



## Willowcroft Manor Placed on Endangered List

Willowcroft Manor in Columbine Valley, which was built for pioneer Joseph Bowles in 1884, is one of six historic sites placed on the 2010 list of Colorado's Most Endangered Places by Colorado Preservation, Inc.

This year's list of endangered structures was announced at CPI's 13th annual Saving Places Conference on Feb. 4.

Since 1997, CPI has produced an annual list of at-risk sites to build awareness of historically significant places within the state that are in danger of being lost.

Of the 80 sites named to the list, three have been lost, 34 are in progress, 26 remain in alert, and 17 have been designated as saved.

A committee of Historic Littleton, Inc. board members did the research and submitted the nomination of Willowcroft

Manor last fall to Colorado Preservation, Inc.

The main house at Willowcroft Manor was designed by noted Denver architect Robert Roeschlaub, who also designed the Central City Opera House and Trinity Methodist Church in Denver.

Joseph Bowles was one of the first settlers in the Littleton area. He originally came to Colorado at age 22 to prospect for gold in 1859. In 1862 he moved to Littleton and bought up land west of the South Platte River. He eventually owned 2,000 acres, stretching from the South Platte River to the hogback.

Besides being a very successful farmer, Bowles built one of the first irrigation ditches in the area and was elected county commissioner twice. When Willowcroft Manor was built it was called, "one of the most elegant residences in the state," in a newspaper article written in 1884.

The

***Willowcroft still looks as it did in Joseph Bowles' day. —Historical photo courtesy of Mary Wolf***

Queen Anne style house of pink rhyolite stone was added to the Colorado State Register of Historic Places in 1993. That designation gives no protection, however, and Columbine Valley has no historic preservation ordinance or program.

Columbine Manor had been owned by Paul and Cee Wolf since 1946. The death of Cee Wolf caused the property to be sold at auction in 2009 to a buyer who has received numerous proposals to demolish the buildings and subdivide the remaining nine acres.

HLI hopes Willowcroft Manor can be saved!



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

# Sternberg Building Future Uncertain

Imagine what Littleton Boulevard would look like without the iconic white brick building with the zigzag roof that has been at 2009 W. Littleton Boulevard since 1959.

In a vote that could be considered a setback for Littleton's historic preservation program, the Littleton City Council voted 5-2 at their council workshop to sell the former office building of architect Eugene Sternberg, currently owned by the city, without designating it a historic structure.

"My deal is: sell it or demolish it," said Councilman Joe Trujillo. "Get it out of the way. I'd vote for demolition right now."

Council members Jim Taylor, Phil Cernanec, Debbie Brinkman and Mayor Doug Clark voted with Trujillo to sell the building.

Council members Peggy Cole and Bruce Stahlman voted against selling the building, but no one made a motion to designate the building as a historic structure, despite findings by preservation consultant Diane Wray Tomasso that "the building meets the highest standard of historic and architectural significance and clearly qualifies for historic designation as a Littleton, Colorado, and National Register landmark."

Architect Eugene Sternberg, who fled Nazi Germany to settle in Colorado, designed the building for his own office. Arapahoe County District Attorney Marty Miller worked on the second floor. The county later bought out Sternberg's share.

Littleton obtained the building with the purchase of the former Arapahoe County courthouse. Previous city

councils had expressed interest in preserving the building, which had been mothballed.

City Manger Jim Woods had researched a way to fund restoration of the building, using Arapahoe County Open Space Funds, which are allowed for acquisition or improvements on historic sites, but the council couldn't see a use for the building.

"On paper it's historical," said Brinkman. "At what point do you feel it's necessary to preserve that? I'm not ready to spend city funds on that."

Stahlman said he would prefer to see the city stay involved with the building, since Littleton does not have a lot of mid-century modernist architecture.

## Bemis House Work to be Shown May 16

Historic Littleton, Inc. members are invited to come view the completed restoration work at the Ed Bemis House, 5890 S. Bemis, on Sunday, May 16 from 2-4 p.m.

This event is part of the state-wide celebration of historic preservation in May.

The main floor and grounds of the house will be open for touring. Refreshments will be served. At 3:30 p.m. this year's winners of the Historic Preservation Awards will be honored during a short ceremony.

In 2008 the City of Littleton accepted a \$198,483 grant from the State Historical Fund and agreed to a \$93,904 cash match to restore the home of Edwin Bemis, which is the headquarters of Western Welcome Week. Historic Littleton Inc. has an office on the second floor.

The work being done includes replacing the roof, stabilizing the basement support system, removing asbestos siding, and rehabilitating the exterior doors and windows.

*The Historic Littleton Inc. newsletter is published quarterly for members of HLI as part of their membership contribution. Send comments to P.O. Box 1004, Littleton, 80160 or email: [rebeccakast@earthlink.net](mailto:rebeccakast@earthlink.net).*

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# It's Time to Renew Your Historic Littleton, Inc. Membership for 2010!

Since October, 2000, Historic Littleton, Inc. has been active in fostering a positive spirit towards historic preservation in Littleton. Historic Littleton members receive a quarterly newsletter, are invited to participate in special tours and events, and are directly involved in promoting historic preservation in the greater Littleton area.

In our present economy, with a focus on sustainability, preservation has become more important than ever. As architect Carl Elefante said, "The greenest building is one that is already built."

On May 16, HLI will join with the Historical Preservation Board and Western Welcome Week, Inc. to sponsor an open house to show off the restoration of the Ed Bemis House. In the fall of 2010, HLI will celebrate its 10-year anniversary.

We look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events and thank you for your support!

Sincerely, The Board of Directors of Historic Littleton, Inc.

Mary Wolf, President; Charlie Carroll, Vice President; Sonya Ellingboe, Secretary; Ron Richards, Treasurer; Barb Eaton, Membership; Rebecca Kast, Newsletter Editor; and Directors Karen Arras, Jack Ballard, Lorena Donohue, Dick Dugdale, Liz Eaton, Leti Fanning, Doris Hulse, Mike Massey, and Darlee Whiting.

Members of Historic Littleton, Inc. need to renew their memberships for 2010. Please send your \$30 membership fee to:

Historic Littleton Inc.  
P.O. Box 1004  
Littleton, CO 80160-1004

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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I'd like to help with:  Ed Bemis Open House May 16 and/or other special events