



Come View Ed Bemis House!

The former home of Ed and Katharine Bemis has a new roof, new paint and is ready for public viewing.

Historic Littleton Inc. is sponsoring a free open house for the public to come view this restored Littleton landmark at 5890 S. Bemis on Sunday afternoon, May 16 from 2-4 p.m.

The grounds and first floor will be open. (The interior has not been renovated.) Volunteers from HLI will serve refreshments on the lawn.

This event is part of the state-wide celebration of Archaeology and Historic Preservation Month.

There will also be a formal dedication of the Bemis House on Friday, June 4 from 3-5 p.m. Mayor Doug Clark will speak, as will Steve Turner, Director of the State Historical Fund. Refreshments will be served.

Both events are free and open to the public.

Thanks to a \$198,483 grant from the State Historical Fund and \$93,904 from the City of Littleton, the asbestos siding and roof shingles were removed, the basement support system was stabilized, and the exterior doors and windows were rehabilitated.

The landscaping around the home was upgraded with new sod and sprinkler system in 2008, with the help of Schultz Industries, South Suburban Parks and Recreation, and community volunteers.

Western Welcome Week, Inc. is the tenant of Bemis House, which is owned by the City of Littleton.

Ed Bemis was the long-time publisher of the Littleton Independent, town treasurer, deputy sheriff, and overall city booster. He founded the Littleton Historical Society (which later became the Littleton Museum) and Littleton Rotary.

With his prized Kodak camera, Ed Bemis photographed early Littleton.

When he died in 1978, Bemis left his home to the City of Littleton. After a period of neglect, the house is once again the pride of the neighborhood.

Come celebrate what is truly a story of community cooperation to restore the home of a man who devoted his life to Littleton.



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

Historical Preservation Board Develops Plan

Littleton's Historical Preservation Board has developed a work plan for the next several years, based on citizen feedback from the "True Grit" series of public meetings in 2009.

The "True Grit of Historic Preservation" forums were sponsored by the HP Board and Historic Littleton Inc. Over 100 people attended the three evenings, which were facilitated by preservation consultant Nore Winter.

"We started True Grit to find out what the community wanted with historic preservation," said Bill Hopping, Chair of the HP Board, at an April 12 public hearing about the plan.

"Interest in historic preservation is alive and well in Littleton," Hopping said.

"There's a lot of public support. People care about historic preservation but they want more clarity. They want more helpful programs."

Winter drafted a strategic work plan that includes advoca-

cy, identification, management tools, education, and incentives and benefits.

The first priority of the plan will be to develop design guidelines for the Main Street Historic District.

"This was the most requested item in the True Grit forums," said HP Board member Steve Ekman.

Updating the city's List of Merit, which names properties considered to have historical significance, is the second priority.

Other priorities include making more information on historic preservation available on the city's website and in handouts, including preservation in emerging city policies on sustainability, and working with Historic Littleton Inc. to continue award programs and tours.

HP Board member Chuck Reid thought it was important for the HP Board to coordinate with the Planning Commission as they develop the COMPLAN.

David Randall, owner of a

Main Street property, argued that the work plan language should be changed in the education section. Instead of only promoting the benefits of historic preservation, Randall said the city should give both the pros and cons of historic preservation. "This is not a one-way street," he said. "There are effects."

The HP Board was unanimous in approving the work plan at the April 12 hearing.

"I think this is a very good plan," said HP Board member Margi Clute. "I'm excited to get started on things."

"We need to retain what makes Littleton special," agreed City Councilmember Phil Cernanec, who attended the April 12 public hearing.

To see the entire work plan go to www.littletongov.org and look at "What's New?"

HP Awards Given May 20

The Historical Preservation Board and Historic Littleton, Inc. will give out awards for outstanding historic preservation projects, stewardship, and advocacy at the third annual historic preservation awards presentation on Thursday, May 20 at 7 p.m. at the Littleton City Center, 2255 W. Berry Ave.

More information is available on the city's website at www.littletongov.org or call 303-795-3719.

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.

Historic Littleton Inc. Board of Directors:

President: Mary Wolf

Vice President: Charlie Carroll

Treasurer: Ron Richards

Secretary: Sonya Ellingboe

Membership: Barb Eaton

Newsletter: Rebecca Kast

Directors: Karen Arras, Jack Ballard, Dick Dugdale, Lorena Donohue, Liz Eaton, Doris Hulse, Mike Massey, and Darlee Whiting.

Trail Planned Alongside Historic Ditch

What's the oldest structure in Littleton that is still in its original location and still being used for its original purpose?

It's the City Ditch, and it's been an important part of Littleton's history since 1861.

In 1859 the Capitol Hydraulic Company was organized to construct a canal to bring irrigation water from the South Platte River to the fledgling community of Denver.

The first surveyor did not include enough slope and was replaced in 1861 by Richard S. Little. Little liked this area so well he brought his wife here, homesteaded 120 acres, and eventually established the town of Littleton.

Construction on the City Ditch, which has had many different names over its 150 years, was interrupted during the Civil War.

Floods destroyed early flumes and blew out portions of the ditch walls, which created mud holes that became hog wallows. Finally in 1867 water began flowing regularly and has continued until the present day.

The City Ditch has water right number one on the South Platte River. Water flows through it from April to November, supplying drinking water for the City of Englewood and irrigation water for other users.

Portions of the ditch in Littleton and Englewood are still open to the air and appear as they did in Richard Little's day.

In Littleton the open ditch lies west of St. Mary's Catholic Church and School. It continues around the ballfields north of St. Mary's, where it crosses over Lee Gulch in a flume. Then the ditch is piped along the west side of the Littleton Cemetery, crosses Prince Street and continues west of the Littleton Municipal Courthouse to the Depot Art Center. The original ditch depression still exists in this portion. North of the Depot Art Center the water is open again to Bellevue Avenue.

In 2003 the City Ditch was listed as one of Colorado's Most Endangered Places, because citizens in Englewood were concerned that it would be enclosed in a pipe along its entire length.

The City Ditch in its entirety is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, but that



does not give it any protection.

Now, Littleton's Director of Public Services Charlie Blosten would like to see a trail constructed along the portions of the trail in Littleton. The Littleton City Council approved \$88,000 for the trail construction earlier this year. South Suburban Parks and Recreation District has given \$10,000. Blosten has also applied for a \$250,000 grant from Arapahoe County Open Space.

"This is one of the most fun and interesting projects I've ever worked on," Blosten said.

The City of Englewood tried to put a condition on the trail construction which said Littleton would never ask for local historic designation of the ditch. "I told them I don't have the authority to say that," Blosten said. "Nobody can."

Construction of Phase One of the trail, along the portion of the ditch that goes from Littleton Boulevard to Prentice Avenue north of Slaughterhouse Gulch, will begin in 2010.

Thanks to our Renewing Members!*

Meg Anderson and John Lake
Karen and Gary Arras
Craig Bailey and Nancy Flanagan
Jack Ballard
Charlie Blosten and Kathy Jordan
Libby Bortz
Mary Bradford
Norm and Beth Brown
Thomas and Claire Brown
Jim and Florence Bullock
Charlie and Marilyn Carroll
Jim and Peggy Cole
Jim and Mary Jo Collins
Don and Amy Conklin
Woody and Phyllis Cottle
Betty Croft
Rick and Pat Cronenberger
Dick and Anne Dugdale
Jim and Lorena Donohue
Bill and Barbara Eaton
Sonya Ellingboe
Elizabeth Eaton and John Gerkin

Chris Fisher
Tim and Debbie Flynn
Vaughn and Mary Gardinier
Arthur and Anita Garfein
Mike Giesen
Cathy Grace
Gerard and Ann Healey
Jim and Doris Hulse
LeBrun and Myrtle Hutchison
Cliff and Carol Johnson
Bill and Rebecca Kast
Littleton Capital Partners
Larry and Karla Langton
Lautenbach Insurance Agency
Bill and Gloria Leeper
Mike and Kathie Massey
Jeff May and Karen Crossen
Tom and Betty Mulvey
Jaxi O'Brien
Lil Owens
Sally Parsons
Kyle and Amy Reed

Dennis and Sue Reynolds
Ron Richards
Millie Rothstein
Jim and Marilyn Ryan
Marilyn Schalge
Jean Selders
Jimmy and Annawyn Shamas
Max and Donna Smith
Jim Taylor
Frank and Marion Taylor
John and Susan Thornton
Jerry and MaryPat Valdes
Kay Watson
Western Welcome Week
Darlee Whiting
Charles and Nancy Williamson
Matt Wilson
Mary Wolf
Carol Young
Carle Zimmerman and rita derjue

*As of April 27, 2010

Members of Historic Littleton, Inc. need to renew their memberships for 2010.
If your name is not listed above, please send your \$30 membership fee to:

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

Thank you for supporting historic preservation in the greater Littleton area!

Name _____

Address _____

City, Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____