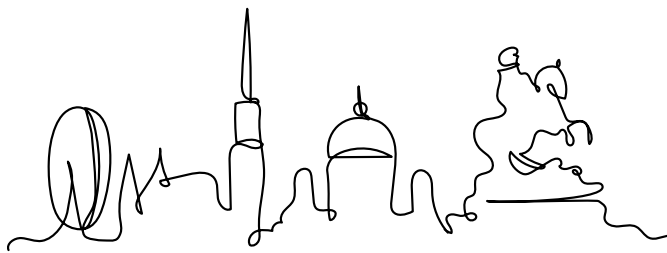
### WE ASKED THE CANDIDATES:

**“Historic Denver believes preservation can go hand-in-hand with growth and development. What specific ideas do you have to balance our growing population with our historic built environment?”**

- Mayor**
- Kelly Brough** • “I am committed to building more housing and increasing density in Denver but there is no reason that the pursuit of smart density must negatively impact our historic buildings. In fact, through adaptive reuse, I believe that historic buildings can be part of the solution.”
- Lisa Calderón** • “We can look to cities like Minneapolis for solutions to these problems — they adopted truly form-based design and development standards that respect historic patterns of development so that new growth is durable and compatible, even if it is stylistically different.”
- Aurelio Martinez** • “It can and it will under our administration.”
- Deborah “Debbie” Ortega** • “One approach that I plan to take, among others, is repurposing vacant units and commercial buildings to meet the needs of our surging population and limited supply of housing.”
- Terrance Roberts** • “Historical Landmarks and institutions that give Denver its culture and heritage like the Mayan Theater, Su Teatro, the Fillmore, etc., will be protected and supported under my administration.”
- Trinidad Rodriguez** • “I would like the city to develop a partnership with Historic Denver and other organizations that serves as a clearing house for innovative real estate and financing transactions that align use and match owners who value historic designated properties and with sellers who do not.”
- Ean Thomas Tafoya** • “Adaptive reuse of historic buildings is the best choice for climate action and sustainable development. We must incorporate historic preservation in Neighborhood Planning.”

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3





HAVE YOU RECEIVED YOUR MAILED BALLOT?

Historic Denver’s Molly Brown House Museum showcases the legacy of Margaret “Molly” Brown, who held a lifelong belief in equal rights for all. The museum continues her work to strengthen gender equality, voter equity, and voter access through education and interpretation.

In the spirit of Margaret Brown, and with our mission in mind, a main theme of this issue of Historic Denver News is the April municipal elections.

Elections represent a season of hope and possibility. Nearly 60 names are on this year’s ballot across the city council, auditor, and mayoral races, each hoping to be elected. With 17 candidates on the ballot for mayor alone, it’s likely that this election will result in a runoff as has happened in the past two out of three mayoral elections.

As you know, Historic Denver does not endorse individual candidates, but we do give candidates the opportunity to introduce themselves to you in these pages. We polled all city council and mayoral candidates and heard back from many. Read on for excerpts from their responses, and visit [historicdenver.org](http://historicdenver.org) for a deeper dive.

Housing, development, and affordability are all hot topics, especially in the citywide debates required by the new Fair Elections Fund. While cutting red tape and building at a faster clip may seem an obvious approach, we know that higher-volume construction isn’t the only answer. For example, when demolition of older single-family homes only gives way to larger single-family homes, we’re not moving the needle on affordability or housing supply.

Preservation can go hand-in-hand with growth and development — and it has to, if we want a city that’s diverse, dynamic, and distinctive. The city’s Blueprint Denver land-use plan and Comprehensive Plan 2040 have a vision for Denver that preserves character and culture to maintain our city’s authentic history while we grow and evolve. Historic buildings are one part of the solution to our housing crisis. Building more housing units can coincide with other strategies like incentivizing adaptive reuse, permitting accessory dwelling units (ADUs), using data uncovered by the Discover Denver citywide building survey to identify notable structures and areas, and ensuring that all people can see themselves in the story of their city through its places. A multi-pronged approach will drive affordability as well as quality of life.

The candidates have a wide variety of proposals and ideas for how we can preserve our built environment. We’re following these issues and will continue to advocate for related policies no matter who wins, and we look forward to working closely with our new elected representatives.

Election year or otherwise, as Denver’s leading community-driven voice for historic places, Historic Denver works every day to promote and protect what makes Denver Denver. Thank you for your support as we continue this important work.

Don’t forget to return your ballot by April 4!

John R. Lucero  
Chair, Historic Denver Board of Trustees

NOMINATIONS FOR ANNUAL AWARDS

Which preservation projects or people do you think should be nominated for Historic Denver’s 53<sup>rd</sup> Annual Awards Dinner & Gala on November 2, 2023, at The Brown Palace Hotel?

Honorees will be selected from the following categories:

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION AWARDS

Given to projects, institutions, or community efforts that have made an exceptional contribution to the preservation of Denver’s heritage.

REMIX AWARDS

Given to one or two projects each year that creatively combine the old and new.

THE ANN LOVE AWARD

Presented to a person who does not consider themselves a traditional preservationist but has shown initiative, creativity, and commitment in preserving the history, culture and architecture of Denver.

THE MOLLY BROWN AWARD

Presented to someone who has devoted many years to civic life in all its forms, actively engaging in politics, philanthropy, arts and culture, and historic preservation.

THE KEYSTONE AWARD

Presented to those who have made a significant contribution to historic preservation over a career or lifetime.

The individual awards may be given to a couple, a partnership, or a specific group of people. Nominations will be accepted until May 26, 2023, via our online voting form:  
[bit.ly/HDAwards2023](http://bit.ly/HDAwards2023)



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MOLLY BROWN HOUSE MUSEUM  
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Historic Denver News welcomes your letters, contents of which may be edited for length and clarity. Please include your name, address and telephone number in correspondence to:  
Editor, Historic Denver News,  
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Unless otherwise noted, all photographs were taken by Jay Homstad.



MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS SPECIAL SECTION

BUILDINGS & PLACES  
OF INTEREST TO CANDIDATES:



At-Large

- Will Chan** • “We can also proactively identify main streets and neighborhood centers worthy of preservation, rather than reacting to demolition proposals, when a historic designation attempt may be too late.”
- Tim Hoffman** • “Amending our zoning code that allows for more types of housing can be accomplished without having a negative impact on current landmarks and can be done in a way that maintains the specific requirements of historic districts.”
- Travis Leiker** • “Updating city code to facilitate easier updates and thoughtful reuse of old properties to reduce our carbon footprint and expedite neighborhood revitalization.”
- Penfield Tate** • “Developments in historic neighborhoods should undergo review early in the approval process by various stakeholders – architects, neighborhood organizations, and city planners.”
- Marty Zimmerman** • “Create impact plans for new developments. The plan will include relevant information for the preservation of historical sites in the development area.”

District 1

**Amanda Sandoval**

“By using a combination of adaptive reuse, incentives, protections, education, and collaboration, we can ensure that our historic built environment is preserved while also accommodating the needs of a growing population.”

District 4

- Tony Pigford** • “I think that the conversation can start with adaptive restoration and reuse of existing historic buildings can help to find a balance with our growing population while preserving our historic buildings.”
- Diana Romero Campbell** • “The city’s building dept should make it easier for people to reuse old buildings without having to adhere to regulations that are cost prohibitive.”

District 5

- Michael Hughes** • “We have to channel growth away from historic districts (and resist the movement to rezone historic neighborhoods) and toward areas where development can be served with great transportation and where that new development does not come at the price of historic buildings.”
- Amanda Sawyer** • “From the cases I’ve seen in District 5, the costs to adaptively reuse structures has been extremely high, which is a huge disincentive for developers. The city needs to adopt adaptive reuse incentives to overcome this hurdle.”

District 6

- Paul Kashmann** • “I would consider additional tax benefits for property owners whose property is land marked. Also reductions in permitting for renovating rather than scraping.”

District 7

- Adam Estroff** • “I believe that allowing adaptive re-use of structures and a land use code that allows flexibility are the best ways to preserve buildings...Under our current code it would often be easier to demolish a building and create a replica rather than re-use, that should be changed.”
- Nick Campion** • “To balance growth while preserving historic buildings, we need to address each case as a community and determine if the building is a major part of the culture of the community.”
- Guy Padgett** • “Denver must embrace programs that let residents and businesses reinvest in historic properties to keep them viable. Liberalizing the use of ADUs throughout the city is one strategy. Another is more aggressively helping owners make their properties energy efficient through electrification of appliances and insulation improvement.”

District 8

- Leslie Twarogowski** • “I will continue to advocate for houses/lots to be subdivided and find incentives for currently existing affordable houses to not be torn down.”
- Tyler Drum** • “We should have more incentives for structures to be repurposed as adaptive reuse of historic buildings minimizes the use of new construction materials and preserves our city’s history.”

District 10

- Chris Hinds** • “We can do both: commemorate where Denver came from using historic preservation while building in anticipation of Denver’s future...Two examples of doing both at the same time are in District 10: Uptown Tavern and Tom’s Starlight.” ☼

*Special thanks to the University of Colorado Denver graduate-level Politics of Preservation class and Barb Pahl for their support on Historic Denver’s candidate survey.*

BALLOTS

Mailed out week of . . . . . March 13  
Last day to return ballot by mail . . . . . March 27  
Ballots due by . . . . . Tuesday, April 4 at 7 p.m.  
Check registration . . . . . GoVoteColorado.gov  
Find 24-hour ballot drop boxes and a list of in-person voting centers on the denvergov.org website

DID YOU KNOW?

Eligible registered inmates can vote from the Denver County Jail and unhoused neighbors can use any Denver Public Library branch as their address.



# MOLLY BROWN HOUSE MUSEUM

## THE BROWNS VISIT THE CHICAGO WORLD'S FAIR

by Abigail Wedlick, Archives Assistant

When Margaret Brown and her son, Lawrence, attended the 1900 Exposition Universelle in Paris, France, they found the experience disappointing. To a reporter back in Denver, Margaret said the exposition, “is not finished and never will be. It means the ruin of a pair of shoes and a gown every time you go there... [it] cannot compare to the White City of the Columbian Exposition... It is a matter of common comment in Paris that no such electrical or mechanical display was ever seen in Europe before as America presents at the exposition.”

Six years earlier, Margaret and J.J. had taken their two young children to the World’s Columbian Exposition — the last stop on a long family trip before they returned home to Leadville. They spent nearly a month touring the Chicago World’s Fair, impressed by the displays of American innovation, entertainment and achievement.

Many agreed that the Chicago World’s Fair electrical displays, which twinkled from May through October of 1893, were unparalleled. The Browns were awed by the inventions presented there for the first time, such as moving sidewalks, electric sewing machines, and George Washington Ferris Gale Jr.’s spectacular electric wheel.

In an effort to surpass the previous Paris Exposition Universelle of 1889, the United States needed an attraction that could out-Eiffel the Eiffel Tower. Ferris’s Wheel was chosen. The wheel itself was over 250 feet tall and its location as the centerpiece of the midway allowed guests to have an unobstructed view of the grand Beaux Arts and Neoclassical buildings that formed the “White City” and Lake Michigan beyond.

The Browns also visited the Colorado pavilion, which aimed to capture key elements of life in the young state. This included a mining exhibit, which Margaret called “splendid,” especially as Colorado contributed a significant amount of the ores and minerals on display at the exposition. The city of Aspen sent a silver gilt statue named “Silver Queen” to display in the pavilion, and an unknown Colorado engineer donated an animatronic diorama of the interior workings of a mine, which fairgoers found fascinating.

In the Women’s Building, the women of Pueblo created a model of their city’s Mineral Palace for the Fair. Though on display separately from the state pavilion, the model represented an important part of Colorado culture. For Puebloans, it was a way to showcase their gems and minerals and illustrate that Pueblo was growing into a major urban center.

The same summer as the fair, Colorado was sent into an economic crisis when the Sherman Silver Purchase Act was repealed and silver was instantly devalued. Since J.J. had made his fortune in gold, the Brown family wealth was unaffected and, even though the silver market was affected, mining would remain a significant industry in Colorado as many other industries relied on Colorado’s mined resources.

While Margaret enjoyed the mining exhibit, six-year-old Lawrence was entranced by the Colorado pavilion’s agriculture exhibit, which featured the state’s grasses, grains, and fruit. The fruit displays had an impact on young Lawrence, as he remembered them proudly years later for the Rocky Mountain News reporter:

“ ‘Yes,’ chimed in Master Lawrence, ‘and the Frenchmen never saw such apples as there are in the American exhibit. They never saw any apples larger than that,’ making a ring with his fingers. ‘The Americans are taking the first prizes with all their fruits and vegetables, machinery and electrical appliances.’”

The Columbian Exposition also introduced new food brands that are still enjoyed today, like Cracker Jacks, Vienna Sausage, and Wrigley’s Juicy Fruit gum, which the Brown children undoubtedly enjoyed tasting for the first time.

By the time the Browns returned to Leadville in late 1893, they had been traveling across the United States for several months. During their stay in Chicago, they saw innovations in technology and witnessed the grandeur that their country and their state had to offer. Whether it was Margaret recalling the electric glamour of the “White City,” or Lawrence enjoying the tremendous American apples, the Browns would never forget



their experiences at the exposition. In Margaret’s case, she was even inspired by it years later, when she planned the 1906 Carnival of Nations in Denver.

You can travel back to 1893 and immerse yourself in the Chicago World’s Fair at our exhibit, *The World is Changing*, which runs May 3-August 27, 2023, at the Molly Brown House Museum. Just as the Browns toured the fair 130 years ago and experienced a celebration of new innovations, you can learn more about the artists, inventors, and industrialists who were eager to make their mark on this global stage. On display at the museum, you’ll find unique original artifacts from the fair and learn about the wonders experienced by the thousands of visitors. #

**DISCOVER**  
how the world was changed  
by this momentous event.  
**Tickets at [mollybrown.org](https://mollybrown.org)**

Fairgoers were astounded by unveiling of the Ferris Wheel. Photo: Library of Congress.

Replicas of the Niña, Pinta, and Santa María were docked at the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair, which was also called the Columbian Exposition after Christopher Columbus’s voyage from the Mediterranean to North America 400 years earlier. Photo: Denver Public Library Special Collections WHJ-10421



Historic preservation and sustainability are natural partners. The preservation and reuse of existing buildings and retrofitting them to be “green” reaches for new heights of fiscal and environmental responsibility.

Daria Castiglione



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PHASE FIVE ON THE WAY IN 2023

by Beth Glandon, Director of Research and Engagement



The Discover Denver citywide building survey project expects to move to northeast Denver in the coming months. Volunteers will begin documenting the buildings of the Five Points, Skyland, Clayton, and Whittier neighborhoods, and plan to be in northeast Denver through the end of the year. Work is already underway to identify buildings previously noted as significant, as well as to schedule events where area residents can learn more about Discover Denver’s work and share their own knowledge.

The project team is excited to learn about another area of the city with completely different stories to tell! If you have photos or stories to share about the buildings and history of northeast Denver, visit [discoverdenver.co/share-what-you-know](https://discoverdenver.co/share-what-you-know) to contribute to the project.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT: MEAGHAN HEINRICH



Meaghan Heinrich joined Historic Denver in November as survey coordinator for Discover Denver. In this role, Meaghan oversees field survey operations for the project, trains new survey volunteers, and reviews the data collected by the project to ensure it is accurate and complete.

Meaghan recently received a master of science in historic preservation from the University of Colorado Denver. Part of her graduate studies at UCD centered on historic cemeteries and their preservation. As part of her research, she visited almost 30 cemeteries or burial sites in the state of Colorado!

The colorful Queen Annes and other historic homes in her hometown in Indiana inspired her to study architecture at Ball State University. As a part of her

integrated curriculum at Ball State, she traveled to several cities such as Chicago, Montreal, Savannah, and Charleston for immersive studies of architecture, design, and planning. She credits a grade school field trip to see an old film at a restored Art Deco theater with sparking her initial interest in preservation.

Before moving to Denver to pursue her graduate studies, she interned with the Historic American Building Survey (HABS), a program of the National Park Service. Her focus was on documenting several portions of New York City’s Ellis Island, including buildings and areas that are not accessible to visitors. Not only did she learn to document historic buildings by hand, but she also spent part of the summer working with laser scanning technology (LiDAR), which was used to create 3-D models of Ellis Island buildings.

Meaghan interned with the Discover Denver project before graduating from UCD. She brings to Discover Denver a deep knowledge of architecture and a passion for finding architectural gems and untold stories in Denver’s neighborhoods. In her free time, Meaghan enjoys collecting and caring for her numerous tropical plants and succulents.



CITYWIDE INDIGENOUS CONTEXT STUDY UNDERWAY

by Leah Charney, Historic Denver News Managing Editor

Did you know that we have one of the highest populations of urban-dwelling Indigenous peoples in the country? Denver typically ranks in the top ten of U.S. cities in terms of total population. The Queen City of the Plains is home to many people from the more than 570 federally-recognized tribes, as well as those nations that have not received government recognition.

A new project, led by Denver’s Landmark Preservation team with support from the city’s Office of Storytelling, seeks to tell the rich and diverse history of Denver’s American

Indian, Indigenous, and Native American communities. The second of the community-driven “Denver in Context” series, the American Indian/Indigenous Peoples Historic Context Study aims to provide “a broad historical overview of early native history in the area that is now called Denver through the 1990s, and identify associated sites and buildings to preserve and celebrate American Indian and Indigenous Peoples culture and history.”

Those soon-to-be-uncovered locations will also inform the Discover Denver citywide building survey. The American Indian/Indigenous Peoples Historic Context Study is the first citywide effort to locate and preserve the culturally relevant landmarks of the Indigenous communities who continue to call Denver home. Additionally, the context survey hopes to “identify important historical themes, such as political, social, and cultural practices and institutions” and “ensure inclusive preservation practices, not just through designation, but also broader land use planning and policy.”

This project’s predecessor is the recently completed Latino/Chicano Historic Context Study, where the city collected more than 300 stories from members of Denver’s Chicano, Latino, and Mexican American community, resulting in the *Nuestras Historias: Mexican American/Chicano/Latino Histories in Denver* report. The American Indian/Indigenous Peoples Historic Context Study is expected to take about two years from start to finish and create a similar report that includes community voices, visuals, and oral histories; explores the built environment; and raises awareness of and appreciation for historic resources.

By partnering with Native communities, the City and County of Denver will develop a written study and documentary that shares the history of American Indian, Native American, and Indigenous peoples in the area the Arapaho knew as niinenii niicie and that we know today as Denver. 🌸

FOR MORE INFORMATION  
OR TO PARTICIPATE, VISIT

[bit.ly/AmericanIndianContextStudy](https://bit.ly/AmericanIndianContextStudy)

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Toshimune (Ben) and Shizue (Susan) Okubo shortly after they married (1920s) and on their 50th Wedding Anniversary. Photo: Courtesy Okubo Family

50 ACTIONS FOR 50 PLACES

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 have 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 will report the news in these pages and on our social media accounts.

CAPTURING THE STORY OF BEN’S SUPERMARKET

by Alison Salutz, Director of Community Programs

One of our 50 Actions sites is Ben’s Supermarket, named for Toshimune (Ben) Okubo. The Okubo family — Ben and his wife, Shizue (Susan), and children Ruby, Henry, and Helen — were living in Los Angeles when the United States joined World War II. On February 19, 1942, Executive Order 9066 was signed into law, forcibly removing individuals of Japanese descent from their homes, and requiring them to relocate further inland.

By May of that year, the Okubo family had sold their business, their home and most of their possessions, and had been moved to temporary housing at the Santa Anita Racetrack among more than 8,500 others. Ben later said he felt lucky the family was placed in a barracks and not in one of the horse stalls. In September 1942 they were moved to the Granada Relocation Center (later called Amache) in southeastern Colorado, where they remained until 1945.

After the war, the family moved to Denver. Ben, Susan, and their eldest children found work and collectively contributed to buying a house at 28th Avenue and Gaylord Street. The family now included two more children, Jim and Jane, born while the Okubos were incarcerated at Granada. Ben returned to his previous line of work: that of a grocer. In 1950, he purchased a store at the corner of 28th Avenue and York Street — 2301 E. 28th Ave. — and opened Ben’s Supermarket. The 1894 building was initially constructed as a corner store with an apartment on the second floor. Beyond being close to the Okubo home, it was also located strategically on the Route 28 streetcar line terminus, which opened in 1889.

Though Ben sold the store and he and Susan returned to Los Angeles in 1961, the Okubo family is a fondly remembered part of the community. Their son Henry remembered neighbors would frequently knock on the family’s door when the store was closed and Ben or Susan would walk whoever down to the store, open it, and sell them what they needed.

Another community member, Marilyn, recalls that, as a little girl, she took the bus at 28th Avenue and York Street to get to and from school. If she didn’t get off the bus, the Okubos would call her mother. She remembers fondly that her mother often gave her a nickel or dime to spend at Ben’s Supermarket. Whatever she picked out would always cost exactly what she had, including the time she asked to buy a present for her mother. The Okubos were generous, and let her pick something out that her mother would like, charging her only the amount that she had in her small coin purse.

Even after the Okubos sold the store, the name remained, and with each owner Ben’s Supermarket continued to provide the neighborhood with access to food as well as a sense of place and community until 2020. Recently the space sold once again and is currently home to Ephemeral Rotating Taproom. In a nod to the space’s long history, the taproom does keep a large shelf of local and hyperlocal products, as well as a cooler of locally brewed beers. The sign that advertised Ben’s Supermarket is currently part of the taproom décor and continues to keep the memory of the longtime name of the building alive.

Completing this research is the first step of our interpretive plan for Ben’s Supermarket as part of 50 Actions for 50 Places. Next, we will design a panel that will be affixed to the exterior of the building to ensure this history remains part of the building’s story.



PLANNING UNDERWAY FOR LAKE STEAM BATHS

by Leah Charney, Historic Denver News Managing Editor

When the approximately 10,000-square-foot Lake Steam Baths building on West Colfax Avenue sold in October 2022 for about \$2 million, Denverites feared that the 95-year-old bath house would become a car wash. After all, the property was purchased by an entity named Boom Car Wash LLC. But many in the city breathed a sigh of relief when the new owners quickly confirmed to BusinessDen that their plans include a redevelopment of the property that will “incorporate the business.”

Though plans are still in progress, new owners Scott Kilkinney and Tyler Weston have kept the bathhouse open to the public in the time since. In January they began what The Denver Post described, per Weston, as “a moderate remodeling” to “fix dilapidated structures,” all of which points to a positive future for a space that’s been a local fixture since 1927.

Lake Steam Baths was opened on Colfax Avenue at Lowell Boulevard by Russian immigrants Ethyl and Harry Hyman for fellow Jewish residents in the West Colfax neighborhood. The Hymans fled persecution and war in their homeland and landed among the diaspora of other Jewish settlers from across the globe. They opened the bath house, which, according to a GoFundMe launched in 2020 during the early months of the pandemic, the Hymans built “brick by brick,” to create a community space that also embraced the health benefits of traditional Russian- and Turkish-style steam baths.

The property was sold by Amy Hyman, who inherited the business and continued to operate it in the years following the 2015 death of her husband Hannon Hyman, a grandchild of Ethyl and Harry. Historic Denver has engaged the new owners in conversation and will continue to work with them as they develop their plans. We’ll provide updates as things progress. ❁







TALENT + TIME: WHY HISTORIC DENVER VOLUNTEERS ARE MISSION-CRITICAL

Walking tour volunteers share their passion for Denver history across multiple neighborhoods. This year’s class of docents learned how to give our LoDo Walking Tour.

by Mike Erickson, Volunteer and Event Coordinator

Did you know? April is National Volunteer Month! Volunteers exemplify our organization’s mission to empower people to actively experience and thoughtfully maintain our city’s cultural landmarks and historic places today and into the future.

Our volunteers, no matter what area they volunteer in, give their time, skills, and showcase passion as they empower residents and visitors to experience our built environment. This might be accomplished through research of Denver neighborhoods, welcoming guests to some of Denver’s most cherished places, and sharing our city’s history with students and lifelong learners of any age.

With nearly 3,000 combined volunteer hours contributed annually in 2021 and 2022 alone, volunteers are essential to what we do.



Volunteers are essential in expanding our knowledge of Denver’s built environment. Discover Denver is a collaboration between Historic Denver and the City and County of Denver, but Historic Denver volunteers complete all surveying.

In the Discover Denver project — a Denver-wide building survey project that focuses on identifying the buildings that help tell Denver’s story — volunteers document and research buildings and collect stories from members of the community, sometimes learning details that could only come from these connections.

Survey volunteer Chris Geddes recalls, “One of the encounters that stands out to me was when I surveyed a basement house in Westwood last summer. A basement house is mostly underground and was built with the intent that, as you had more money and your family grew, you could add onto it by building up from the basement. It was just so neat to talk to someone who could share their personal experience [of what living in one is like].”

Kimberly and Phil Seymor learned a unique building origin story of their own while surveying Westwood: “We met an interesting longtime homeowner whose house was constructed of stone that his father and brother salvaged from the original Denver County jail. They hauled the stone and built a very solid home that is still standing.”

These volunteers enhance our ability to know more about Denver. They are an active and essential part of our mission to make more of our history accessible to residents and visitors.

Denver history also shines through our Historic Denver Walking Tour guides. These well-researched offerings are available in a number of Denver neighborhoods thanks to our walking tour volunteers, who undertake in-depth training to prepare them for sharing neighborhood histories. It is becoming increasingly popular to tour Denver by foot and The Denver Post states that the Historic Denver Walking Tours “have long been the city’s gold standard.” This is no doubt a credit to the effort that walking tour volunteers put forth, both in being knowledgeable and in passionately putting this knowledge to use with those eager to walk and learn about Denver’s neighborhoods.

Ingrid DeGreef engages her tour guests with a passion for learning about her own family history in the area, including relatives who immigrated to Golden and Colorado Springs between 1871 and 1882. “My great-great grandfather homesteaded on a portion of Lookout Mountain, so that is even more of a draw to better understand his life in that period. I find it fascinating to learn how so many diverse people came together to build up what we call Denver today,” says DeGreef. She also says that learning the Capitol Hill Walking Tour “sparked an interest in Colorado history far beyond what I ever expected. I’ve loved it so much I’m learning the LoDo Walking Tour and I also am a docent at the Center for Colorado Women’s History.”

Before the building surveys and walking tours, there was one Denver historic site that was so cherished by Denver residents that it sparked a citywide discussion about historic preservation and led to the formation of Historic Denver in 1970. This site is now the Molly Brown House Museum.

Even back then, volunteers interacted with both the public and the preservationists



Many of the first supporters and members of Historic Denver were volunteers, including those who helped restore the carriage house.

intrigued by the historic home of Margaret Brown and early volunteers were undoubtedly essential in the beautiful restoration of the house. One museum volunteer has been captivating visitors since she was thirteen years old, before much of the house was restored! Other volunteers remember visiting the house when there were people lined up out the door to see the interior for the first time.

Stephanne MacCarter, who has been volunteering with Historic Denver since 2003, remembers, “When the citizens

who became Historic Denver were raising funds to buy and restore the house, there were a series of weekends when the house was open to the public for a walkthrough; the price of admission was \$1. Of course, we wanted to see the inside of the house so Mom and I came down. I remember that the line to get in stretched from the front of the house along Pennsylvania to the north, past Colfax Avenue!”


That passion and drive to share the house and its story with others continues today. Our volunteers at the museum explain Margaret’s story and the house’s history to multi-generational audiences from all over the world. The museum’s volunteers welcome guests for guided tours and assist with a newer self-guided experience. Volunteers connect with students at the house museum for field trips and with lifelong learners off-site at our outreach programs, not to mention volunteer contributions to programs and events that occur over weekends and evenings.

From the organization’s volunteer-led beginning to how we currently engage with visitors or Denver residents, there is much to appreciate when it comes to our volunteers. Thank you, Historic Denver volunteers, for holding our mission dear and for sharing your enthusiasm through the many roles in our volunteer program.


Be sure to thank a volunteer this month, or better yet, reach out and see how you can support our mission at Historic Denver. Contact Mike Erickson at merickson@mollybrown.org or visit [historicdenver.org/support-us/volunteer](http://historicdenver.org/support-us/volunteer) to learn more about volunteering with Historic Denver. ✨

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# PRESERVATION BRIEFS



The Alan Golin Gass House features an open floor plan and large picture windows to let in natural light. Photos: Courtesy Alan Golin Gass

## MODERNIST ARCHITECT ALAN GOLIN GASS LANDMARKING HIS LONGTIME HOME

by Michael Flowers, Director of Preservation Action

Design deemed “radical” in Denver before the 1950s quickly became the norm as Modernism swept the architectural world. Modernism was not a new concept in the 1940s or 1950s, but, during these two decades, more Modernist houses were constructed in Denver than ever before. Denver’s downtown would also see a transition in style during this time, including two prominent additions by the nationally renowned architect I.M. Pei that were added to the downtown building stock. Pei was influential in popularizing Modernism downtown, but he also influenced many Denver architects who would go on to contribute heavily to the city. This includes Alan Golin Gass, whose house is on its way to becoming a Denver landmark.

The Alan Golin Gass House is a unique Modernist house that was designed by Gass and has also served as his personal residence since 1961. Gass himself had direct involvement in putting together the designation application, which highlights the unique design of the house — one that infuses Modern design with classic elements — as well as Gass’s career accomplishments. The designation marks a positive movement in the saving of Denver’s Modern architecture as many Modernist structures are becoming endangered in the wake of development pressure, like the recent demolition of the Richard Crowther House at 401 Madison St. in Cherry Creek.

Gass was born in 1931 as a fourth generation Denverite. He attended East High School, graduating in 1949. When he left the city to study at Harvard University, his original interests focused on photography and science. He ended up studying architecture following an encounter with one of Modernism’s greatest architects.

One day, Gass’s curiosity brought him into the architecture building, where he happened upon an “older gentleman” presiding over student reviews: the founder of the Bauhaus Movement, Walter Gropius. Influenced by Gropius’s instruction, Gass began to consider studying architecture as the “perfect synthesis of art and science,” and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1953 and a master’s in architecture in 1956.

At the time that Gass was studying architecture, the field was in transition. Of his first encounter, in the essay “Photography, The Siren Lures Denver Native to Architecture” that he wrote for *Guide to Denver Architecture*, Gass recalled, “I had never seen architecture like that, except by a couple of architects that local standards adjudged to be radical.” Enter I.M. Pei, who, as a former Harvard professor, maintained a friendship with Gropius as well. Gass interned with Pei during the 1954 construction of the Mile High Center at 1700 Broadway and would intern for I.M Pei’s office several times during his academic career. He also worked for Pei’s office in 1957 and 1958.

Once Gass returned to Colorado, he worked in a variety of offices before partnering with Robert Brewster Gay to form a firm. During this partnership, Gass designed his own home, which was completed in 1961. The Gass House features a prominent roof with overhanging eaves centered around a raised dome skylight. Though originally designed for a space between Montview Boulevard and 22nd Avenue, Gass ended up

choosing a more affordable property near what is now City of Brest Park, named for Denver’s sister city in France. The quarter-of-an-acre site on Harrison Lane had two alley easements and was located next to a dump, though the latter became the park. These two disadvantages allowed Alan to negotiate the price down and afford to build the house he designed.

He chose to model the design after the Villa Capra, “La Rotonda,” designed by Andrea Palladio in northern Italy. Concise and tight geometric shapes gave Gass an economical design. It was a fusion of a classic design with modern elements, including a prominent split-entry design. Gass soon realized that with such a deep space in the upper level, there would need to be a provision for natural light, which led to the

inclusion of the domed skylight on top of the raised roof structure.

The roof shape, central skylight, and dome were inspired by a school designed by Walter Gropius and his partners in West Bridgewater, MA. The house was also influenced by prominent Denver Modernist architects Victor Hornbein and Bill Muchow, among others such as Richard Crowther and Don Roark. Gass visited their homes during the design phase of his own house to get a sense of local design details. The house was also constructed by talented and well-known carpenter Clyde Manon, who is best known for his work on the homes in Arapahoe Acres, adding a high level of craftsmanship to the home.

It’s impossible to fully recount all Gass’s career accomplishments in one article, but highlights include his leadership in environmental design with the Front Range Community College project in Westminster (originally Community College of Denver North). Due to

energy concerns and rising costs of oil, it turned into a solar project. Gass was both the project architect and solar designer for the 304,400-square-foot facility built in 1973. At the time, it was one of the world’s largest buildings using a solar assisted heat pump and passive solar technology.

This project put Gass on a trajectory to enhance his knowledge of solar energy and become an expert on the application of solar technology for buildings. Gass applied the same solar heating system to two schools in Aurora: the Yale and Jewell elementary schools, both constructed in 1977, which served as the prototypes for six subsequently built hybrid active-passive solar technology buildings.

Gass also contributed to the fields of urban design and historic preservation, and has served on numerous committees and boards, and held many volunteer positions. He was influential in the development of Babi Yar Park, a Hungarian holocaust memorial designed by the offices of Lawrence Halprin. Gass continues to serve the Denver community today.

The Gass House represents a remarkable career. Historic Denver was thrilled to collaborate with both Alan Gass and Denver’s newly formed chapter of DOCOMOMO (a nonprofit documenting and conserving modern buildings) on writing the designation for his house. Though a date for the Landmark Preservation Commission (LPC) meeting has yet to be set, a finalized draft has been submitted to LPC staff and we look forward to later this year when the Alan Golin Gass House is officially named a Denver landmark. 🌿



The domed roof is a Modernist take on a Renaissance-style villa.

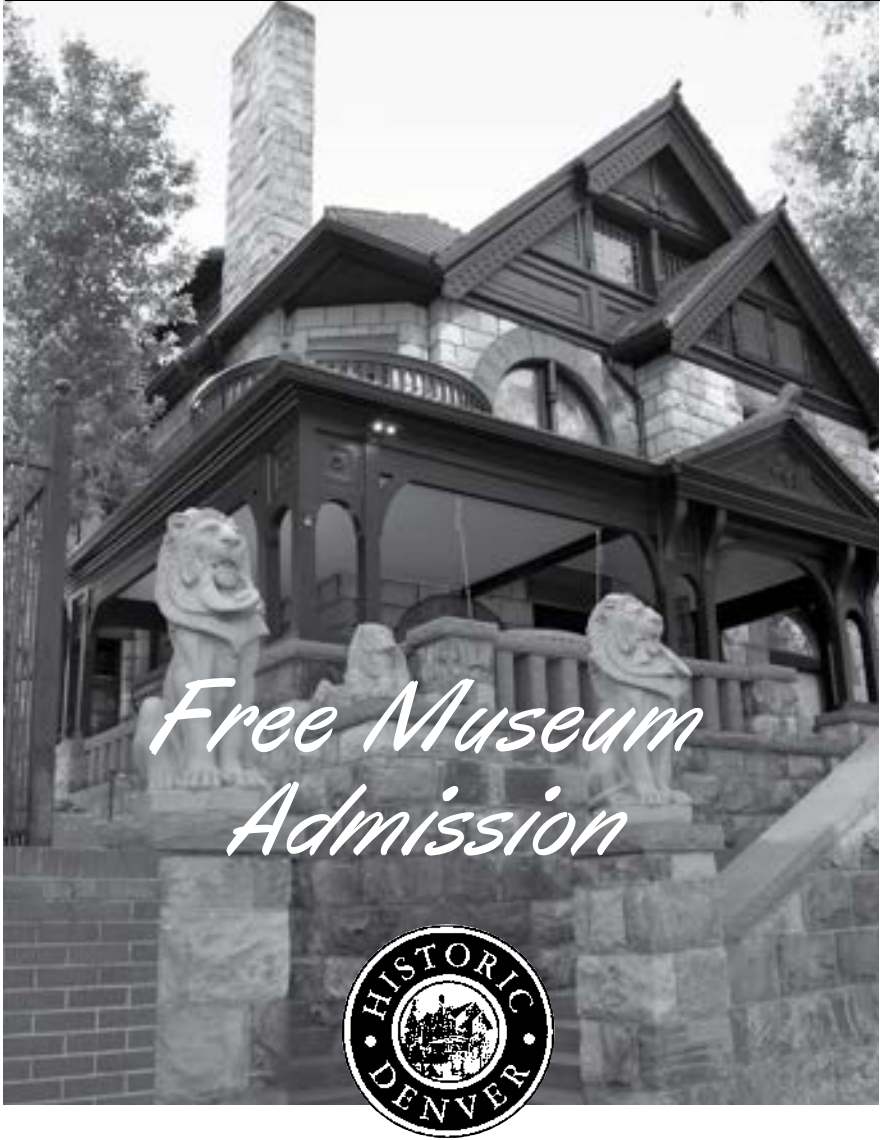


# Thank You

New and Renewing Members 12/24/22 to 3/10/23

- |                      |                        |                           |
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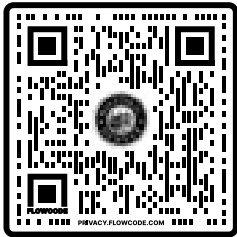


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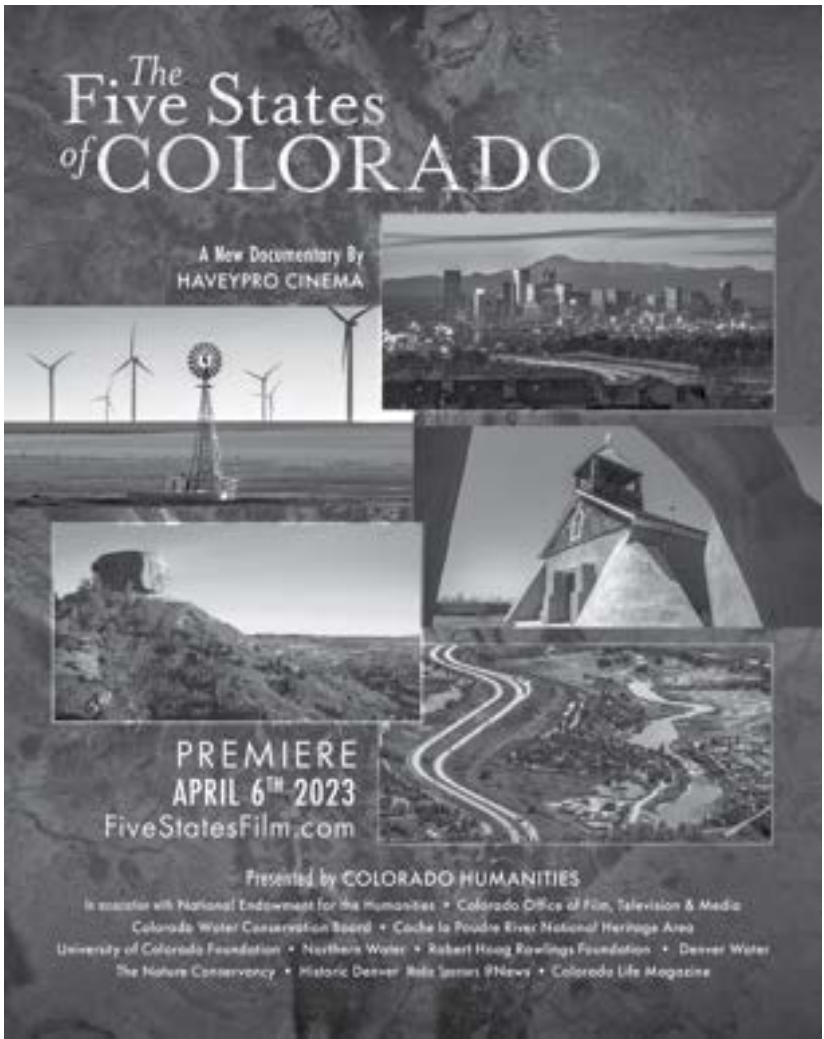
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Pictured Above: The Richthofen Castle in Montclair, Sold by Casey in 2012.

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# FROM THE TOP DOWN: HISTORIC BUILDING ANNUAL MAINTENANCE

by Michael Flowers, Director of Preservation Action  
and Alison Salutz, Director of Community Programs

What better time than spring to check on the condition of the old buildings you love? Especially since May is National Preservation Month!

We recommend assessing your maintenance needs from a top-to-bottom, outside-to-inside approach. And we recommend using the gentlest means possible to address any issue. This keeps the original materials that have already withstood the test of time in good shape. We just need to give them a little help.

## WATER IS ENEMY #1

As snow melts and we have spring rain, pay attention to where and for how long water sticks around. Pooling water can indicate poor drainage in your yard, gutters that need work, or issues with your roof not properly shedding water. We'll explore more in-depth below, but if water is not properly draining away from your building it will cause major long-term issues. Water is the number one enemy of all structures, especially historic ones, and the goal of roofs, gutters, windows, and walls is to keep water moving away from a building. If water is hanging out, that is often a hint that there may be an issue with one or more of those systems.

## START WITH THE ROOF



When evaluating your roof, the first thing to check for is peeling or damaged shingles. Another major culprit for water infiltration is peeling flashing around valleys, chimneys, roof vents or even dormers. You may be able to replace flashing before it causes any issues, but if shingles are peeling up or damaged by hail or deterioration it's probably time to look into replacement. If you do find a roof replacement is necessary, the old layer of shingles should be fully removed. Layering

materials can disguise future maintenance problems, trap in water, and add unnecessary weight to your roof structure. If you see signs of bulging or water pooling on the roof, this is also a serious sign that you should have your roof checked out.

## CLEAN YOUR GUTTERS!

You might laugh but fixes don't matter if you don't take care of the problem causing them. Ensuring gutters and downspouts aren't clogged or cracked is extremely important for preventing several condition issues. Their sole purpose is to effectively disperse water, so it's important to keep the water from spilling onto or pooling next to your favorite historic building. Check that they are catching and removing water by cleaning gutters and downspouts and looking for cracks caused by Denver's freeze/thaw climate.

## PULL OUT THE PAINTBRUSH

Most wooden elements such as trim, molding, soffits, fascia, window sashes and frames, and siding need to be periodically painted to prevent deterioration and potential rot from water exposure. Paint is considered a sacrificial layer; it protects the wood but over time it will deteriorate. Even if your roof and gutters are in tip-top shape, your wooden elements will get exposed to some water. If you notice any peeling paint or exposed wood, it is best to take care of this quickly.

## DON'T GIVE PESTS A HOME, TOO

As wood deteriorates it can make it easier for water to infiltrate, causing further deterioration to other parts of the house. But it also makes it easier for rodents to get inside, which can cause a host of additional issues. Wood, like siding, trim, molding or soffits, can be replaced in sections rather than having to redo the entire element. Pay attention to eaves and places where critters like horntail wasps, who feast on wood, like to make their homes.

## HAVE MASONRY? MIND YOUR MORTAR



Mortar is a key element in protecting your brick. It prevents excessive moisture infiltration and allows the brick to stay stable while also giving and taking in a freeze/thaw cycle. Mortar, like paint, is designed to be sacrificial. It will deteriorate over time, but keeping your joints repointed is one way to ensure your masonry won't deteriorate along with it. It's important, especially the older a home is, to make sure that the correct mortar mix is being used. Older bricks are often softer, so a soft mortar with higher lime content and less cement may be needed. Using a

mortar that is harder than your bricks can cause cracking and spalling (where the face of the brick pops off). If you aren't sure what mortar mixture you need, ask a mason: many masons can do mortar analysis.

## PAINT YOUR TRIM, NOT YOUR BRICK

Painting brick can cause more harm than good, even if it looks stylish. Bricks are designed to dry and move moisture outward. This is why you sometimes see white powder on masonry; this is salt left over from moisture escaping through this process. Even if your roof, gutters, and mortar are all perfect, some moisture will still get in your walls through condensation or even wicking up from your hardscape. If the brick can dry out properly, this little bit of moisture will rarely cause major issues. Painting or using a non-permeable sealer actually traps that moisture in. This can cause cracking and spalling and will ultimately deteriorate the brick over time, often causing it to become weak and friable (powdery).

## WHAT IF YOU HAVE PAINTED BRICK ALREADY?



If your brick is already painted, and has been so for a long time, you may need to keep it painted. If the brick is soft behind the paint, you do not want to leave it unexposed where it can absorb water like a sponge. It is best to keep soft bricks painted and sealed and just repair or replace them as needed. Painted bricks may need increased maintenance over time so the best practice is to never paint unpainted masonry.

If there is paint on your brick and the brick face isn't soft, there are several methods for paint removal. The gentlest is to remove flaking paint with a soft bristle brush. If the paint is in poor condition all over the masonry but the brick isn't, you may be able to do a very low PSI pressure wash using only water and a mild detergent. Grit blasting, even with a softer material like walnut shell, is not recommended. Any method of grit blasting can ruin mortar joints or mark up the brick, making it porous and absorbent. There are chemical strippers, like the Peel Away formula designed for masonry, but do your research or consult a professional before using one as different types of chemicals interact poorly with some types of masonry.

## HAVE HISTORIC WINDOWS? KEEP THEM!



If you keep your historic wooden windows painted properly, they will continue to last. In some cases, we see windows that are well over a hundred years old! A good exterior storm window can also protect both the window itself and the paint, reducing the need for maintenance and improving energy efficiency. Need to convince a well-meaning spouse, housemate, or window salesperson? Remember, no vinyl window has ever lasted 100 years. Much like other parts of your home, if part of the window frame has rotted or deteriorates beyond repair, you can replace just a part of the window without replacing the whole thing.

Another key element to window maintenance is the use of glazing putty. This putty is designed to seal any small cracks that form around the panes of glass. Over time, this can deteriorate, especially if the window trim is not repainted frequently enough as a thin strip of paint is often laid over part of the putty. Reglazing a window is not difficult, but it is a part of proper historic window maintenance.

## CRACKS ARE COMMON



Cracks are typically not cause for concern. Some appeared close to the construction date by the initial settling of the house. The key things you want to track are whether they are new or expanding. You can use a variety of methods to monitor the progress of the crack, including making a pencil mark at each end of the crack. If a crack is growing, especially rapidly, you may need to get a structural assessment.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

Historic home maintenance can seem daunting, but simple monitoring and preventative care preserves strong materials that were built to last. For example, the concentric rings of old growth wood make it significantly stronger and more rot resistant than new woods. Many historic materials have similar benefits, and an annual once-over can keep them functioning as intended.

Completing a full visual inspection each year and then addressing any discoveries is a great way to head off larger issues. Continued maintenance, ensuring there isn't excessive water draining onto one area, and keeping elements painted all prevent problems in the first place! 🌸

**LEARN MORE** about how to care for the old buildings that we all love. Join us on Thursday, May 18, from 6-8:30 p.m. at the Emerson School for our **Love Old Buildings Expo**. A number of experts will provide information and resources on masonry, windows, and more for FREE!

Register at [historicdenver.org/events](https://historicdenver.org/events)



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

To purchase tickets to upcoming events visit:  
[historicdenver.org/event](http://historicdenver.org/event)  
Make sure your membership is up to date to get member pricing.



**VIP MEMBER INSIDER TOUR AT  
WATKINS STAINED GLASS STUDIO**

Wednesday, March 22 • 4:30 p.m.  
Watkins Stained Glass Studio  
Our first insider VIP insider tour of the year will be hosted by Jane and Phil Watkins at Watkins Stained Glass Studio in Englewood. The Watkins family has been in Colorado since 1868, and is one of the most respected stained glass companies in the Rocky Mountain area. The company has provided stained glass for some of our city's most iconic buildings, from the State Capitol to the Brown Palace to the Molly Brown House Museum.

Members of Historic Denver at the VIP level (\$10/month Keystone Member, \$125 VIP Associate level, and above) enjoy exclusive access to insider tours of unique places around the city that tell Denver's story. Visit [historicdenver.org/support-us](http://historicdenver.org/support-us) or contact Jay Homstad for more information about the benefits of each membership level.



**DEEPER DIVE TOUR**  
Thursday April 13 and 27 • 6:30-8:30 p.m.  
\$19.12/person • Molly Brown House Museum

Whether you had a first class, second class, or third class ticket to the RMS Titanic, White Star Lines promised fine accommodations on Titanic's maiden voyage to New York City. From spacious dining saloons specific to class, to the Turkish baths and promenade decks, the Titanic was meant for much more than travel. Explore the details of traveling aboard the RMS Titanic during our in-depth tour experience in the historic home of Titanic survivor Margaret "Molly" Brown.

**TITANIC MEMORIES**  
Saturday, April 15 • 6-8 p.m. (every 15 minutes) 5 p.m. Accessible Performance  
Molly Brown House Museum • \$20 Member, \$25 Non-member

The tragic story of the Titanic resonates with people all around the world. Accounts of survivors garnered intrigue in 1912 and continue to do so today. You may know of the Titanic's famous passengers and their stories, but what about the not-so-famous passengers? Experience these heart-wrenching survivor stories in this one-of-a-kind theater experience within the historic walls of the Molly Brown House Museum.

**REALTOR SEMINAR: UNDERSTANDING &  
SELLING DENVER'S HISTORIC HOMES**

Wednesday, April 26 • 12-4:30 p.m. • Virtual  
\$55 Member • \$70 Non-Member  
This popular three-credit course is offered to real estate agents twice a year and 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 us and receive all three of the education credits you must have video capability and remain present for the entirety of class.

**GIRL SCOUT HAT WORKSHOP**  
Sunday, April 30 • 10:30-11:30 a.m., 12:30-1:30 p.m., 2:30-3:30 p.m.  
Molly Brown House Museum • \$25 per person

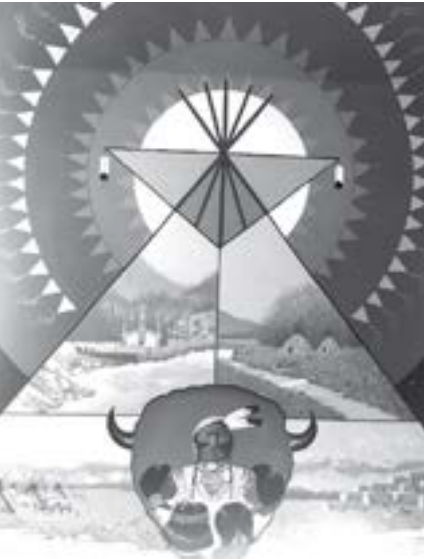
Whether it's a hat for Derby Day, an Easter bonnet, or just because, come create a Victorian-inspired hat in this hat workshop just for Girl Scouts and their adults. Everyone gets to make a hat to take home! Recommended for ages 6+.



**WORLD'S FAIR HOMESCHOOL DAY**  
Monday, May 2 • 9:30-11:30 a.m. or 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

What do peanut butter, the Ferris Wheel, and Colorado minerals have to do with each other? They were all on display at the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago! Join us to explore the impact the fair had on the world through its architecture, inventions, pavilions, and amusements.

Homeschool days offer non-traditional students the same opportunities to come to visit the museum as our more traditional school visitors. Homeschool Day programs include a specialized tour and hands-on activities.



**EMPOWERED BY PLACE:  
CHICANO/A/X MURALS**  
Wednesday, May 3 • 7-8:30 p.m. • Virtual • Free, Donations Appreciated

Join The Chicano/a/x Murals of Colorado Project founder Lucha Martinez de Luna as we discuss the goals of the project, recent work to restore and protect some historic murals in Denver, as well as her hopes for the success of the project.



**1340 PENN AFTER HOURS:  
SEX, MURDER, AND SCANDAL  
IN THE WHITE CITY**  
Thursday, May 11, 2023 • 7-9 p.m.  
Molly Brown House Museum • \$16 Members, \$20 Non-members

130 years ago, the world, including the Browns, descended on Chicago for the World's Fair, dubbed the White City because of its bright lights and white buildings. The fair brought us erotic dances, electric lights, and America's first serial killer. Ticket includes snacks and one drink. Additional drinks are available for purchase.

**LOVE OLD BUILDINGS EXPO**  
Thursday, May 18 • 6-8:30 p.m.  
Emerson School, 1420 Ogden St. • Free

Join us for a series of workshops that will help you feel knowledgeable about your historic homes. We'll cover popular topics like historic window repair, masonry, maintenance FAQs and more. If you live in, rent or love a historic home, join us for this information session.

**UNDER THE LENS SERIES: ARCHITECTURE**  
Tuesday, May 23 • 6:30-8 p.m.  
Flora House, 1430 Race St. • \$20

The Brown's arrival in Denver in 1894 converges with state and world events that changed the world into the 20th century. Margaret "Molly" Brown was an active participant in events like the World's Fair in 1893 and she would help usher this global curiosity into Denver. The Under the Lens Series, in conjunction with *The World is Changing* exhibit at the Molly Brown House Museum, will explore these world-changing topics in four programs from May to September.

**CAPITOL CROSSROADS  
SCAVENGER HUNT**

June 16-18 • Various Locations • \$12-18/person  
Are you ready to uncover more about Denver's past while following a series of clues through the city? You'll have three days to complete your hunt — although it should take something closer to 2.5 hours. Go by foot, go by bike, or any way you like! The hunt is an innovative way to uncover more about the city you love, while enjoying a fun activity with family, friends, or even on your own.



**SAVE THE DATE**  
**53RD ANNUAL AWARDS  
DINNER & GALA**  
Thursday, November 2  
The Brown Palace

Start planning your outfit — we return to The Brown Palace this November for the 53rd Annual Awards Dinner and Gala! Interested in sponsoring the event or curious about purchasing a table?

Contact Jay Homstad at 303-534-5288 ext. 26 or email [jay@historicdenver.org](mailto:jay@historicdenver.org) to discuss package options and learn how you can support our largest fundraising event of the year.

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