





**Dedicated to W.T. (Doc) Little whose "A Look Back Into History" features have kept alive a public interest in the earlier days of Cañon City.**

Text: Elinor M McGinn

Drawings: Cara D. Fisher

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**Fremont County Historical Society, Incorporated**  
P.O. Box 965  
Cañon City, Colorado 81215



Buckles. In 1977 Cara opened the Artworks Gallery in Canon City — a unique enterprise housing artists' studios, an art supply shop, a gallery of regional fine crafts and art, and an antique gallery. The business was destroyed by arson in December 1980 leading her eventually to a career as a historian and archivist. Working first with the Cañon City Municipal Museum, Cara eventually held the position of director of the Local History Center at the Cañon City Public Library. She appreciated the opportunities for continuing education that the city sponsored and used the knowledge she gathered to enhance her civic involvements. She took an active part in regional life - helping to secure funding for projects and serving on several boards of directors. Her interests ranged from the Fremont Center for the Arts, the Fremont-Custer Historical Society, the Gold Belt Byway, the Museum of Colorado Prisons, Main Street USA, the Garden Park Paleontology Society, the Cañon City Historic Preservation Advisory Committee, the Greenwood

Pioneer Cemetery Committee, Developmental Training Services, History Colorado, the Pueblo Archaeological and Historical Society, the Cañon City Chamber of Commerce, and the Democratic Party. Upon her retirement in 2001 from the Local History Center, the name of the library park was changed to Cara Fisher Square in honor of the many years she dedicated to the community. Other honors include the 1995 Doc Little Memorial Award, serving as Grand Marshal for the 1997 Canon City Music & Blossom Festival, the Distinguished Citizen of the Year in 1998 by the Fremont County Community Access Channel 19, and the 2011 "Key to Our History" award from the Cañon City Chamber of Commerce. Cara won numerous prizes for her artwork through the years, in both regional and statewide shows. She co-authored with Elinor McGinn the publications *If Walls Could Speak* and *About the Avenues* where her literary and artistic talents became evident.  
*The Canon City Daily Record, March 11, 2015*

- Many of these Vignettes, in a similar form, were used on Radio KRLN in August 1984.
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## Tribute to Cara Dawson Donovan Fisher



Cara once said that she strove to be thoughtful, to be truthful, to be kind, to speak out, and to have made a difference for good. And so, she turned her abundant energies to those efforts. Born in New York City, Cara spent most of her early years in St. Louis, Missouri. Always an artist, she studied at Washington University School of Fine Arts. Among her first jobs was filing tickets for the Frisco Railroad, giving her a railroad designation Social Security number, of which she was always proud. She worked with the Army Map Service in St.



Louis from 1944 to 1947 compiling and drafting maps. Cara began spending summers in Custer County before moving to Westcliffe in 1969 with her husband at the time, the late Rev. H. P. Donovan. She came to Cañon City in 1971 and soon began attending what is now Colorado State University-Pueblo where she earned a degree in Art Education. As staff artist for the university's Department of Anthropology until 1977, she drew maps and illustrated technical papers on archaeological digs in Colorado for Dr. William G.

## 2650 EAST MAIN STREET

Cañon City's healthful climate brought a West Point graduate, Colonel Greydene-Smith, here to recuperate and build the beautiful estate in 1889. From the hand-carved wood brought from England, the rugs from the Orient, to the local sandstone quarried by convict labor, this landmark - heated by six fireplaces - rose to become one of the social centers of early days. It was the setting for the coming-out party of not a daughter, but a young man, when Vincent Greydene-Smith was so honored on his twenty-first birthday. As

a youth Vincent had a playroom in the tower which was, and still is, entered only from an outside ladder.

Mrs. Greydene-Smith held fund raisers at her tennis court by charging fees to the players. Her famed tennis court was featured in a Hollywood film in 1929.

By 1932, the family had all died, and hard times fell on the estate during the depression. It was sold for taxes in 1941. Subsequent owners have carefully preserved the past and blended it with the present to afford comfortable family living.



## 1226 ELM AVENUE

One of the most unique of all nineteenth century homes in the area was the three-storied unspliced log home built by Dall De Weese in 1896. These walls resemble a hunting lodge, which it often was because the builder hunted the wilds from Alaska to Africa and often entertained hunting parties. Although it is not documented, it is reported that Teddy Roosevelt, another hunter, was a guest before he was president.

After each hunt, De Weese added mounted specimens to the walls of his thirteen room home or fashioned furniture from the horns and rugs from the furs of his trophies. His twenty-four by twenty-four foot den was a naturalist's delight with its many animal displays. One side had a fifteen foot ceiling, and the other side featured a unique interior balcony over the fireplace which had a second opening on the balcony.

One of the particular species of big game which De Weese stalked was the rare cousin of the Rocky

Mountain bighorn, the *Ovis dalli* or the Dall sheep, named by a Professor Dall. In a hunting article which De Weese wrote after an Alaskan trip for the Smithsonian Institute, he stated that, after bagging specimens, he would shoot no more of this beautiful white sheep. Was his great interest in this particular sheep whetted by the coincidence of his nickname?

In 1926 he offered his fabulous collection to the city if they provided a museum on the second floor of the city hall. For it, he also fashioned a fireplace using bones of prehistoric animals and rock specimens of the area. Today the De Weese Room is a treasure-house of nature for all who view it.

This home was the center of a vast acreage of nursery stock for that was the main profession of De Weese. Before coming to Cañon City, he had planted the first orchards in Glenwood Springs. Here, he developed and named Lincoln Park and eventually

## CAÑON CITY DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

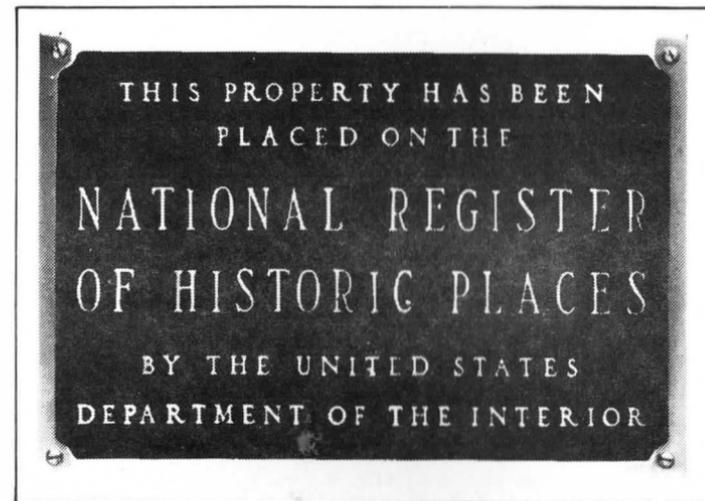
In late 1983 a five block area comprising the historical commercial core of Cañon City was named to the National Register of Historic Places. The area extends from the middle of the three hundred block of Main Street almost to Ninth Street, taking in some of Macon Avenue.

There are 81 buildings in the area in which 48 are designated and considered the best collection of late Nineteenth century to early Twentieth century commercial structures in the county.

A feature of this downtown district is the quality of design of the structures plus the consistency of window treatment on the upper floors. Making a strong initial visual impact, beautiful window detail adds more for the enjoyment of the viewer.

Designation has been given for some buildings such as the Baptist Church, Methodist Church and Public Library which are not commercial but historic period structures. The area also takes in other buildings but these are considered to be neutral or non-contributing to the historic period.

The National Register is administered by the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, and at the State level, by the Archeology and Historic Preservation Office of History Colorado.

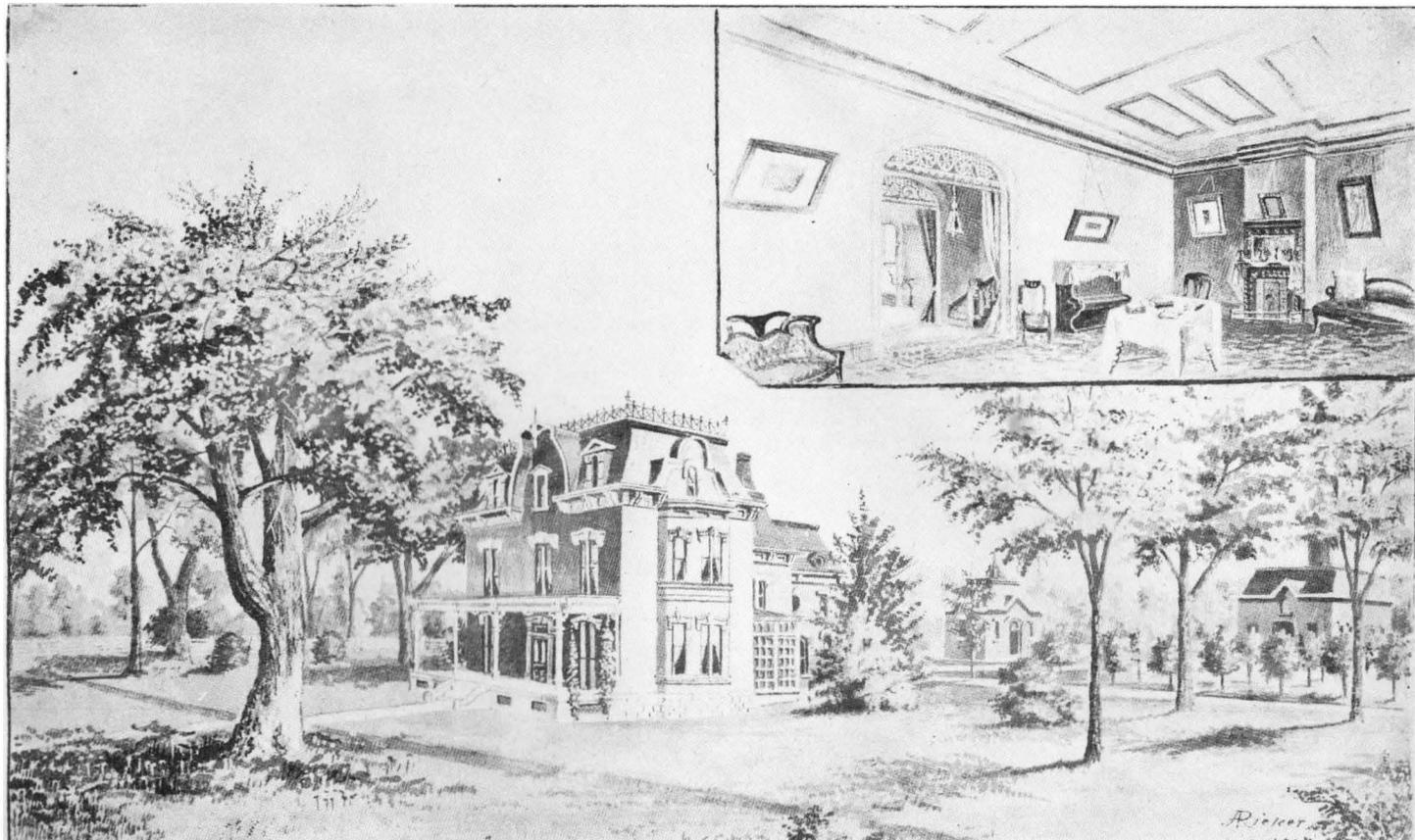


located some 280 families on land which he sold for \$250 - \$300 per acre.

Water for irrigation was first brought from Grape Creek. Later, he designed and superintended the construction of the De Weese Reservoir at the lower end of the Wet Mountain Valley.

This home is no longer visible because on January 15, 2007, the historic home was devoured by a two alarm fire. Extensive renovation was being done but, fortunately the home was vacant so there were no injuries.





## SOURCES

### Interviews:

Rita Benzmiller  
Mrs. Joe Dodge  
Mr. & Mrs. Ken Ireland  
Kathy Kunselman  
W.T. Little  
Mrs. Charles Price  
Elwood White  
Mr. & Mrs. Peyton Wilbar

### Research Files:

Cañon City Municipal Museum, the Fremont -  
County Historical Society, Fremont County Court  
Records - 1870's, The Cañon City Daily Record

### Appreciation To:

Barbara Ahart  
Ted James  
Irla Nixon  
Freda Reininga  
Margaret Stiles Storm and Pat Nelson (2019 update)



**12 RIVERSIDE DRIVE**

Selecting a beautiful natural cottonwood grove on the south bank of the Arkansas River, the Lyman Robisons built their Victorian mansion in 1884. The six thousand square feet of the home rests on a foundation of native sandstone which is five feet thick and eight feet deep. The soft hand-pressed Catlin bricks used in its construction were made by workers who were paid two dollars a day in gold coin.

The sloping mansard roof is constructed of zinc plates soldered together and covered with tar. The windows are variously trimmed with round, gabled or pointed features. A portico supported by Tuscan columns was added to the original porch.

There were three fireplaces, seven bedrooms, two baths, fourteen foot ceilings on the first floor and a solarium on the west side. Built entirely without nails, the forty-four feet of hand-carved walnut stairway leading from the first to the third floors is a wonder of

construction. They even had their own private water tank on Smelter Hill. The original carpet remains in one parlor and in one bedroom.

The walls of the attractive carriage house once housed the carriages and quarters for a gardner or coachman.

The fortune for this luxurious home came from Colorado's mining industry. When Lyman Robison, a Scottish immigrant, built three downtown commercial buildings, he named them for three of his mines - the Apex, the Annex and the Sulphide buildings. After the builder died in 1912, son David's family occupied the mansion.

Trying to preserve the mansion for community use, Don Hardy purchased it and offered it to the

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## 12 RIVERSIDE DRIVE (continued)

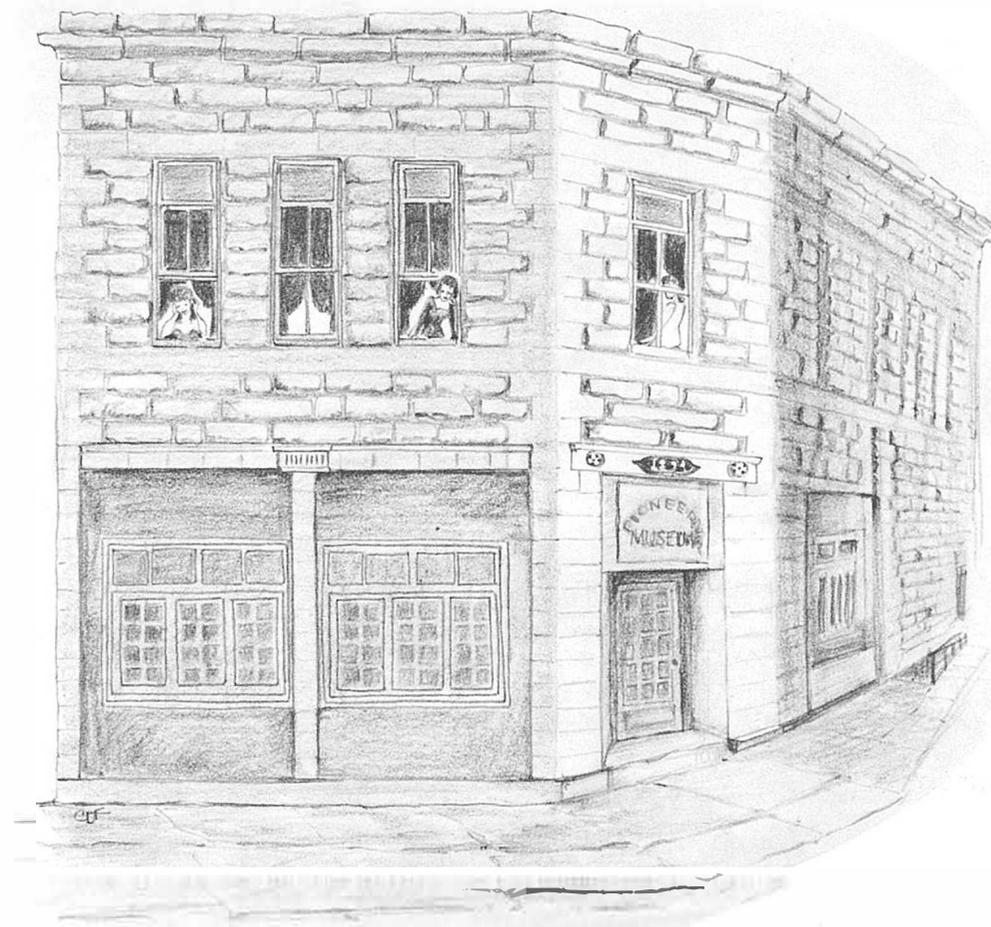
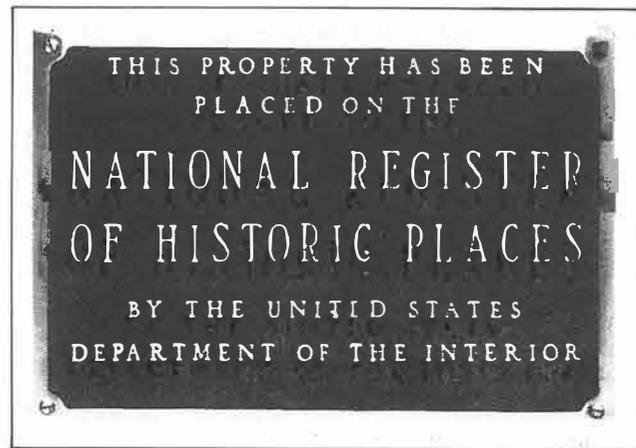
Fine Arts Association, but their fund drive failed. When the Roy Wilsons acquired it in the 1960's they furnished it as a private museum and leased the carriage house for a restaurant. That too came to an end in 1976 when the entire antique collection was sold in a national auction.

Kenneth and Naomi Ireland made it their splendid home in 1977. While undergoing a thorough renovation, the mansion has lost none of its original distinction. Elegant furnishings from the Irelands' overseas collection enhance these one hundred year-old walls.

Five years after the home was placed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Irelands sold the home to Ed Tezak, Jr., in 1989. Tezak spent 1.5 million dollars refurbishing the home. In 1998, he sold it to Joe and Kathleen Wells. They in turn sold it to Darryl Biggerstaff. After Biggerstaff's death, it was inherited by Heather Biggerstaff-Cost. Erin Mahoney, HLC Enterprises owned the Mansion in October 2017.

The newest owner is Alpine Depot, LLC, owned by Royal Gorge Route Railroad owner Mark Greksa,

who purchased the mansion January 2019. He is changing the name to Royal Gorge Mansion and it will operate as a bed and breakfast.



## CORNER OF FRONT STREET AND PIKES PEAK AVENUE, FLORENCE

If the walls of this stately old building could speak, we would hear of the days when it housed a saloon or of the times the Catholic youth of Florence met inside. During World War II, we could have heard the young men receiving their orders to report for service. Later, the Eagles Lodge headquartered within. Much less respectable activity occurred during the heydays of the mining boom when the upper story was a parlor house for ladies-of-the-night. A nearby grocer reported good business profits were gained at night by filling food orders from the bordello.

Back in 1964, the Eagles Lodge offered this well-used building for sale for \$1500. Needing a museum structure, Charles and Velma Price organized a club for donations called "100 for \$15" and successfully reached the goal. On September

12, 1964, the "Florence Pioneer Museum" was dedicated. In 1976, through a grant from Colorado State Centennial Commission, the museum was able to add a room for its expanding collection.

In September 1987, the name was changed to "Price Pioneer Museum" through a mandate of the Florence City Council and the Pioneer Day Board. The City owns the building while the museum board owns the artifact collections.

In 2013 the name was returned to the original Florence Pioneer Museum. In 2015, the name was updated to "Florence Pioneer Museum & Research Center." In 2017 a portion of the White Building, 104 East Front was donated/purchased. The Bill and Diana White Room dedication was September 15, 2018. Displays include histories of Rockvale, Coal Creek, Williamsburg, Penrose and Wetmore. There is also display space for farming, ranching, newspapers and women of Eastern Fremont County.

Stone quarried south of Florence was used in the construction by Phillip Griffith in 1894, and the original sandstone sidewalk is still in use.

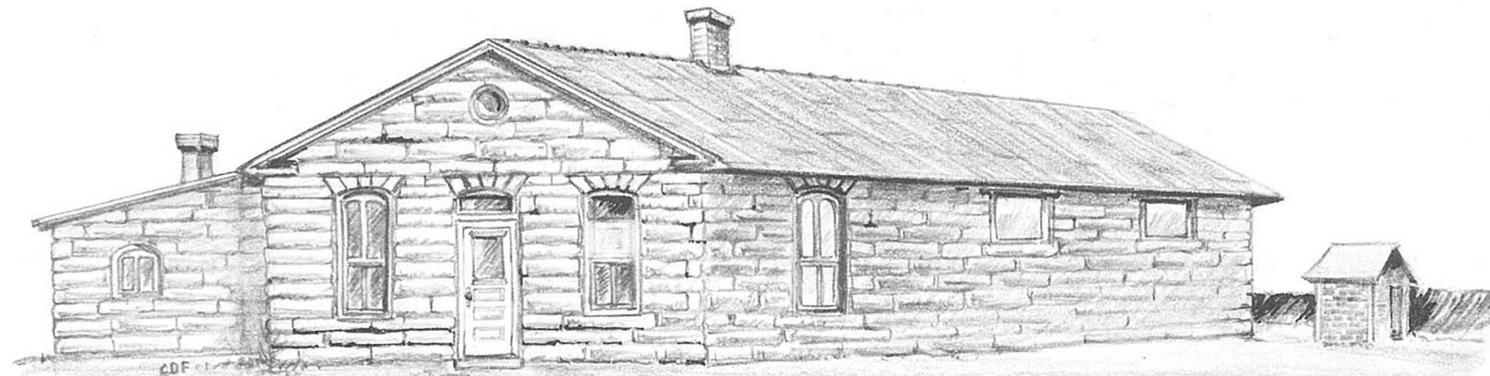
## 104 GREENWOOD AVENUE

The inconspicuous small masonry building standing today near the state penitentiary was built in 1876 to house Fremont County cattle rustlers, card sharks and murderers. Yes, it was the first Fremont County jail.

One of the residents, a George Witherell, was not allowed his full stay in that jail because some local residents were not above taking the law into their own hands. These vigilantes tied up the sheriff and took away the accused murderer to hang him at four A.M. December 4, 1888 on an electric light pole at First and Main.

Not only did the whole town turn out at dawn to view the hanging body of Witherell with his boots on the wrong feet, but a picture of the grizzly sight was made for posterity. Robert Redford chose to display this Cañon City hanging in his article in the *National Geographic* for November, 1976. The mustache was also cut from this victim and placed in a glass case for viewing. Western justice at its worst!

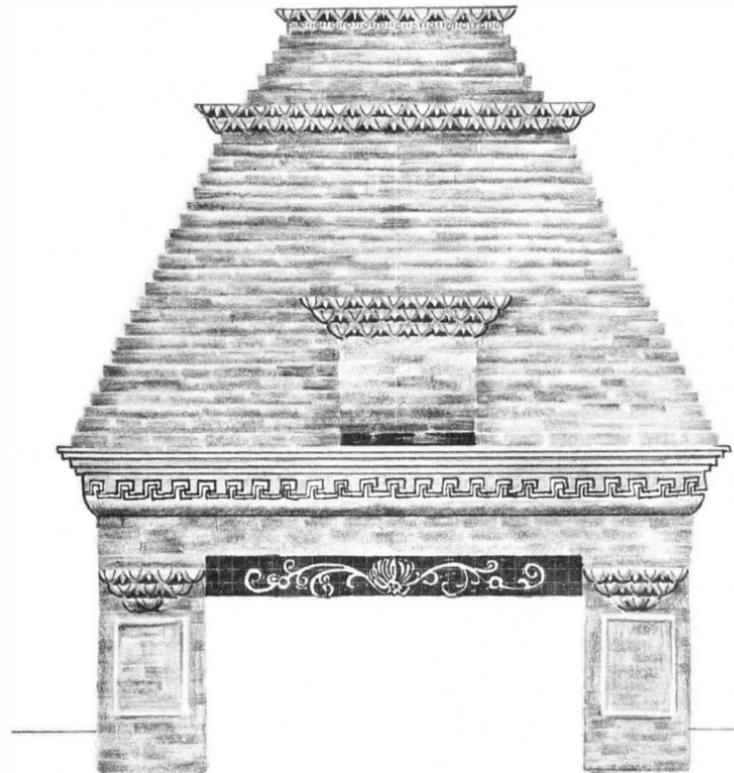
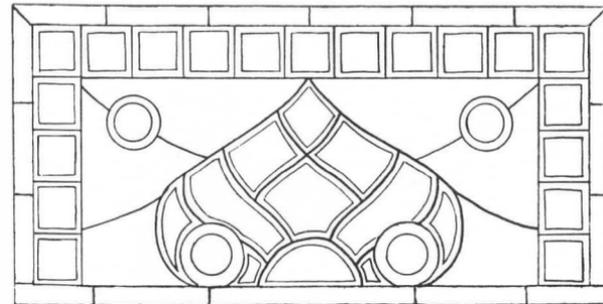
Long departed from its gruesome past, this former jail has been converted to four apartments whose walls ring with other stories in the twentieth century.

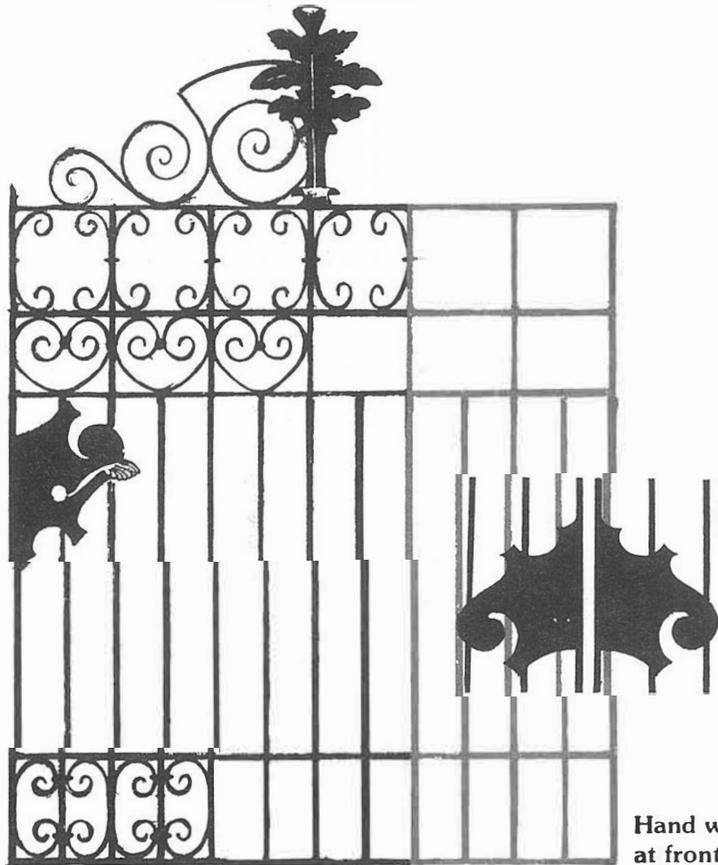


## 305 MAIN STREET

To hear the voices of the past, we might stop in front of the newly-painted two-story building housing an antique store. Although there were many saloons, Bernard Murray's saloon was different. These beige adobe walls could speak of the days when redevye was dispensed downstairs and justice was meted out upstairs. Yes, the county paid rent for court space until a courthouse could be provided. The learned Moses S. Hallett was the first circuit-riding judge for this part of Jefferson County as Fremont was first called. Often he would send the court bailiff downstairs to quiet the thirsty patrons enjoying the "best bar in town."

The downstairs walls could tell of an incident of injustice which never reached the justice of the upstairs court. This story is of the two men, Talmadge and Salazar, who were suspected of the Newman murder in the Wet Mountain Valley. The vigilantes did not wait for Judge Hallett. They took the two prisoners from the county jail, and while Salazar was being lynched in a shed at 603 Rudd, Talmadge escaped. His freedom was brief, but the vigilantes braced his spirits with a Murray Saloon drink before leading him across the First Street bridge to his fate on a cottonwood tree.





Hand wrought panels on gates at front and drive way.

## 225 EAST MAIN STREET , FLORENCE

One of the wealthiest of all pioneers was A.R. Gumaer who built his home in 1893 in Florence. A similarly styled ranch house has become a landmark at his former Trinity Ranch in Wetmore.

The Gumaer fortune came from his many and varied interests in oil, mining, horse racing, cattle and land. Although Mr. Gumaer was most often seen with horses, he later became a common sight in his chauffeur-driven Maxwell open automobile. To protect himself against a severe dust allergy, he covered his nose and mouth with a silk handkerchief.

In 1916 an oil company bought this Florence home to use as a clubhouse for its oil and refinery executives. A few years later, Florence businessman W.P. Wilbar purchased the home. With it he also acquired a one hundred year lease on five gas wells which provided a direct fuel line to the house.

Much of the original expensive furniture remains in this spacious home. The lovely home is now an exquisite antique store - Heartland Classic Antiques.

In addition to court meetings, there were other exciting meetings upstairs over the Murray Saloon. One of the most celebrated meetings might have been one still documented on a hand bill on display today at the local museum:

# TO ARMS! TO ARMS!

A meeting of the citizens of Canon City will be held at

## MURRAY'S HALL,

AT 2 P. M., TO-DAY, OCTOBER 8, 1879,

For the Purpose of organizing for protection against the Indians now within our borders.

What alarmed the citizenry? Just two weeks earlier at the White River Agency near Meeker where the Indians had been forced to move, there had been an uprising known as the Meeker Massacre. Even though Chief Ouray immediately calmed his people, this news put fear into the hearts of all.

Inside these 149 year-old walls, daring plans of civil defense were made on that October afternoon of 1879.

Owner Bernard Murray advertised in the local paper in the 1870's like this:

Sixteen days after Canon City was incorporated there on this second floor, the trustees passed an ordinance requiring a license for each billiard table at \$50 per year. Today's pool tables are still considered taxable items, and the rate is \$75 for the first and \$7.50 for others.

For a time, a popular member of the Republican Party, Bill Knox, ran the saloon, but was quieted in 1920 when the provisions of the Eighteenth Amendment prohibited the sale of alcoholic beverages.

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Canon City Advertisements. 187

**MURRAY'S BILLIARD HALL AND SALOON,**  
Main St., Canon City.

THE ONLY FIRST CLASS RESORT IN THE CITY.

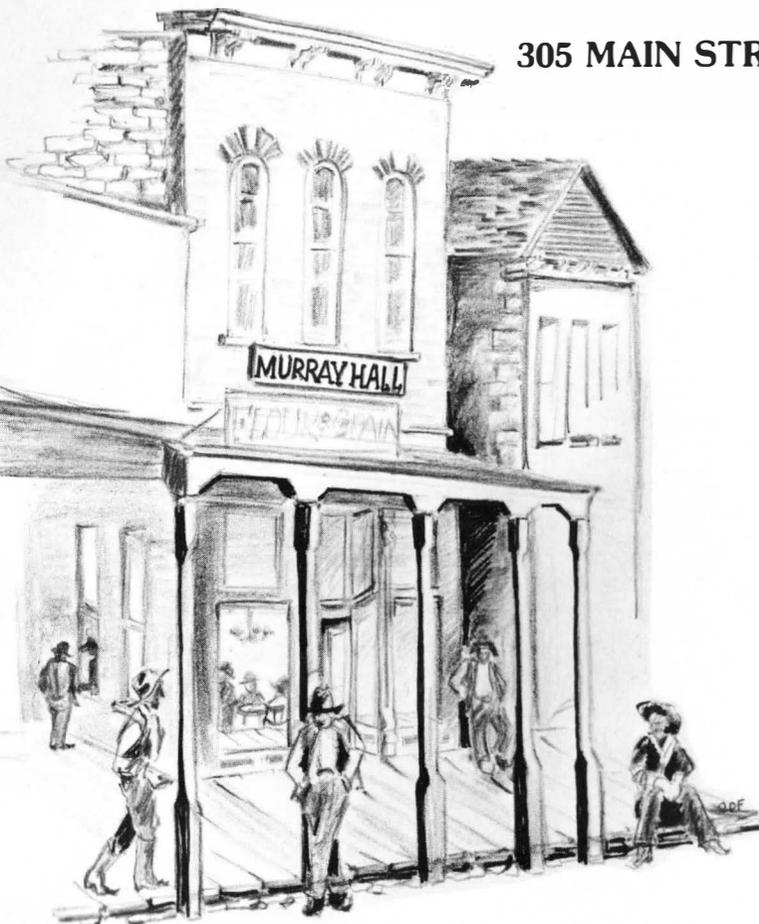
The Choicest Wines, Liquors and Cigars  
always on Sale.

PUBLIC HALL ON SECOND FLOOR.

B. MURRAY, Proprietor.



## 305 MAIN STREET (continued)



This former Murray's Saloon played a direct role in the creation of the town on April 2, 1872. In the upstairs public meeting room, the County Commissioners accepted the petition of over two-thirds of the taxable electors to incorporate the town of Cañon City. The boundaries were set and the five trustees were appointed. Not many saloons can boast of being the scene of a town incorporation which is probably fortunate.

These walls have not only watched the drama of people coming and going, but have hosted much of the action. When the freight wagons went to and fro from the mines, Murray's Saloon was a favorite stopping place. After parking their wagons at a nearby wagon yard and renting rooms at the Central Hotel, these wagon drivers retired to the saloon to wash the dust from their mouths, and the stories they might have told are forever buried in the walls of the Murray Saloon.

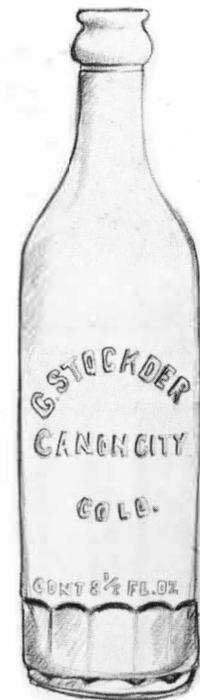
This senior citizen of Cañon City will probably host remnants of our culture for many years to come.



The enterprising Stockder came to Cañon City in 1888 from Denver and built his bottling works which served the mining camps as far afield as Westcliffe. With his teams and wagons, it took two days for his round trip deliveries to the Wet Mountain Valley.

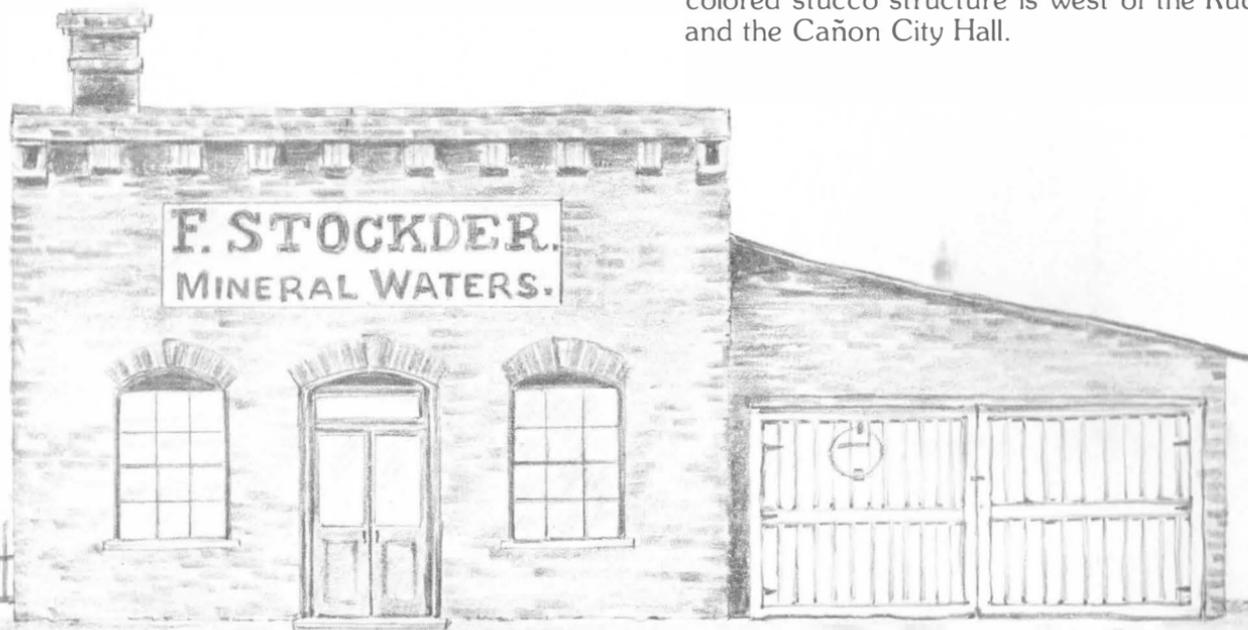
The *F. Stockder* name was on the metal caps of his soda pop. During his first years of business, the iron water from Soda Springs provided the carbonation for the soda pop, but its fizz was not long-lasting so new carbonation machines were added.

From 1908 to World War I, Stockder's widow kept the business going. Gertrude Stockder proudly labeled her product with *G. Stockder*. In 1918, a Pueblo bottling company bought the equipment and closed the firm. Recycled, the building has long been a quaint residence with its past almost buried in its walls.



## 211 SOUTH SIXTH STREET

Tucked behind beautiful evergreens just above the railroad tracks is a neat residence whose walls once housed the popular soda pop manufacturer - the Ferdinand Stockder Bottling Works. This beige-colored stucco structure is west of the Rudd Cabin and the Cañon City Hall.



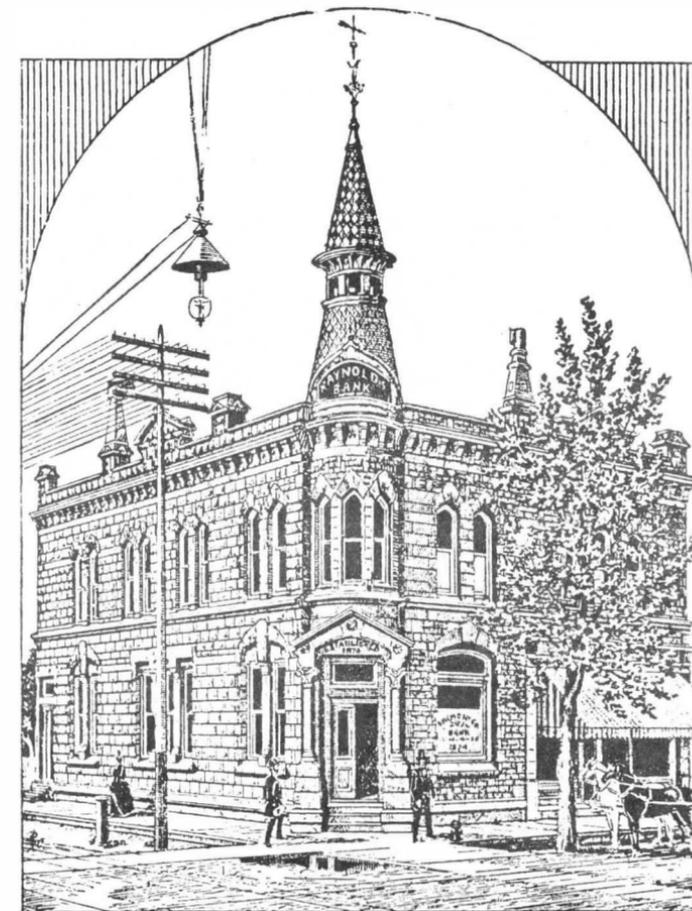
## 332 MAIN STREET

As in every community, banks usually are housed in the most ostentatious structures, and certainly Fred Reynolds achieved this when he built the third home for his Fremont County Bank on the corner of Fourth and Main in the 1890's.

This handsome two story stone building was constructed of Castle Rock pink lava stone trimmed with the famous cream sandstone from the local Franck quarry. The unusual corner entrance is supported by granite pillars. Its eighteen by eighteen foot vault - the largest in southern Colorado - was built entirely separate from walls and ceiling.

In the days before the Federal Deposit Insurance, Fred Reynolds was a do-it-yourselfer. He secured the deposits with "all the earthly possessions of Fred A. Reynolds". Since he was the largest real estate holder in the county, this was adequate. He also took out a \$100,000 life insurance policy in case "there was a run on the bank at his death."

For years the charming tower above the bank was missing until owner Wes Carhartt had it reconstructed from the engraving on old bank checks. Since the Fremont National Bank moved to Sixth and Main in 1921, many businesses and offices have been enclosed in these timeless walls.



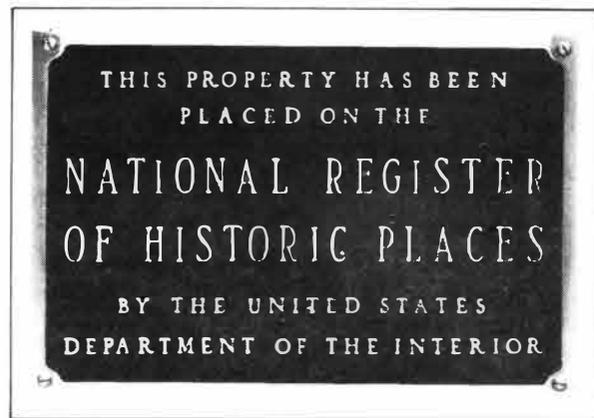
FREMONT COUNTY BANK, CANON CITY.

### 331 MAIN STREET

In the 1870's, when business flourished in Cañon City around the two and three hundred blocks on Main Street, local residents grumbled about the fact that William McClure was building his beautiful three story hotel "so far east as Fourth and Main". Today its location is far west on Main, and it is called the Strathmore after the Earl of Strathmore who headed the English syndicate which purchased the McClure House in the mid 1890's.

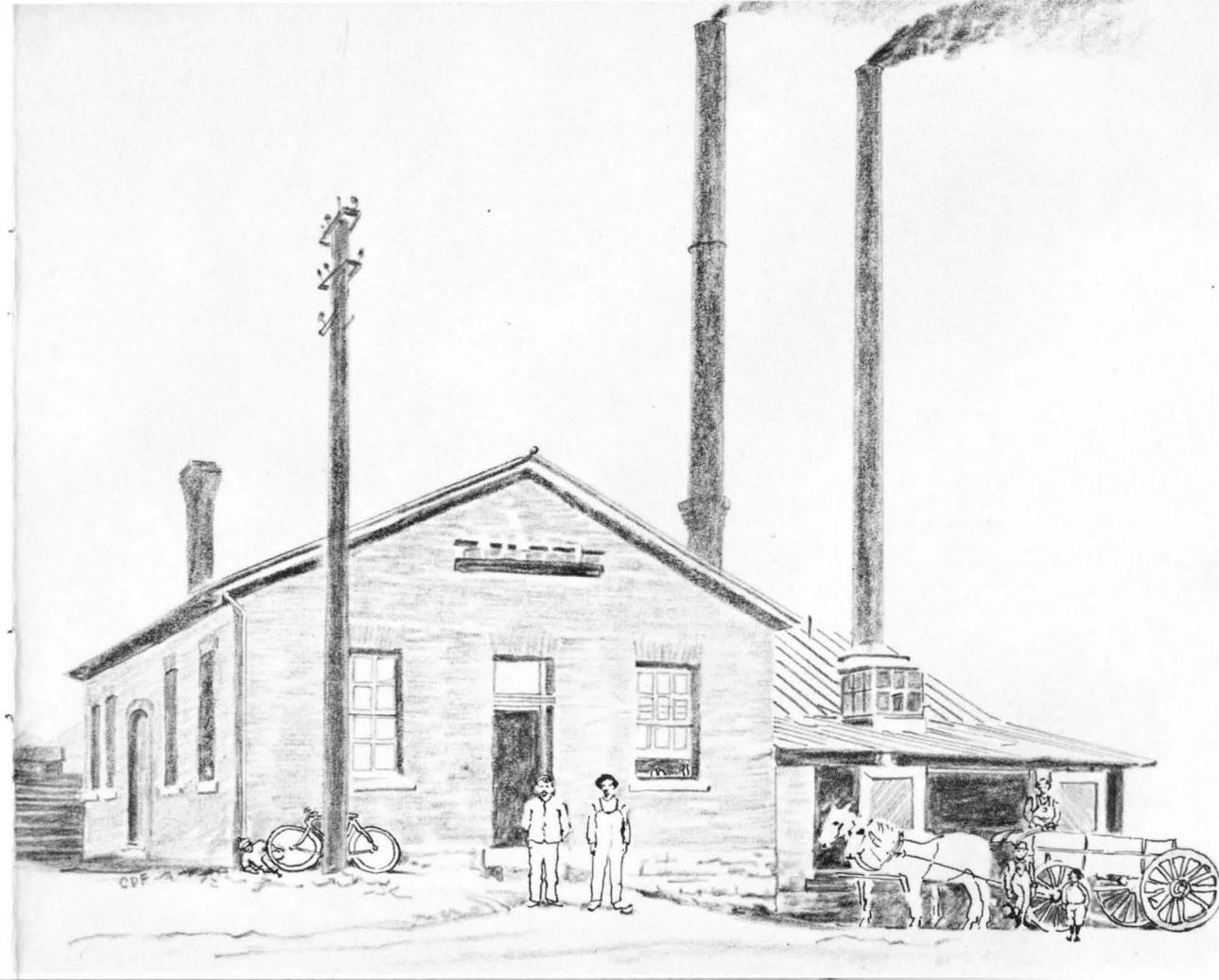
When the McClure House opened on October 1, 1874, hundreds of candles were placed in the windows, and fourteen years later, the same festive atmosphere was recreated to celebrate the coming of the standard guage railroad - the Santa Fe - into Cañon City. Over one hundred flags festooned the outside of the building, and the fashionable banquet for many dignitaries was accompanied by an orchestra.

The walls of the Strathmore Hotel have housed both the Fremont and First National Banks before they located elsewhere.



To prevent disturbance of guests, the north wing of the third floor was reserved for the ever rowdy cowboy clientele. This "cowboy alley" area became structurally unsafe a few years ago, necessitating the removal of an upper area, leaving only the former hotel dining room which is now the bustling McClure Saloon.

Another reminder of grander days is the cast iron grate filled with rounds of purple glass located on the sidewalk in front of the hotel. This probably provided a



## 212 SOUTH FIFTH STREET

One would never guess that the first home of the Cañon City Fine Arts Center once housed steam engines for the generation of electricity, but it did. When one visited the art collections in the basement room, one could see the engine footings built in the heyday of the power competition spurred by the Cripple Creek and Victor mining activity.

From the Colorado Electric Company to the Arkansas Valley Railway Light and Power Company to the Southern Colorado Power Company who bought it for warehouse storage in 1923, the building has had an enLIGHTening history. The Cañon City Fine Arts Center leased the soft brick building for fifty dollars monthly from the Southern Colorado Power Company and was responsible for the building's upkeep. From 1947, when the Cañon City Fine Arts Association became the first community arts council in the state of Colorado, it did not have a permanent home until 1973 when it renovated this warehouse.

Community activity GENERATED the purchase of over 136 pieces of art making up a valuable

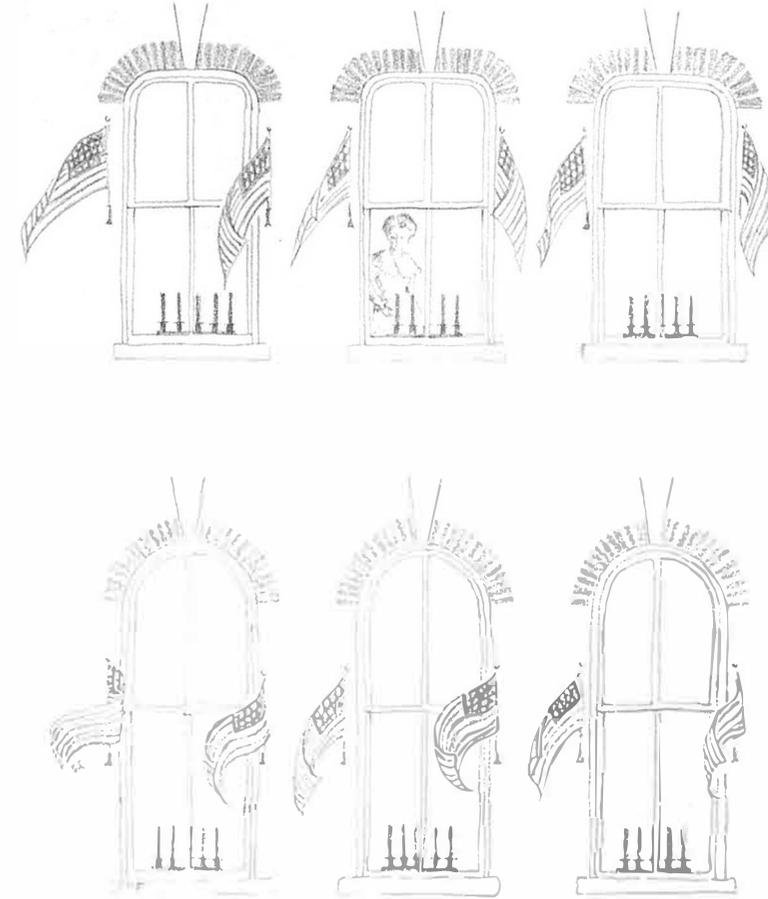
collection. This unique permanent collection was described by an appraiser as a valuable repository of art history. Prized portions of the collection were the early works of artists such as John Mendoza, Lawrence Barrett and Edgar Britton who have become renown in their fields.

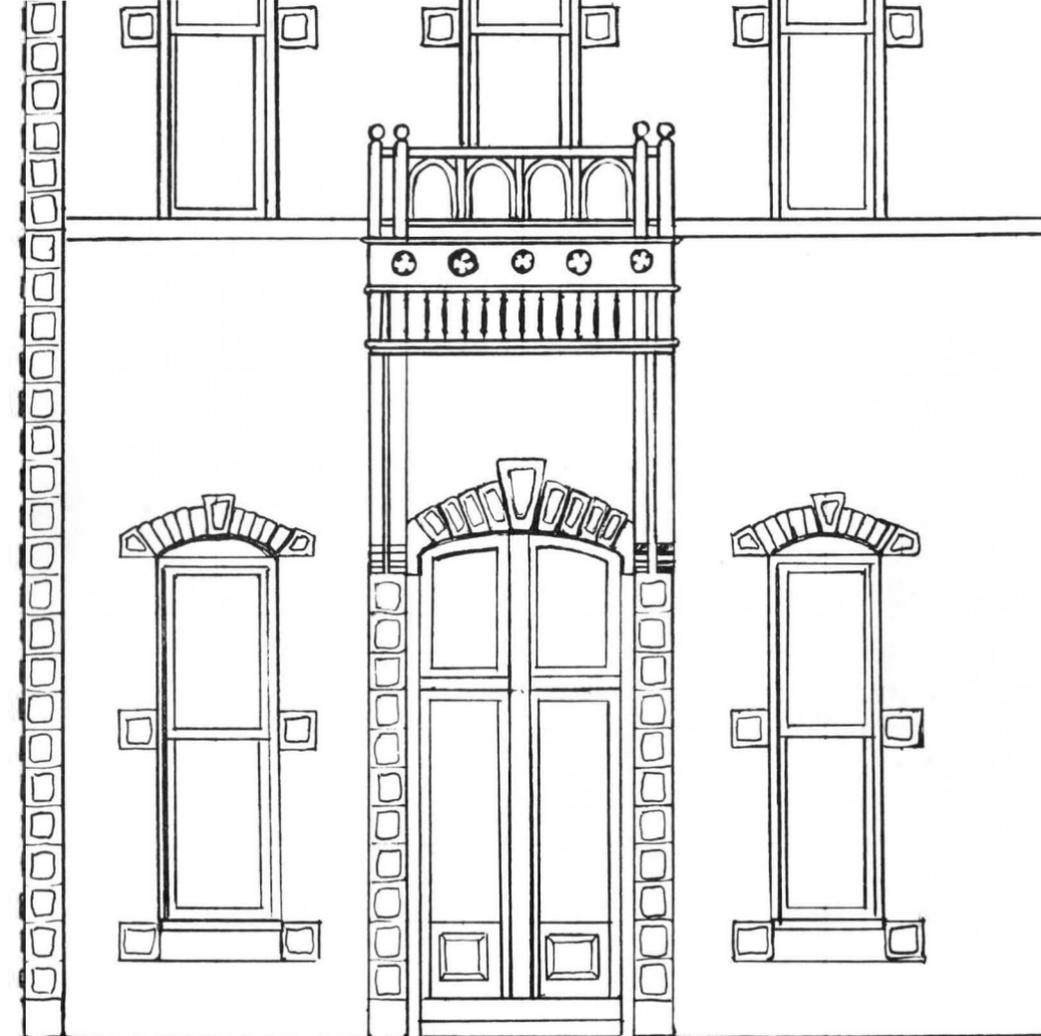
Organizations generated by the Fine Arts Center have included the Fremont Civic Theater from its Little Theater program and the Community Concerts Series from the music committee. One of the first juried state-wide art shows was its Blossom Festival Exhibit. The Center served as an information center for cultural activities, sponsored workshops and exhibits and is the advocate for arts on the local, state and national levels. Its funding was obtained from the City of Cañon City, grants from the Colorado Council on the Arts and Humanities, memberships and private donations.

From production of energy to production of art and beauty, it was a true blending of the past to the present!

skylight effect for the shoppers who visited the underground mall which once housed at least six different shops. In earlier days, before ERA, the hotel provided a private entrance for women on the east side opening to a black walnut stairway to the upper floors.

Today these walls have been placed on the National Register. After almost 145 years, and many owners, the building is still called the McClure House/Strathmore Hotel.





St. Cloud Hotel  
West end showing one  
of its three balconies.

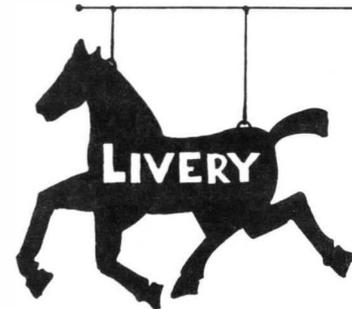
## 631 MAIN STREET

The second oldest hotel in Colorado is the Hotel St. Cloud., but its story and walls began in the booming town of Silver Cliff in 1880. Because the narrow gauge railroad bypassed Silver Cliff in the Westcliffe area, Silver Cliff began to die. However this beautiful four-story hotel was torn down brick by brick to begin life anew. Those numbered bricks were laboriously hauled by oxen and freighting teams down the winding roads to Cañon City where it was rebuilt in 1887.

Many famous people have made the Hotel St. Cloud a home-away-from-home. Buffalo Bill and Calamity Jane stayed there when the Wild West Show came to town. Tom Mix lived there when on location for many of his westerns which were filmed in Fremont and Custer counties. Later, other movie stars lived at the hotel while making movies such as "Saddle the Wind" and "Cañon City".

In July 2018 Unbridled Holdings from Denver purchased it when the hotel was put up for auction. The hotel sat empty for a decade but this group has restoration plans that will revive the cornerstone of Cañon City's downtown historic district. President of Unbridled, Stan Bullis, anticipates a 2 1/2 year completion.

Hotel St. Cloud is on the National Register of Historic Places.



## 129 NORTH FOURTH STREET

Although livery stables once flourished in Cañon City, there are few reminders today. However, one of the largest, the Eclipse Livery, has been beautifully preserved and recycled to house youth and still another form of transportation - motorized vans.

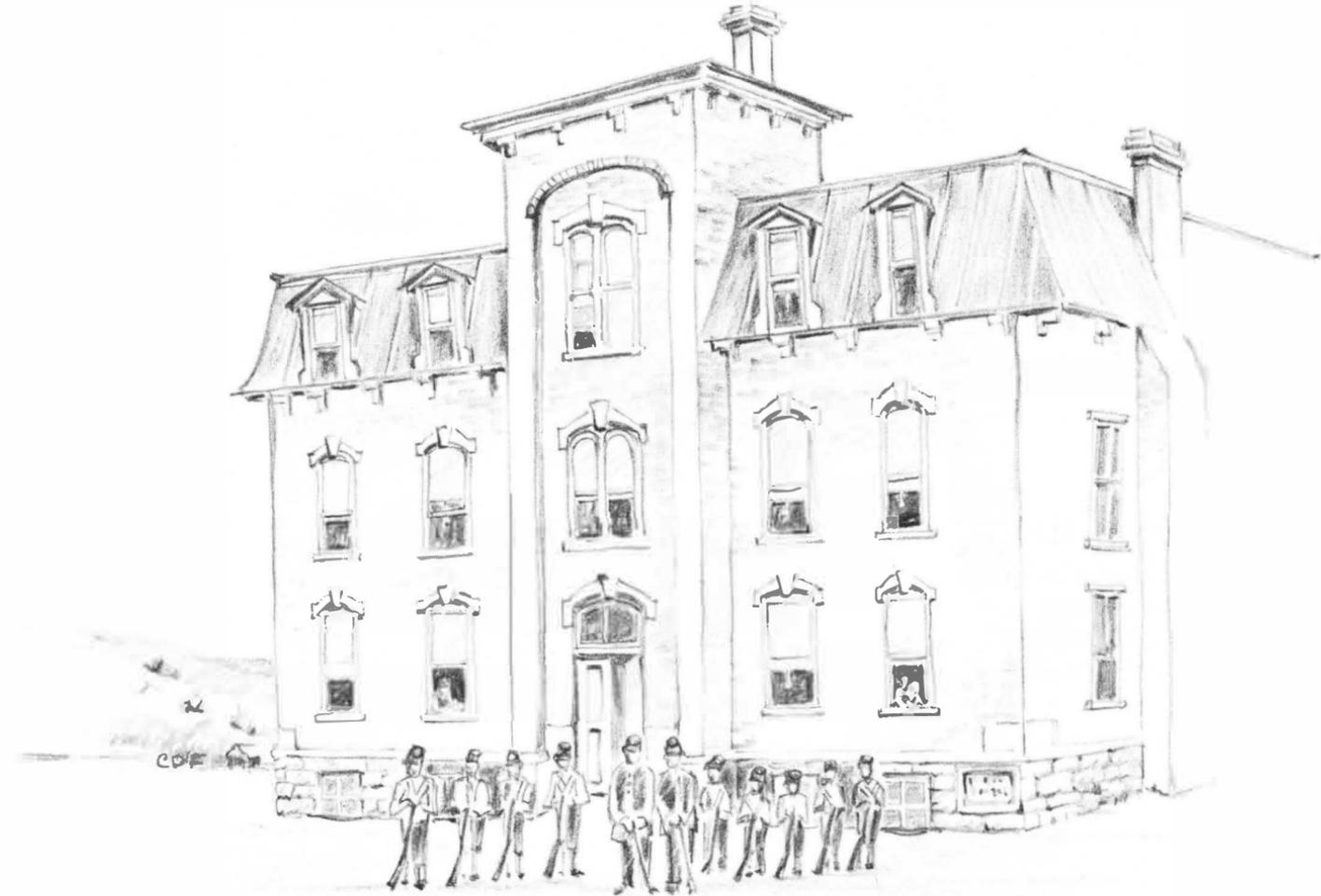
Those solid brick eighteen inch walls have been home since the 1890's chiefly to some facet of transportation such as horses, carriages, the Poston Motor Company or trucking. The carriage belonging to former State Attorney General Joseph Maupin was stored at the Eclipse Livery. Today that same carriage is on display next to the Rudd House at the Royal Gorge Regional Museum & History Center grounds.

The second story formerly provided living quarters for stable hands, but it has been removed to create a high ceiling. Time has not harmed the original steel roof nor has the building shifted because it stands on an ancient river bed.

The iron horse once elevated over the livery door-way is replaced today by the tenant's sign - BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB. The stained glass is no longer decorating the doorway, but black rod iron baskets adorn the lower windows keeping the past in tune with the present.



From Canon City Daily Record - C. 1905





## 615 PIKE AVENUE

Amidst the grounds of the modern St. Scholastica Academy, there is one stately building dating back to its reconstruction in 1897 on the original foundation of the Colorado Collegiate and Military Institute built there in 1881. Those walls first heard the echoes of sixty-six students, but the school was not successful until the Benedictine Sisters opened a girls' boarding school in 1890.

During their first years, the Sisters faced the problem of having part of this building destroyed by a blast. In 1892, the state penitentiary did not have convicts quietly secured behind bars. They were blasting a tunnel for State Canal Number One under the hogback just eight hundred feet west of the school building. One blast nearly unroofed the building, shattered all of the windows and greatly damaged the walls.

Although the building was still standing after the blast, state inspectors found it to be unsafe and ordered it to be torn down.

After much controversy, the General Assembly enacted a law which commanded the penitentiary commissioners to rebuild it with convict labor and materials. For other expense, they appropriated \$8000. However, legislative wheels did not run smoothly, and, while legal battles delayed the reconstruction, the Sisters and students occupied a barn, a coalshed, and a two-story cottage. By 1897, academic life began anew. Although other buildings were erected and some removed, today the original 1897 building stands vacant. It is part of a complex that was transferred to Pike Canyon Properties LLC in August 2017.

## 821 MACON AVENUE

This beautiful three-story home features a turret and a colonnaded porch erected in the early 1890's. The sandstone lintels enhance the beauty of this brick home.

From the abstract, one learns that the property was first a part of a quarter section patented to Anson Rudd in 1865. The abstract further lists B.F. Rockafellow as an owner, but after S.H. Atwater purchased the land, he built the stately home on what was then the eastern edge of Cañon City. Mr. Atwater, son of a

New York doctor, was an active realtor and vice president of Park Center Land Company.

Prominent banker W.H. Dozier and a Texas millionaire who had Florence oil interests were subsequent owners. Later, Guy U. Hardy invested in the property as a rooming house for tubercular recuperatives. At one time, it sold for \$700.

Since 1956, it has been maintained in beautiful style - a great landmark of the past whose walls will harbor more chapters of history.



## 907 GREENWOOD AVENUE

One of Colorado's finest mansions built before 1900 rose partially from the tragedy of the Cripple Creek fire in 1896. Does that sound illogical? No, not when you learn that the builder of the stately stone mansion was D.E. Gibson who owned sixteen lumberyards and supplied most of the rebuilding materials for Cripple Creek via the Florence and Cripple Creek Railroad.

This pioneer builder imported French tiles and European artisans to hand carve all the woodwork, but he used stone from local quarries for the exterior. The third story was originally to be a ballroom, and the

basement housed the popular billiard tables. Truly those walls are filled with echoes of pleasure.

Until 1941 when the Cole family from Alamosa bought it, the Gibson family retained the home. An indoor swimming pool was added when the Dr. Bentzmiller family purchased the home. They preserved its elegant architecture with the same stone type from salvaged building stones.

Quite by accident, another of the occupants broke a built-in settee, uncovering a hiding place for old financial records and diaries, thus adding more historical spice to this majestic structure. The Brendan Pardue family is the current resident.



## 902 GREENWOOD AVENUE

Passing this stone and stucco three-story building, one would not think of it as a hospital at one time. Yet that was its main purpose when Dr. W.D. Howe built it before the turn of the century. It was one of two hospitals in 1900, the other being Dr. Ward's at Sixth and Macon. The city directory listed seventeen other physicians at that time. Why so many for a population of just over 3000? The answer lies in this area's climate as much as anything. It became a haven for the treatment of patients with tuberculosis just as Colorado Springs was.

Rooming houses were busy at the time also. The health resort popularity of Cañon City was further enhanced by the existence of the healing hot mineral baths of Soda Springs and the Hot Springs Hotel on Riverside. Records show that the Howe Hospital was not highly successful.

For some time, it became the home of Percy H. Troutman who operated the Round Crest Canning Company from 1912 to the early 1920's. Mr. Troutman also owned an apple orchard in Fruitmere which is now part of the property belonging to the Holy Cross Abbey.

Today this stately building has easily been recycled into an apartment house with years of living ahead.

