



City Hopes to Survey Post-War Buildings

Littleton was truly a small town, with fewer than 3,000 inhabitants, until World War II. The post-war boom changed everything. Companies like C.A. Norgren and Ohio Oil (later called Marathon Oil) moved into the city. The Glenn L. Martin company of Baltimore, with plans to employ up to 18,000 within five years, moved just southwest of the city in 1956.

A population and housing boom came with the boom in employment. From 1950 to 1960 Littleton's population jumped 305%, reaching 13,670 people. And with so many new people came new construction: homes, apartment buildings, schools, churches, and shopping centers.

Now these buildings are over 40 years old and eligible for local historic landmark designation under Littleton's historic preservation code. The City of Littleton wants to know which of these buildings are worth preserving.

Andrea Mimnaugh, the city's Historic



Church of God, 5621 S. Delaware Street

Preservation Planner, has turned in a Certified Local Government grant proposal to the Colorado Historical Society for \$40,022 to hire a consultant to complete a survey of post-war, non-residential structures in Littleton that were built

from 1945 to 1967. The survey would focus on centrally-located areas, including downtown Littleton and the Littleton Boulevard corridor.

"This era is so close to our own time that we don't have a historical perspective on it," said Mimnaugh. "We want to find out what are our important historical resources. It would be easy to tear down something we don't realize is important."

Mimnaugh cited the Marathon Oil building as a building from this era that has already been destroyed. The survey will look at post-war buildings designed by architects such as Eugene Sternberg, Joseph Marlowe, William Murchow, Eugene Groves, and Earl Morris.



Being a land-locked community, Littleton's new development will be mostly infill or redevelopment. The Historical Preservation Board and Mimnaugh are concerned that good examples of the Modern style of architecture may be destroyed in the process of replacing old development with new buildings.

"Do we still have enough buildings to tell our story?" Mimnaugh asked.

The Colorado Historical Society should decide whether to award the City of Littleton's grant request by spring of 2007.

Historic Littleton Inc. is dedicated to preserving the historical and architectural heritage of the greater Littleton area through advocacy and education.

Ed Bemis House HLI Focus in 2006

The Ed Bemis house, 5890 S. Bemis Street, was the major focus of Historic Littleton Inc. in 2006.

Back in March, 2005, HLI featured the plight of the neglected house in a newsletter, which led to non-profit organization Western Welcome Week, Inc. asking the City of Littleton to lease the house to them. The city agreed to a 15-year lease with WWW, and the City Council declared the Ed Bemis house to be a historic landmark.

In 2006, Historic Littleton Inc. retained preservation consultant Christy Fockler to survey the interior of the home and develop a plan to restore the interior.

On May 13, Historic Littleton Inc. sponsored a public open house at Bemis House to raise money for the restoration. The \$600 raised will help refurbish the leaded glass windows, according to **Cindy Hathaway**, Western Welcome Week Executive Director.

One of the highlights of the open house was meeting two of Ed and Katharine Bemis's granddaughters, **Sandy Bemis Geofrion** and **Maya DeBus**, who journeyed from New Mexico and California, respectively, to attend the open house. They brought several photo albums of historical photos and a number of family artifacts.

At the September 6 annual meeting of HLI, Director **Lorena Donohue** presented a slide show and lecture about the Bemis family and their influence on Littleton.

Dairy farmer Fred Bemis's home is in the 1890's farm at the Littleton Historical Museum. Son Ed Bemis was the long-time publisher of the **Littleton Independent** newspaper. He brought legendary



Charlie Carroll and Joe Racine at Historic Littleton's booth

editor Houstoun Waring to Littleton.

At the annual meeting, the past and present publishers and editors of the **Littleton Independent** newspaper were honored for their contribution to preserving Littleton history over the decades.

Honorees included **Garrett Ray**, former Independent publisher; **Jerry and Ann Healey**, former publisher and editor; **Jeremy Bangs**, current editor; and **Sally Atchison**, daughter of legendary editor Hous Waring.

Historic Littleton also sponsored a tour of Willowcroft Manor on July 26. HLI Director **Bruce Wolf** grew up in the former Joseph Bowles residence, a beautiful rhyolite Queen Anne home that dominates Columbine Valley. Wolf led tours through his boyhood home and spoke about the future of this historic building, which is owned by him and his siblings.

During the Western Welcome Week parade day on August 19, Historic Littleton Inc. sponsored a booth to raise the public's awareness of historic preservation. A photo display at the booth docu-

mented the changes on Main Street over the decades.

HLI Directors **Charlie Carroll** and **Joe Racine** also photographed passerbys in a pseudo American Gothic setting at the booth. The free photos were a big hit; a number of new members joined Historic Littleton, and many people became aware of our organization and its work. Many thanks to all the HLI members who helped make this first-time-ever event for HLI a success!

The Board of Directors of Historic Littleton, Inc. wishes all its members a very happy holiday season!



Louthan House Being Restored

The former home of Charles G. Louthan is being rescued from obscurity by owner David Svenson, who plans to open a restaurant and office space in the refurbished building.



Charles G. Louthan was a mayor and city councilman in Littleton in the early 1900's. He built many of the homes in the Littleton Heights neighborhood, including a block of pebble-dash bungalows that form the

Louthan Street Historic District.

Mr. Louthan's own home at 5649 S. Curtice Street, where he and his wife Lorena Bair Louthan raised seven children, had been dramatically altered over the years. The wrap-around porch had been removed and the brick exterior had been covered by an unsightly layer of stucco.

On April 4, the Littleton City Council approved Local Historic Landmark Designation for the property. That allows the owner to be eligible for tax credits and to apply for grants from the State Historic Fund.

The city council also recently

amended the Historic Preservation Code to allow commercial buildings that are designated historic landmarks in the downtown area to be eligible for funds from the Main Street Historic District Grant Fund. Grants of up to \$10,000 per year can be used for architectural design assistance, façade improvements and maintenance. The Louthan House is now eligible for a grant from



this fund.

QUOTE FROM SVENSON
ABOUT PLANS FOR BUILDING

If you have a red mark on your address label, you need to renew your membership for 2006. Please send your \$25 membership fee to:

Historic Littleton Inc.
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