

Lower Chautauqua Newsletter

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SHARING THE HISTORY OF THE PEOPLE AND EVENTS THAT HAVE SHAPED THIS GREAT NEIGHBORHOOD!

Floral Park Historic District was ahead of its time

by Silvia Pettem

In 1939, when eight faculty members of the University of Colorado shared a dissatisfaction with available living facilities in Boulder, they formed their own association and bought an entire city block in the Floral Park subdivision. Then they divided the block into eight lots, held a drawing to determine who got which lot, and each built a house.

Maintaining the architectural unity of the project was important to the homeowners, so they created covenants to preserve the exteriors. The phrase "historic preservation" had not yet entered the average person's vocabulary, but these homeowners already looked ahead to the future.

The eight houses (bounded by 15th and 16th streets and Mariposa and Bluebell avenues) all were constructed with green shutters and red tile roofs and were designed by James M. Hunter. He saved the homeowners money by buying in bulk, particularly when he recycled bricks from the State Preparatory School that had recently been demolished after the "new" high school opened on Arapahoe Avenue.

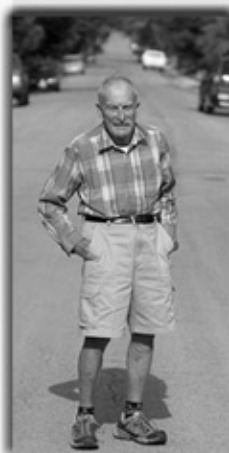
Hunter also built himself a house across the street at 1505 Mariposa Avenue. He later stated that because the owners were so cooperative, it only took him six months to design all of their homes. He added that "the roof slope was in the style of the University buildings, detailing was culled from Williamsburg, and molding was in the Colonial style." When the eight houses were completed in 1940, they initially were called "Red Square" because the redroofed houses surrounded an interior courtyard designed as open space.

All houses shared a one-story parking garage. (The original one burned and has been replaced.) In later years, the Red Square label was misconstrued as a connection to Communism. The eight original owners were History Department Chair James G. Allen, Economics Department Chair Morris Garnsey, Fine Arts professor Francis J. Geck, assistant professor of speech Elbert W. Harrington, mechanical engineering professor Norman Parker, Chinese and Far Eastern history professor Dr. Earl Swisher, English professor Paul V. Thompson, law professor Henry Weihofen. In 1977, the city of Boulder designated the eight homes as the Floral Park Historic District. At the time, the only original owners still living there were the Garnseys and the Gecks. With the historic district in place, all current and future property owners have to agree to retain the exterior architectural features of their homes. What the city did was very simple – it ensured that the plans of the original eight owners would be respected in the future.

Silvia Pettem is the author of "Boulder: Evolution of a City" as well as "Separate Lives: The Story of Mary Rippon," and other books on local history, available in local bookstores and at www.thebooklode.com

Running with Irving

by Jon Hatch



I recently caught up with Irving Weiss, 88, from the cozy living room of his 1950's ranch-style home at 1635 Mariposa Avenue. I see Irving running and biking all the time so I just had to catch up with him and share his story. Irving's presence here has surely helped shape the identity of this neighborhood, in addition to the lives of a great many young mathematicians. You will see Irving running or riding his bike through the neighborhood. Next time you see him be sure to say, "Hello!"

JH: What year did you come to Colorado? **IW:** 1962

JH: How did you choose Colorado? **IW:** My family was from New York. I was born in the Bronx and then we moved to the country in nearby New Jersey. Many years later I did graduate work at Stanford (California) and after that, this

was 1955, we made a trip from the west coast back to the east coast to Lehigh University (Penn.) where I would teach. But on the way we came through the Moffat Tunnel (penetrates James Peak and the continental divide) and it was spectacular. I said I've got to come back here. I was hired by the university in 1962 to teach applied mathematics in the College of Engineering. **JH:** What year did you buy your home on Mariposa? **IW:** 1966 **JH:** Who was the U.S. president? **IW:** Kennedy. I remember walking home from campus when I heard of his assassination. I was shocked. **JH:** What were homes prices when you bought your home in 1966? **IW:** After renting for about 4 years I started looking to buy a home for my family, my wife and our three daughters. "Martin Acres homes were selling for about \$12,000 and here they were selling for around \$25,000. I also looked at a home on Highland (Mapleton Hill) selling for about \$50,000. I settled here since it fit my family and it was close to campus where I taught math. At the time my salary was \$12,500 a year and interest rates (for home loans) were about 4.5%. We could afford to live here comfortably. **JH:** What historical events can you remember in your time here that impacted the neighborhood?

IW: Bluebell Creek (just behind his home) flooded in 1971. It inundated half of my yard and there was 2 inches of water in the basement. And then the city wanted to continue 17th St south through the Bureau of Standards land and connect it to I think Dartmouth Ave (Table Mesa). We all opposed the idea. A woman who owned the land thought that rather than sell to city she would donate or sell it as Open Space. That would have been different. I also remember the Red Owl supermarket (in Basemar), where Ace Hardware is now. That was kind of like Ideal Market is today. **JH:** Have you enjoyed this neighborhood? **IW:** Yes, I run a lot and use the trails all around here. It's so close to everything and I commute to just about everywhere. My 1984 Toyota Tercel has about 76,000 miles (just over 3,000 miles/year). I have had great neighbors over the years. Dr. Takahashi was a well known pediatrician here and Bill Bright lived nearby. He was a world renowned Linguist (a person skilled in languages). **JH:** Besides running, what other activities do you enjoy? **IW:** I have been running since 1968. It was queer then, to run, that's why I would do it on trails so no one would see me. I run 3 to 4 days a week, mostly on trails, an hour at a time all year long, winter and summer. I ride my bike all over to get around. I also swim and lift weights. I am doing the Courage Classic (3 days 155 miles) this year for the sixth time. **JH:** Is there any wisdom you can leave for the next generation of families in this neighborhood? **IW:** Get involved with activities and explore. Explore and get out and meet your neighbors. I just met a neighbor who's lived a few homes down from here for the past six years. I just met her while clearing the sidewalk and we had a great chat. We went to the hillside here (Four Pines) to watch the fireworks together.

Neighborhood Real Estate Market Watch - April 1st thru June 31st...

SOLD	SALE PENDING	AVAILABLE
2252 Columbine...\$496,935	2131 Bluebell.....\$467,000	517 22nd.....\$499,000
602 22.....\$538,500	437 18th.....\$720,000	2150 Columbine.....\$519,000
320 20th.....\$570,910	601 15th(no M.L.S.)...\$831,500	14 Chautauqua Prk.....\$595,000
340 21st.....\$705,000	1225 Mariposa.....\$1,075,000	285 Fair Pl.....\$680,000
1380 Bluebell.....\$795,000	546 14th.....\$2,499,000	240 Camden Pl.....\$795,000
650 11th.....\$1,570,000		2015 Mariposa.....\$99,900
		205 Devon Pl.....\$839,000
		1405 Bellevue.....\$1,500,000
		1901 Bluebell.....\$1,695,000
		690 11th.....\$2,295,000
		1498 King.....\$3,300,000
		1480 Bellevue.....\$3,550,000
		1529 Columbine.....\$3,775,000
		35 Bellevue.....\$4,400,000
Comparison	2nd Qtr-2007 vs 2nd Qtr-2006	
# of Homes Sold	6 homes	7 homes
Average Price/sqft	\$265/sqft (-8.9%)	\$291/sqft
Average Price	\$779,390 (+8.7)	\$717,714
Median Price	\$570,910 (-21.3%)	\$725,000
Avg. Days on Mkt.	91days	117days
Purchase Price to List Price	98% avg	99%avg
Lowest Price	\$496,935	\$590,000
Highest Price	\$1,570,000	\$889,000

Information from IRES Multiple Listing Service deemed reliable but not guaranteed!



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