



160TH ANNIVERSARY POTTER HIGHLANDS

TOUR BROCHURE
SUMMER 2023



PROJECT PARTNERSHIP

Highland United Neighbors, Inc. (HUNI) has worked closely with Amy Berglund, Potter Highlands homeowner and real estate agent on this milestone in Denver's history. Through conversations with decades-long neighbors and personal visits to homes, this community has curated this tour guide to keep and treasure beyond this anniversary. We have enjoyed rekindling these relationships, and hope you share its history with your family and loved ones.



POTTER HIGHLANDS HISTORIC DISTRICT

POTTER HIGHLANDS

Shortly after Potter Highlands was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in January 1986, several residents started discussing the ramifications of the designation. They concluded that while it was an honor, little would be accomplished in terms of actually preserving, let alone restoring, the district. Local designation with its stringent guidelines and no-demolition clause was the next logical step. The Potter Highlands Preservation Association found its beginnings. The district became a Denver Landmark District in February 1987.

It was a turbulent time when Reverend Walter McDuffie Potter first climbed the bluff west of Denver in 1863 to stake a claim for what later would be Potter Highlands. The country was divided by a bloody civil war. Rival militias drilled in the streets - the poorly disciplined troops often were a source of terror to the citizens. The city was isolated by the war; the government had no surplus resources for the west and the long arduous wagon trip was increasingly dangerous. Supplies were scarce and expensive. On April 19, 1864, a fire started by a careless drinker destroyed a large part of Denver. In the spring of 1864, Cherry Creek overflowed its banks, and Native Americans cut telegraph lines between Denver and the east. It was a time of uncertainty, hardship, and strife.

The Reverend Potter made the dangerous journey to Denver in 1863 because of his health. The dry Denver air was touted as a cure for respiratory diseases. He homesteaded a section of the yucca-covered hillside across the Platte overlooking Denver and wrote back to his superiors at the American Baptist Home Mission Society asking permission to organize the First Baptist Church of Denver. With his death in 1866, the homestead was bequeathed to the Mission Society which sold it for development.

POTTER HIGHLANDS

Potter Highlands became part of Highlands, a Denver suburb, when that town was incorporated in 1875. Highlands' town fathers promoted the purity of its clean air, high morals, and good water to attract residents. (Denver's water often had fish flowing through the faucets.) Taking the streetcar down to boisterous, smoky Denver for work, they returned in the evening to the clean, sober community where saloons and rowdiness were prohibited.

The Silver Crash of 1893 profoundly affected Colorado culture. Tens of thousands were left unemployed and many of Colorado's wealthiest citizens ruined after price supports for silver were discontinued by the federal government. During the resulting severe eighteen month depression, real estate values plunged and construction slowed to a fraction of its pre-crash activity. When construction resumed in the mid-1890's, the whimsical frills of Queen Anne and Victorian architecture were no longer the predominant style. Less-adorned and more sober, the new Foursquare style reflected the security consciousness of the depression survivors. Highlands was annexed by Denver in 1896, a victim of the depression and unable to maintain the civic improvements it once had lorded over Denver.

DEMOLISHED 1935



The Pomeroy Mansion

37th Avenue and Federal Boulevard

In its day, the most costly and elaborate residence in Denver and Highlands, the Pomeroy Mansion stood on the northeast corner of Federal and 37th Avenue. This huge, three-story brick house with extravagant carriage and hen houses reflected the larger-than-life presence of Marcus "Brick" Pomeroy, Potter Highlands most notorious resident. Pomeroy was extremely wealthy, at least on paper. Unfortunately for the people who invested in his many mining and publishing companies, he diverted most of the funds to pay for his lavish lifestyle. One of Pomeroy's most imaginative projects was for the construction of the Atlantic-Pacific Tunnel, a railway passage under Mount Kelso and Gray's Peak, connecting Denver more directly with Salt Lake City. Half-completed, the tunnel still exists. Pomeroy only lived in his mansion for a couple of months before fleeing to New York to escape his creditors. In 1902 the mansion became the Belle Lennox Home for young children. It was razed in 1935.

THE TOURS

This booklet contains two tours that highlight just a few of the wonderful structures (and gardens) in Potter Highlands. We encourage you to wander the streets (and alleys) of this diverse and lively historic district.

1



Holiday Theater

2644 W. 32nd Avenue

The Egyptian opened in 1926, a 400-seat venue on W. 32nd Avenue. In 1953, it became the Holiday Theater. Starting in the 1960, it featured Spanish-language films until the 1980's when the theater closed. Since then, it has had many uses - as a restaurant, a shop, and a place of worship. Now, the theater is ready to welcome North Denver back in, as the Museum of Contemporary Art Denver serves as a hub for the arts.

2



Henry Lee House

2653 W. 32nd Avenue

Henry Lee owned this large, red brick Queen Anne, constructed in 1894-1895. Lee, known as the father of Denver's Park system, along with Jacob Downing, selected and purchased land for Denver's City Park, which inaugurated the park system in the city. An agriculturist born in Iowa in 1841, Lee came to Colorado in 1865 and farmed in Jefferson County. He was a member of the Park Commission under Mayors Speer and Johnson. Lee served several terms in the Colorado legislature. In 1912, Lee sold his Potter Highlands home, returned to Jefferson County, and died two years later after being struck down by an automobile.

3



Coors House

2611 W. 32nd Avenue

The Baerreson brothers designed this distinguished \$5,000 Classic Cottage in 1904. It was owned by the Adolph Coors Company of Golden and used for out-of-town guests. William McCombs was the builder. This is the district's most elegant Classic Cottage.

4



Thomas Ward House

2564 W. 32nd Avenue

Look across the street at 2564 W. 32nd Avenue. The Thomas Ward house is technically out of the district, but figures in Denver history. Ward came to Colorado in 1880, fearing that his wife had tuberculosis. His daughter, Elsie Ward Hering, was a sculptor, whose work, "The Boy and a Frog," is at the Botanic Gardens. His granddaughter, Louisa Ward Arps, wrote six books on local history.

5



The Henri Foster House

2533 W. 32nd Avenue

This vernacular masonry house was built in 1876 and is one of the oldest houses in the district. Henri Foster was a proprietor of a school supply company and became a Highlands real estate developer. He has been credited with laying out the original streets of Highlands and was the town's first clerk. The house was restored in 1980.

6



The Prout Homes

2525 W. 32nd Avenue

John Prout commissioned these four homes between 1901 and 1906. Prout, who came to Colorado with his father in 1872, became a noted mining expert. His family occupied 2501 and 2511. The smaller homes to the west were rentals. The Foursquare (Denver Square) houses were designed by Frank E. Edbrooke, one of the country's most important architects of the 1880s and 1890s. The design of these homes was a radical departure for Edbrooke, best known for his 19th century commercial buildings, most notably the Brown Palace Hotel, Central Presbyterian Church, Loretto Heights College, and the now demolished Tabor Block.




2519 W. 32nd Avenue



2511 W. 32nd Avenue



2501 W. 32nd Avenue 

 Continue north on Alcott for 1 block, then turn west on 33rd Avenue to Bryant Street

7



Frank P. Arbuckle House

3257 Bryant Street

This large three-story wood frame house was the residence of Frank P. Arbuckle (ca. 1885) who was associated with the development of Highlands' water resources. In the 1870s, water came from a series of storage lakes linked by ditches and from private backyard wells. As the population increased Frank Arbuckle organized the Beaver Brook Water Company in 1886 to bring water from Beaver Brook near Lookout Mountain. When this project failed, Arbuckle turned his efforts to the artesian water which had been discovered in Highlands while drilling for coal in the early 1880s. Arbuckle's company delivered pure artesian water pumped from four wells to thousands of residents. In 1891, the Beaver Brook Water Company merged with the Denver City Water Company.



check out the garden across the street at 3258 Bryant Street

8



Queen Anne Row

3356 Bryant Street

Continuing on Bryant, the 22 Queen Anne houses in the 3300 and 3400 blocks are themselves a small Denver Historic Landmark District, with the magnificent Queen Annes at 2530 W. 34th Avenue and 3356 Bryant as the stand outs.

9



Queen Anne Row

2530 W. 34th Avenue

10



Mackay House



3359 Alcott Street

The only stone house in the district, the Mackay house also has a matching stone carriage house. Constructed in 1891, it belonged to Hugh Mackay, a mining engineer from Northern Scotland. He originally owned land that is now part of City Park, but sold it and built this house in order to lure his sweetheart from Scotland. He discovered the Bellview-Hudson mine near Empire, one of the few silver mines to continue operating after World War I. Mackay also constructed the water works in Rock Springs, Wyoming. Following the 1893 collapse of silver, he became a building contractor and may have been the designer of his own home.

11



Nathan Davis House

3405 Alcott Street

Just north of the Mackay House is the home of Nathan Davis, the mayor of Highlands during its annexation to Denver in 1896. Note the thoughtful addition.

12



Iglesia Palabra de Vida

2601 W. 34th Avenue

The Colonial Revival style church, formerly the Highlands Christian Church, on the corner of 34th and Bryant was designed by the Denver firm of Cowe and Harvey, ca. 1903. William Cowe was one of the first Denver architects to design early century Foursquare and Craftsman style designs. In the 1920s, the church was a meeting place for the Denver Ku Klux Klan. Today, Sunday morning services fill the neighborhood with joyous singing.

13



Kress Bungalow

3428 Bryant Street

This unusual Bungalow was built around 1913 by contractor Edward J. Kress. The garage was added in 1920. Kress, a German immigrant, had moved to Denver from Cincinnati for the sake of his wife's, Johanna's health. The Bungalow features a truncated hipped roof with railing and corner finials surrounding a skylight; it has curved stucco soffits and a full width gabled front porch with wide masonry piers and heavy-shaped baluster.

14



3544 Bryant Street

After World War II, homes like these filled vacant land in Potter Highlands. Houses built after 1943 are not within the "period of significance" and therefore not protected from demolition. Homes like these, built in the 1950s, were modest and fit nicely within the character of the neighborhood. The same family built both homes, with 2550 still in the family.

15



2550 W. 36th Avenue



*see entry above



As you walk west to 3600 Clay, take time to look at the extensive and well-loved xeric garden at 2555 W. 36th.

16



Amos B. Hughes House

3600 Clay Street

Bungalows were the most popular style of construction in Denver from 1910-1930 (you can see a wide variety of styles on the west side of Bryant between 36th and 37th Avenues). This oversized bungalow is more appropriately considered a Craftsman-type home, with echoes of a bungalow, but more elaborate, larger, and with 2 stories.



Also check out the garden to the south on the corner of 36th Avenue and Clay Street

17



Hamilton Phillips House

2505 W. 36th Street

Although we have lost records tracking early builders in Potter Highlands, we know that Hamilton Phillips built this vernacular wood frame between 1879 and 1882. He also built the wood frame across the street at 3602 Alcott.

18

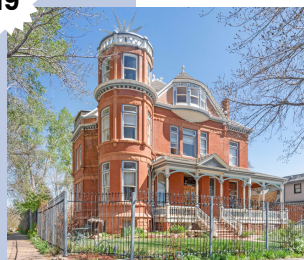


Albert Giesecke House

3659 Alcott Street

The Giesecke house was constructed around 1883-1884. Giesecke was manager for Knight-Campbell Music. Past careers before residing in Potter Highlands included conducting a four thousand head cattle ranch and being a county judge in Texas. Mr. Giesecke came to Denver to help Pomeroy with the Atlantic-Pacific Tunnel. The house is an excellent example of Italianate architecture, a very popular style throughout the United States during the 1850s.

19



John Mouat House (The Lumber Baron)

2555 W. 37th Street

This large Queen Anne (ca. 1890) with a three-story corner tower was the home of John Mouat, a wealthy Scotmans and proprietor of lumber companies in Denver and Aspen. Mouat wanted to show off his woodworking skills, so each of the main rooms features a different hardwood, including oak, sycamore, cherry and walnut. He only lived here a short time before losing his fortune in the 1893 Silver Crash. Today, the Lumber Baron is a popular bed and breakfast.



This concludes Tour Route No. 1

Tour Route No. 2



20



John Mouat House (The Lumber Baron)

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21



Patrick McGowan House

2633 W. 37th Avenue

The Patrick McGowan house is one of the oldest buildings in the district. McGowan bought lots on June 8, 1874 for this unique clapboard residence, one of the district's eight vernacular wood-frame homes. This house, with an outstanding octagonal tower, was designed after the rare 1860's Octagonal Home. Patrick McGowan was one of Highlands' original incorporators and served on the Board of Trustees.

22



Albert Goodrich Fish House

2715 W. 37th Avenue

The only Mission Revival style house in the district was one of the last large houses to be built here, circa 1909. It sat on a large residential site - with six heavily-landscaped lots (which now house the duplex to the east). Albert Goodrich Fish, who came to Denver from St. Louis in 1908, moved to this house from a Jefferson County farm around 1913 and named it "Seven Elms." Mrs. Fish spotted the house from the streetcar on Clay and urged her husband to buy it. Fish was the president of the Jackson-Richter Steel and Iron Works, founded in 1894, which fabricated architectural iron work and structural steel and was Denver's only bridge manufacturer. Fish's wife, Lizabeth Gladfelter Fish, was noted for her large garden of rare plants and for her poetry books.

23



Manetho Jackson House

2825 W. 37th Avenue

Manetho Jackson, an associate of Marcus Pomeroy, lived in this house, now called Evergreen Manor. Completed in 1882, it is the only example of the Victorian Stick style in Potter Highlands. The porch was once held up with impressive stone columns and railings with some of the window sills Colorado 'Red Rocks' sandstone. When built, this mansion took up the entire block and had a groundskeeper and maid.

24



3700 - 3800 Eliot Street

Enjoy the Victorian houses on the west side of this street. The turreted house on the northwest corner has a stained glass transom window with the original address numbers in place. The street names and numbers were changed in 1898 to merge better with Denver Streets. 38th Avenue, once known as Prospect Avenue, led into the mountains and up to the gold camps.

25



Sayer-Brodie Mansion

3631 Eliot Street

The Sayer-Brodie house, a large Queen Anne residence with a three-story corner tower, was built in 1890 by B.B. Clawson (a Highlands real estate developer). In 1892, the house was owned by Colonel Daniel Sayer, a much decorated Civil War hero with mining interests in Central City and a law practice in Denver. The house was purchased in 1908 by another Scotsman, John C. Brodie, who developed the sandstone quarries in Lyons, Colorado. This red stone was used extensively in Denver and elsewhere for construction of buildings and sidewalks. Brodie was also president of Colorado's first asphalt company, the Colorado Company. The house remained in the Brodie Family until the early 1980's.

26



Marean-Teller House

3624 Eliot Street

This two-story wood frame house with its unique shingled tower is considered to be Denver's most outstanding vernacular wood frame dwelling. Built in 1888 by two Norwegian master carpenters, the finished home was purchased by Willis A. Marean, a respected Denver architect, who designed the Governor's Mansion, Cheesman Park, the Civic Center pavilion and many downtown office structures. Marean added electricity in 1892, and indoor plumbing in 1895. He sold the house in 1902 to his good friend, John C. Teller, who was responsible for the Teller Reservoir. In 1905, the property had five out-buildings. Like many residences in Highlands, the house once had its own artesian well.

27



2927 W. 36th Avenue

Very little is known about this classic Queen Anne home here and the Sumner House next door. Built in 1890, they are mirror images with differences in the entry porches and brick coursing patterns. It is likely the houses share the same builder.

27B



Sumner House

2935 W. 36th Avenue

28



Highlands Masonic Temple

3550 Federal Boulevard

The Neo-Classical Revival Highlands Masonic Temple (1927-1928) is located in the center of a full city block. It was designed by Merrill Hoyt, one of Denver's most respected architects, who lived in Potter Highlands from 1909 to 1930 in a modest 19th century house at 2509 W. 36th Avenue (still owned by the Hoyt family). Hoyt also designed Cherry Hills Country Club. The Highlands Lodge, chartered in 1891, soon became the largest Masonic Lodge in Colorado. The cornerstone was laid on March 12, 1927, with over 1,000 members and friends in attendance. The new building, dedicated on October 1, 1928, was used by six different Masonic Lodges.

29



Frank Milton House

3400 Federal Boulevard

Denver architect Glen W. Huntington designed this house - one of Denver's most outstanding Prairie-style houses - in 1916 for Frank Milton. The non-original stone facing on the exterior does little to diminish this fine Prairie-style design. Milton was a smash vaudeville headliner for 20 years in an act called "Frank Milton and the DeLong Sisters" with his wife Lou and her sister Lillian Long. In the early 1920's he was running the Folly, ZaZa (1727 Larimer) and Jazz (1751 Larimer) theaters. In 1922, Milton took over the Rivoli theater at 1751 Curtis and ran it as a musical comedy show with movies from 1922 until the mid-30's when the depression forced him to close.

30



William Cowe House

2801 W. 34th Avenue

William Cowe, a Scottish immigrant, came to Denver in 1895 and designed this home, the first Dutch Colonial Revival house in the district. He also designed the church at 2601 West 34th Avenue. He is also known for a number of Foursquares in Capital Hill and Park Hill, and we suspect several other structures in Potter Highlands.

31



Harry Petrie Houses



3361 Decatur Street

3349 Decatur Street

The water permit for the Queen Anne at 3361 Decatur was issued in June 1891 to two carpenters, James Cameron and John F. McFarland, who lived on the other side of the block on Eliot. Theodore and Harry Petrie (probably father and son) occupied the house in 1892. Theodore was the weighmaster for the Western Railroad Weighing Association and Harry was assistant superintendent for the Denver, Lakewood, and Golden Railroad.

32



In 1897, when Harry and his young family moved into 3349 Decatur, the Denver Square with the turret, the address was 2043 Fifth Street. Harry was general yardmaster for the Union Pacific Railroad. In 1898, he became superintendent of the Denver Union Stockyards and was instrumental in establishing the Western Live Stock Show Association in 1906. Long interested in land use and conservation, Harry prepared a land management bill in 1913 that passed Congress in 1934 as the "Taylor Grazing Act." Harry moved back to 3361 Decatur in 1904.

In 1906, Robert Bunny, a prominent Central City mining man, rented 3349 Decatur to the laundryman at the Oakes Home. Among other reputed residents is a ghost at 3349.

33



Carriage Lot



The alley west of these houses has one of the most intact carriage lots in the neighborhood. The thirty-five blocks in Potter Highlands are square with houses on all four sides. The resulting "carriage square" in the center was used by horse teams as a place for turning around. Some blocks had communal stables and horse troughs.

34



The Lennox Guest House

2875 W. 33rd Avenue

The Lennox was built in 1902, designed by prominent Denver architect, Ernest P. Varian, who also designed the Denver Athletic Club. It was formerly known as the Adams Memorial Home. Charles M. Adams donated \$50,000 in memory of his wife and daughter who had died of tuberculosis. The veranda and 2nd story porches were large enough for sick patients to lay in their beds outdoors, partaking of the healing properties of Highlands' clean air. In 1947, the Lennox became a retirement home for seniors, and is now an assisted living facility.

35



Blue Unicorn Tea Room

2817 W. 33rd Avenue

This Tudor style house was built in the 1920s and served as the Oakes Home Art and Craft Shop. After the Oakes Home closed in 1935, this house became a restaurant, the Blue Unicorn Tea Room. During World War II, it was converted into residential units.

36



Ernest P. Varian Houses

2749 W. 33rd Avenue

Ernest Varian is the likely architect of these 1902 homes, the largest Dutch Colonial Revival houses in the district. Varian was a partner of Frederick Sterner, who designed the Oakes Home.

36B



Ernest P. Varian Houses

2759 W. 33rd Avenue



37



Frank P. Arbuckle House

3257 Bryant Street

This large three-story wood frame house was the residence of Frank P. Arbuckle (ca. 1885) who was associated with the development of Highlands' water resources. In the 1870s, water came from a series of storage lakes linked by ditches and from private backyard wells. As the population increased Frank Arbuckle organized the Beaver Brook Water Company in 1886 to bring water from Beaver Brook near Lookout Mountain. When this project failed, Arbuckle turned his efforts to the artesian water which had been discovered in Highlands while drilling for coal in the early 1880s. Arbuckle's company delivered pure artesian water pumped from four wells to thousands of residents. In 1891, the Beaver Brook Water Company merged with the Denver City Water Company.

38



James A. Fisher Mansion

3227 Bryant Street

The James A. Fisher house (ca. 1890) is a large red brick Queen Anne with a corner tower. Its matching carriage house boarded Fisher's matched pair of black stallions. Fisher owned a tent and awning business that later became the Colorado Tent and Awning Company. The mansion once had peacocks roaming the well-manicured lawns.

39



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This concludes Tour Route No. 2



WORTH A LOOK



St. Elizabeth's Retreat Chapel

2825 W. 32nd Avenue

The Saint Elizabeth's retreat Chapel is the only remaining building on the grounds associated with the Oakes Home, the first institution for the treatment of tuberculosis in the city and the second in the country. Founded in 1894 by Reverend Frederick W. Oakes and the Episcopal Church, the Oakes Home buildings were in the Colonial Revival style designed by Frederick J. Sterner. The first completed buildings were the Emily House for women and Grace House for husbands and wives. They opened in September 1895. St. Andrews House for men was completed in January 1896 and Heartease for the critically ill opened in October 1897. The buildings were connected by glass porches called "cloisters." Originally on one city block, the home grew to two blocks and twenty-four buildings, extending north across W. 33rd Avenue, including several residences and the Adams Memorial Home (now the Lennox). The Oakes Home discontinued treatment for consumptives in 1934, became a convent in 1943, and finally a home for the elderly in 1974, operated by the Sisters of St. Francis. The original Oakes Home buildings, considered outdated, were razed to provide for modern facilities in 1987. The original chapel, modeled after English architect Christopher Wren's London Churches, still remains and is on the National Register. It houses a 1903 Austin Pipe Organ, currently being refurbished.



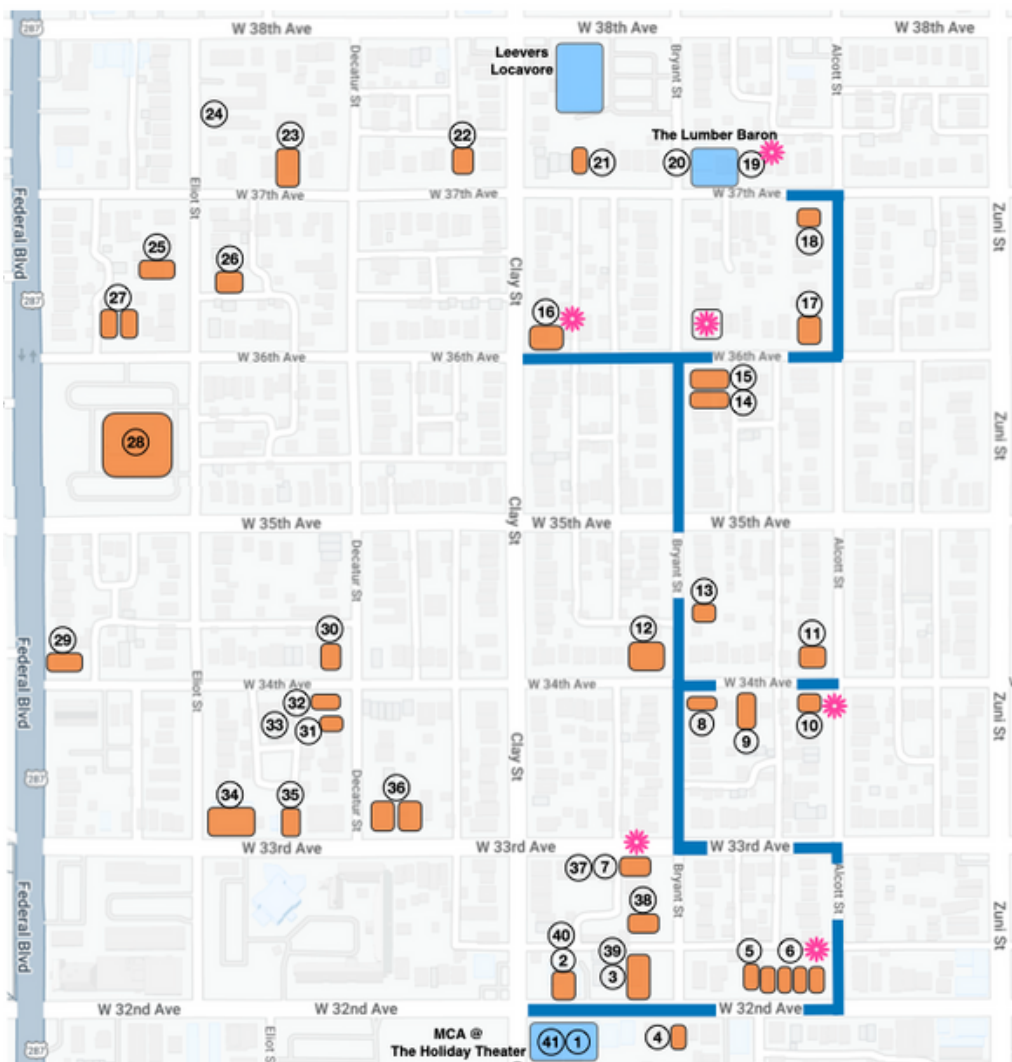
Weir Building and Hall

2405 W. 32nd Avenue

The district's largest historic nonresidential building stands on the northwest corner of 32nd and Zuni. Originally, the first floor contained shops, the second had rooms for rent, and the third featured a ballroom. In the 1930s, the Weir Building housed the Highland Garden Movie Theatre.

TOUR ROUTE

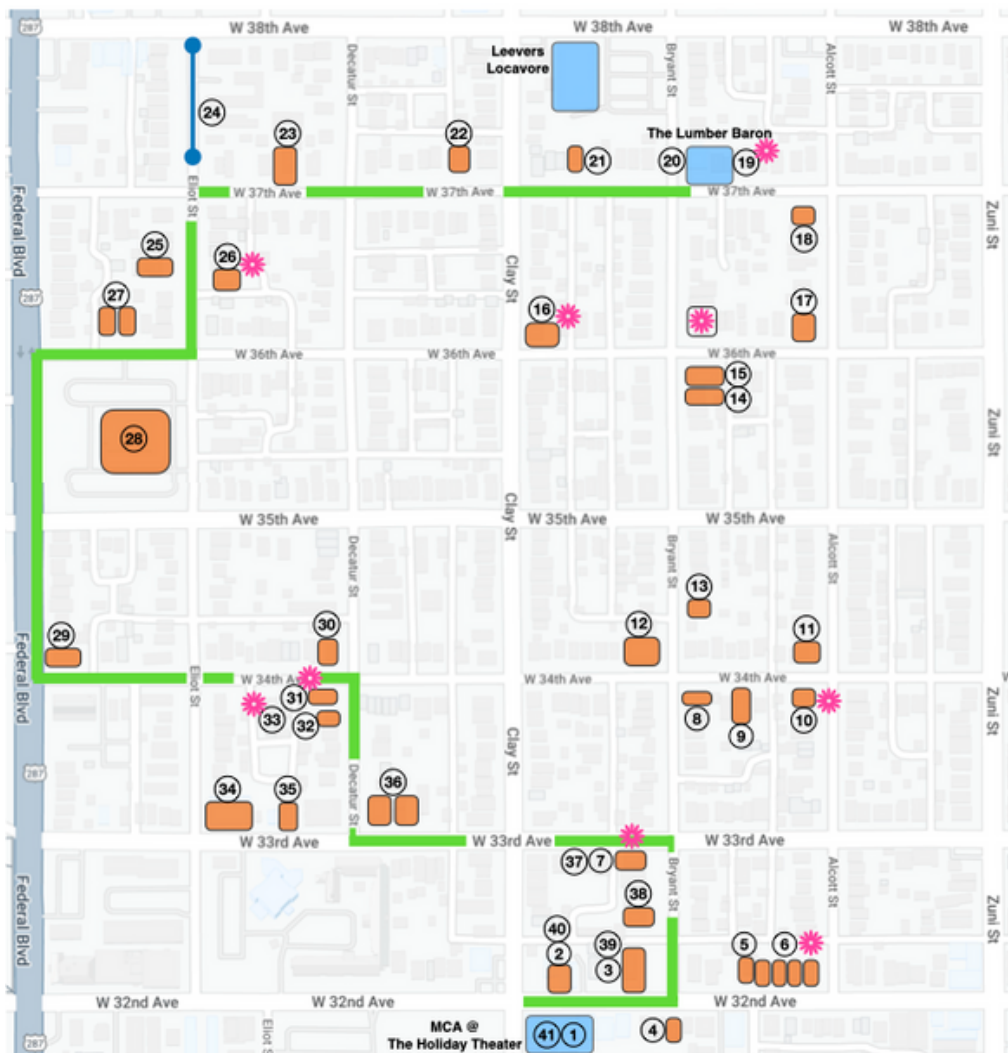
Tour #1 - south to north



- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| 1 The Holiday Theater
2644 W. 32nd Avenue | 8 Queen Anne Row
3356 Bryant Street | 14 3544 Bryant Street |
| 2 Henry Lee House
2653 W. 32nd Avenue | 9 Queen Anne Row
2530 W. 34th Avenue | 15 2550 W. 36th Avenue |
| 3 Coors House
2611 W. 32nd Avenue | 10 MacKay House
3359 Alcott Street | 16 Amos B. Hughes House
3600 Clay Street |
| 4 Thomas Ward House
2564 W. 32nd Avenue | 11 Nathan Davis House
3405 Alcott Street | 17 Hamilton Phillips House
2505 W. 36th Avenue |
| 5 Henri Foster House
2533 W. 32nd Avenue | 12 Iglesia Palabra de Vida
2601 W. 34th Avenue | 18 Albert Giesecke House
3659 Alcott Street |
| 6 Prout Homes
2525, 2519, 2511, 2501 W. 32nd Avenue | 13 Kress Bungalow
3428 Bryant Street | 19 John Mouat House
(The Lumber Baron)
2555 W. 37th Avenue |
| 7 Frank P. Arbuckle House
3257 Bryant Street | | |

TOUR ROUTES

Tour #2 - north to south



- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>20 John Mouat House
(The Lumber Baron)
2555 W. 37th Avenue</p> <p>21 Patrick McGowan House
2633 W. 37th Avenue</p> <p>22 Albert Goodrick Fish House
2715 W. 37th Avenue</p> <p>23 Monetho Jackson House
2825 W. 37th Avenue</p> <p>24 3700 - 3800 Eliot Street</p> <p>25 Sayer-Brodie Mansion
3631 Eliot Street</p> <p>26 Marean-Teller House
3624 Eliot Street</p> <p>27 2927 W. 36th Avenue</p> | <p>27B Sumner House
2935 W. 36th Avenue</p> <p>28 Highlands Masonic Temple
3550 Federal Boulevard</p> <p>29 Frank Milton House
3400 Federal Boulevard</p> <p>30 William Cowe House
2801 W. 34th Avenue</p> <p>31 Harry Petrie Houses
3361 Decatur Street</p> <p>32 Harry Petrie Houses
3349 Decatur Street</p> <p>33 Carriage Lot</p> <p>34 The Lennox Guest House
2875 W. 33rd Avenue</p> | <p>35 Blue Unicorn Tea Room
2817 W. 33rd Avenue</p> <p>36 Earnest P. Varian Houses
2749 and 2759 W. 33rd Avenue</p> <p>37 Frank P. Arbuckle House
3257 Bryant Street</p> <p>38 James A. Fischer Mansion
3227 Bryant Street</p> <p>39 Coors House
2611 W. 32nd Avenue</p> <p>40 Henry Lee House
2653 W. 32nd Avenue</p> <p>41 The Holiday Theater
2644 W. 32nd Avenue</p> |
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OLD OAKES

THANK YOU

We are humbled...

Many thanks to our neighbors who did the legwork to get Potter Highlands designated as an historic district and who put together the brochure (mostly reproduced here) for the 125 Anniversary Celebration in 1988. Two of them, Eve Tallon and Marilyn Starrett, helped us organize the 160th.

Other thank yous to our sponsors:

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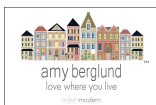
Gardens at St. Elizabeth

Historic Denver

Lumber Baron

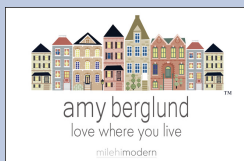
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LET'S WORK TOGETHER



POTTER HIGHLANDS

1 6 0 Y E A R S