



HISTORIC NOMINATION FORM

CITY OF AURORA, COLORADO
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

ORIG

Date:

I.D.# _____
(Staff Use)

Project Name: Current Beeler Street Residence Historic Thomas Gilligan House

Address: Street 1455 Beeler
City Aurora County Arap State CO

Legal Description: Beginning 220' South 689' East of the Northwest corner of Sec. 3, T4, R67, South 130' East 260' North 130' West 260' to the beginning Sec. 3, T4, R67

Date of Construction: About 1925

Nomination Category: District Building Object
 Structure Site Other

Current Owner: Name Partnership Between Notified? _____ (staff use)
Address: MHC-Denver and CLR, Inc. C/O AuCMHC 14301 E. Hampden Ave.
City: Aurora State CO Zip Code 80014 Phone 693-9500

General Information

<u>Ownership</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Present Use</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural
<input type="checkbox"/> Private	<input type="checkbox"/> Vacant	<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Private		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Residential
<input type="checkbox"/> Not-For-Profit Partnership		<input type="checkbox"/> Government
		<input type="checkbox"/> Military
		<input type="checkbox"/> Park
		<input type="checkbox"/> Other

<u>Condition</u>	<u>Modifications</u>	<u>Location</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> None, like original	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On original site
<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Slight	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved (describe below)
<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Work in progress	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Poor/Deteriorating	<input type="checkbox"/> Major (describe/below)	

General Description: Provide other relevant information to assist this nomination review process, including construction information, description and extent of modifications, reasons and dates of building moves, general architectural description (inc. size, height, stories, style, materials, etc.), names and other data for builder and/or architect, and any other relevant information.

See attached Statement of Significance and Description

Application submitted by: Molly Spaeth-Burkhardt, Community Liaison for Aurora Community
Address: Mental Health Center, Inc. 14301 E. Hampden Ave, Aurora CO 80014
Phone: 693-9500

Statement of Significance: Check those which apply and provide details as described below

Architectural Significance

- Represents the work of a master architect
 Possesses high artistic values
 Represents type, period or method of construction

Historical Significance

- Associated with significant persons
 Associated with significant events
 Contributes to an historic dist.
 Geographically significant

Basically, why is this building or site historically or architecturally significant? Provide information on builder, architect, and original or subsequent owners. Discuss other important factors. Is building crucial part of overall historic district or area? Provide any other information leading to conclusion that this building or site may be of architectural, historical or geographical significance.

See attached:

Statement of Significance and Description
 Twice a "Model" Home 03/78

References: List specific sources for any factual information provided in this nomination including books, newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, interviews, etc.
The Aurora Democrat (Aurora, Colorado), June 12, July 23, 24, and 31, September 4 and 18, 1925.

Molly Markert, "Twice a Model Home," Aurora Historical Society Newsletter, III (OVER)

General Notes: All applications should be accompanied by:

- 1) Sketch plan of site, building etc. May be neatly handdrawn on 8½" x 11" sheet showing adjacent streets, general building location and dimensions, plus other prominent site features.
- 2) Color photos of suitable number and size to document size, building etc.
- 3) Additional pages may be attached to respond to above application requirements.

14th AVE.

APT. BUILDING

ALLEY

PARKING LOT

DRIVEWAY

111'

1424'

BEELER ST.

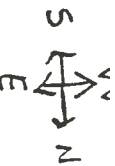
EASEMENT

3024'

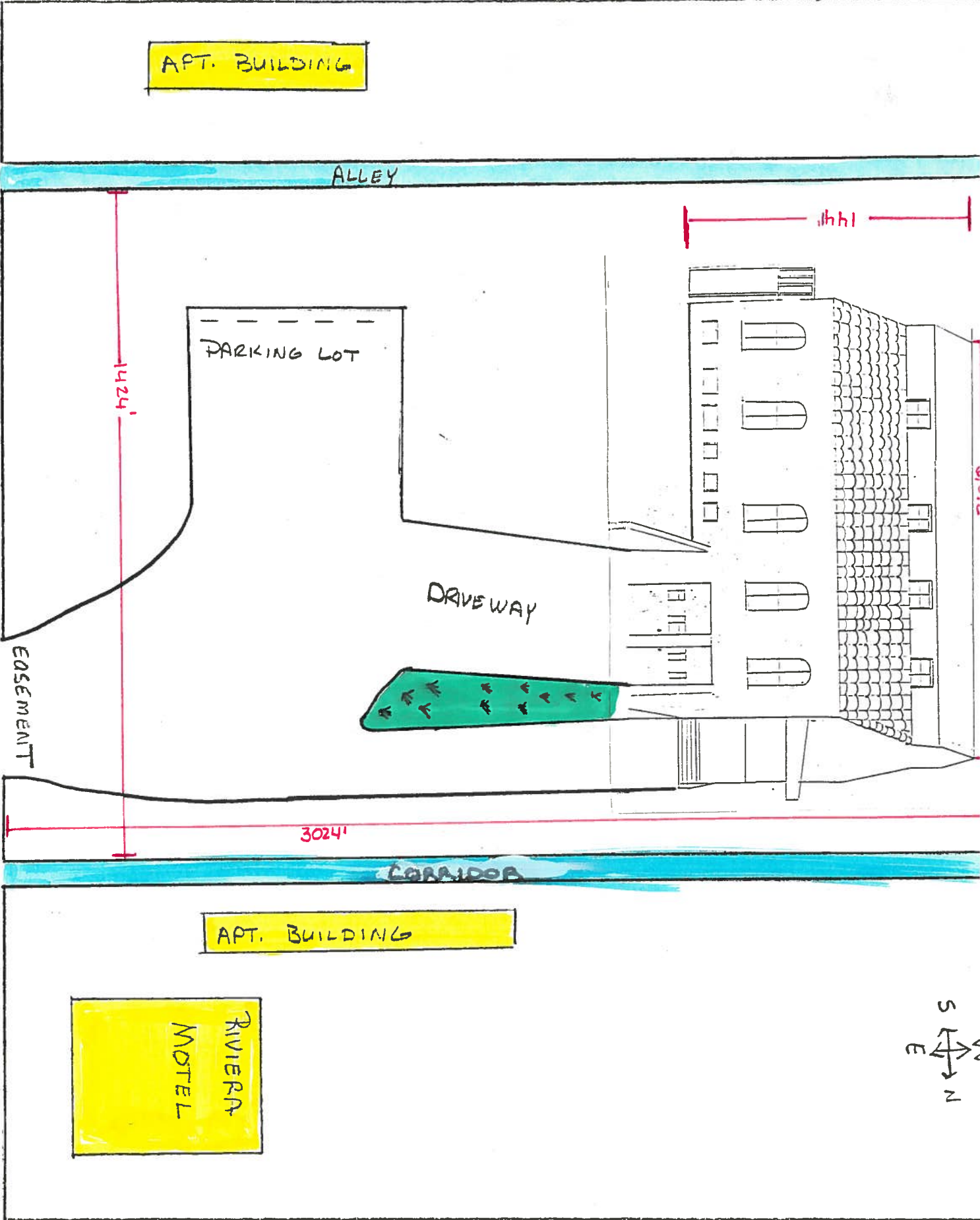
CORRIDOR

APT. BUILDING

RIVIERA
MOTEL



COLFAX AVE.



8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1925-present

BUILDER/ARCHITECTO. J. Grisier, & W.W. Stoddard

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In 1925, O. J. Grisier designed and, with W. W. Stoddard, served as general contractor to build the Thomas J. Gilligan House. The Gilligan House, located at 1455 Beeler, remains the single most outstanding example of the 1920's Spanish Mission style architecture in Aurora.

Unique for its Spanish or Modified Castillian architecture, the house was also considered unique for incorporating the most advanced features of the day, such as fluorescent, recessed or hidden lighting and wiring which accommodated 125 electrical outlets for "every known appliance."

Mr. Thomas F. Gilligan, the home's first owner, was the president of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce and of the Aurora First National Bank. In order to support Aurora's early development, encourage the growth of Aurora as a desirable Denver suburb, and promote the use of electrical appliances, Mr. Gilligan had this show home built. It was touted as an example of the most modern trend in luxurious homes and Aurora's first all electric home.

During a extensive publicity campaign, Westinghouse and General Electric promoted the "All Electric Display Home." KOA Radio and all area newspapers advertised a September 5, 1925 open house ceremony and reception. The American Furniture Company supplied fine interior furnishings and O'Meara Ford placed two automobiles in the garage for the occasion. Governor Morlay officiated at the ribbon cutting ceremony and 15,000 guests toured the house and the fourteen acre grounds terraced to Colfax Avenue, a dirt road with a street car track.

About 1933, the Gilligans moved to California and the house remained vacant for several years. Dr. Arthur C. Cluff then purchased the house with five acres of property, which ran from Colfax to 14th and extended a block and a half from Beeler to the west excepting eight lots on Colfax. Dr. Cluff resided there with his family and operated the Cluff Sanitorium for tuberculosis patients. When his health failed, he sold the property to Mrs. Vesta Bowden, who operated the Mountain View

Convalescent Sanatorium for up to 37 handicapped and elderly patients during the 1950's. In 1957, Mrs. Bowden was listed as the sole owner of the Vesta Bowden Nursing Home.

By 1975, businessman Jack Smith had obtained ownership of the building which was leased to Suburban Community Training and Services Center for use as an Intermediate Care Facility for 15 mentally retarded residents. Re-named "Beeler Street East," the facility was renovated to comply with health, safety and fire codes. A model program, TIM (for Therapeutic Intervention Model), served clients with a dual diagnosis of mental illness and developmental disability during the early 1980's. The facility was listed for sale in 1987, and subsequently purchased jointly by Community Living Resources, Inc. (a subsidiary corporation of the Aurora Community Mental Health Center) and the Mental Health Corporation of Denver, who together operate the specialized residential program re-named Beeler Street.

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Thomas F. Gilligan House, located at 1455 Beeler Street in Aurora, is a large, single detached structure built in 1925 consistent with the 1920's Mission period architecture. The house, which is irregular in shape, has one and one-half stories set over a full basement. The primary building material is brick sheathed in cream-colored stucco. Each facade has multiple bays, some set inside the projections. The roof, with several intercepting gables is covered with red clay tile.

Secondary features give the structure its distinctive appearance. The fenestration is varied, but all major openings on the north, east, and west facades have red brick radiating voussoirs above and lugsills below. This treatment is continued in the main doorway and the three arched chimney caps. However, small windows in the basement and larger ones on the south facade have flat arches and lugsills.

The main entrance is located on the north facade through a door at the end of a long, recessed porch with its original wrought iron lights, trim, and railings. The hardware on the door retains the home's original address, 9100 East Colfax Avenue. The porch was covered at some point during the 1950's when Mrs. Bowden owned the property.

The interior has been modified, but the original hardware, wrought iron detail, mahogany woodwork, tilework and some fixtures remain intact. The large entrance hall leads to the original wrought iron and mahogany staircase. When built, the first floor did have a living room with a fireplace, a dining room, a sun room with quarry tile floor and balconies at either end, a master bedroom, a bathroom with yellow and black tile, a shower and concealed lighting, children's bedrooms, a den, a kitchen with dumbwaiter, a breakfast room, and a maid's room and bath. The second floor contained two large guest rooms, a sleeping porch, and a bathroom. The basement was comprised of the two-car garage, a laundry room, and tile-floored billiard room and play room, a walk-in cold storage locker, and the furnace.

During Dr. Cluff's ownership, a bathroom was added in the basement near the laundry facilities. The kitchen has been significantly altered and none of the original appliances remain. Partitions upstairs have been installed to create additional private bedrooms.

In summary, although exterior and interior changes have been made, the 1920's design and character remain evident.

TWICE A "MODEL" HOME:

1925 - Aurora's Electric Home
1978 - Beeler Street East

Pictures and article by Molly Markert

Introduction

A large, architecturally unique home stands at 1455 Beeler Street in Aurora, surrounded by new apartments, a motel and bar, and a large section of unkempt land. One enters the home from a parking lot on the east side of the building, and immediately notices that this home is not your average suburban dwelling.

How did the home come to be? What purpose did it formerly serve? Why the "sideways" entrance and the unkempt yard? These thoughts, and other questions, intrigued me four years ago when I first visited the (former) nursing home. My curiosity about the residence was given a back seat due to my job working with the people living in the home. Other than noticing a few "unique" features, I ignored the physical surroundings until a project was suggested as a class requirement for History of Denver with Dr. Leonard at Metro State College.

This paper, then, is a project for that class. Although I did not uncover or discover nearly as much as I had hoped to learn, I did talk with many interesting people and came to know and appreciate the depth and length of time historical research requires. Learning the process of historical research is, to me, much more valuable than knowing the number of tiles on the roof; so I feel I have gained a great deal from this project.

Unfortunately, many questions remain to be answered. I hope to continue with this project independently until my curiosity is, at least in part, satisfied.

nothing about Aurora other than the current water problem! Denver City Directories only covered Denver, and the Denver Combined Suburban Directory was not started until 1941. Conversations with interested persons were incomplete, when available. Several vital persons were on vacation or unavailable.

Given those constraints and problems, I'm surprised I even have the barest glimmering of factual information about the origin of the home.

1925—Origin

Thomas F. Gilligan was a Director of the Aurora First National Bank, President of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce, and considered to be one of the leading businessmen in the small suburban community of Aurora. The Society Section of the Aurora Democrat for June 12, 1925, comments that "The Gilligan house is rapidly being completed and will undoubtedly be the finest home in Aurora. We understand that before being occupied, it will be open for inspection." Quarterly statements for the First National Bank on June 30, 1925 show the bank's total assets at \$599,590.50, attested to by T.F. Gilligan, James F. Gilligan, and D.H. Stanley, Directors.

By July 24, 1925, the local paper began weekly front page "progress" reports to the home's completion. The home had been selected as an "Electrical Display Home"; with Westinghouse and General Electric having complete control of the most modern wiring, fluorescent lighting, and "every known electrical appliance" available. The America Furniture Company completely finished every room, and O'Meara Ford even supplied a new auto to grace the garage.

Description

The Gilligan home was designed by O. J. Grisier, who also served as general contractor with W. W. Stoddard, builder of many homes in Aurora. The exterior of the home was a cream colored stucco and was accented with brick arches over the windows and doors. Tall chimneys featured arched tops. The beautiful terrace faced Colfax Avenue (There is a motel there today, so the front of the home is difficult to see.)

The basement had a large double garage, a laundry room, play room, billiard room and den, space for coal and a furnace. The floor was brick, rather than concrete.

The main floor had a reception hall, dining room, living room, sun parlor with two balconies, owner's bedroom, children's bedroom, kitchen, owner's private office and den, breakfast room and pantry, maid's room and bath, and owner's bath. A cedar-lined closet was considered a special feature.

"An unusual detail of the living room was its huge tile fireplace, made by special order in California. This room had lights concealed in the beams, providing indirect illumination." The owner's bath had orange and black tile with a built-in shower and concealed lights.

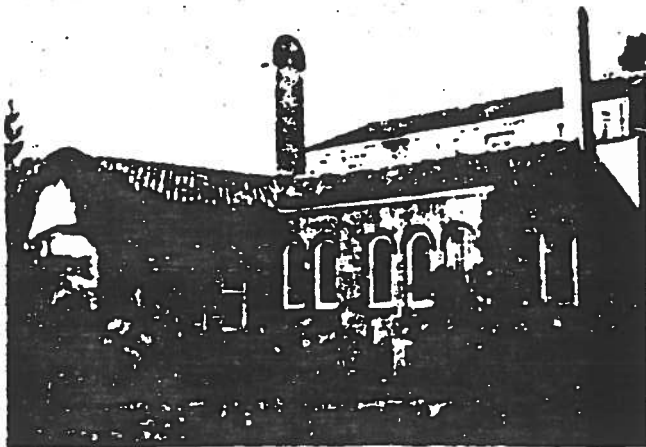
The second floor had two commodious guest rooms, the south room leading to a sleeping porch. A bath for guests completed this floor, whose unique feature was its central location over the first floor.

Every bedroom had a large closet. Floors throughout the house were of double thickness oak.

A meeting at the bank on July 23, 1925 "enthusiastically endorsed" the project, and selected a committee of Aurora ladies to serve as hostesses and tour guides for the Grand Opening, slated for August 29, 1925.

City promoters quickly realized a way to induce Denverites to move to the suburb, and by July 31, 1925 a booklet "filled with the good points of Aurora" was prepared for distribution to the thousands expected to be at the Grand Opening. The event was broadcast on KOA radio, and there was little doubt that all this promotion would result in "the biggest possible advertisement for our town."

(Cont on next page)



Southwest view-note tall chimneys with arched tops.

1925—Research Methods

Some of the methods used to uncover facts about the origin of the house would make a historian shudder in his boots, but were the only recourse available to me with three weeks time, the Colorado State Historical Society closed until August, limited materials at the Denver Public Library Western History Department on Aurora, and no previous experience in historical research.

I started with local rumors about the home, and then proceeded to contact members of the Aurora Historical Society and other interested persons to check out the gossip. My only factual data came from 1925-1930 editions of "The Aurora Democrat", fortunately available on microfilm at the Aurora Public Library.

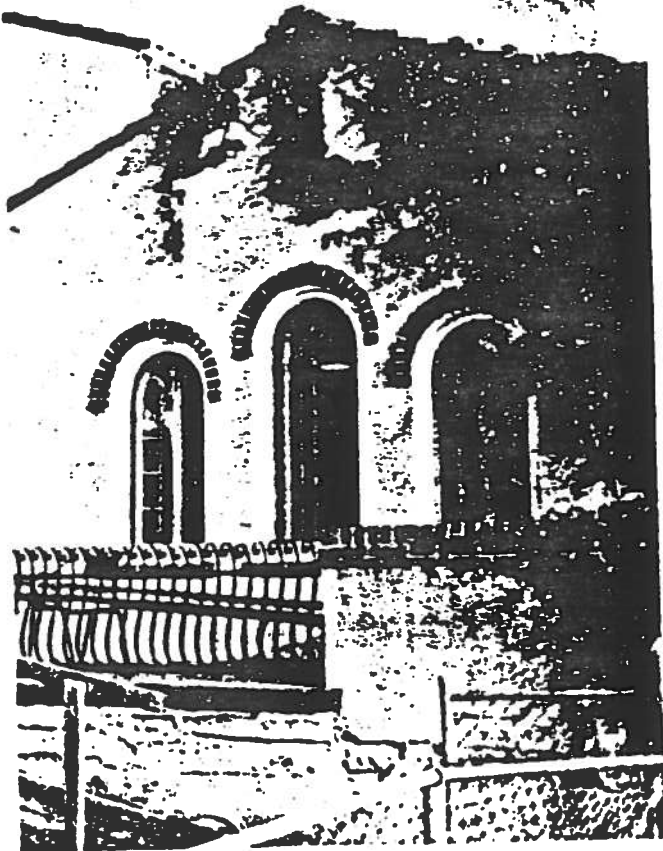
One lead connected with another, and unfortunately all dead-ended. Public Service Company of Colorado referred me to the Rocky Mountain Rural Electrical Association, which seemed to know

from page 2)

More good publicity followed in the paper, noting that the house was "designed, built, and all materials furnished by Aurora men, whenever possible." The paper that date also stated that "no man is better informed as to the financial status of Aurora and to the real value of property here, other than Thomas F. Gilligan, owner of the home."

Construction delayed the Grand Opening until September 5, 1925, and the publicity to make Aurora "Denver's finest suburb" continued unabated.

On Friday, August 28th, a complete description of the dream home appeared in the paper headlined "Electric Home Is Aurora Built", again proclaiming Aurora's glories and urging people to attend the Grand Opening. The modified Spanish or Castilian design was determined to be "the most modern trend in luxurious homes". Over 125 electrical outlets were available, and the walls alone required over 78,000 bricks.



Grand Opening

The September 4, 1925 Aurora Democrat devoted half of the front page to a picture and story about the home. Although mostly good publicity for Aurora, the article cited Thomas Gilligan as President of the Aurora Electrical Home Association, and the names of the "bevy of pretty Aurora girls" who acted as guides. Lovely young hostesses were Blanche Lancaster, Louisa Hasamaer, Marcia Hertzmark, Mildred Hertzmark, Miriam McDowell, Vivian McKenzie, Helen Lewand, Twila Garkie, Lillian Parker, Helen Dodds, Ethel Wadleigh, Elsie Harrison, Merle Harrison, Catherine Cleaves, Hazel Stoddard, Ruth Lancaster and Marian Haight.

Follow-up front page articles on September 11th and 18th mentioned that Governor Morley attended the Grand Opening (one and one-half hours late) as did 15,000 other people. The society news reported that Mr. and Mrs. Gilligan would take possession of their lovely new home on September 19, 1925.

1926-1930(?) - Rumors

At that point, facts end and only memories serve to fill in the gaps. The only other mention in the Aurora Democrat were financial statements and advertisements for the First National Bank through July 11, 1930, still carrying Thomas Gilligan as director and listing deposits at over \$450,000. An obituary in the Denver Post on March 21, 1953 stated that James F. Gilligan, a former cashier in banks in Salida, Boulder and Aurora in 1925 through 1937 had died. The obituary mentioned two brothers and other family in California

Rumors abound for this time period, and no confirmation was located for any of the material. Things must have gone well for awhile, yet memories indicate the contrary.

Supposedly, the bank closed in 1933, never to reopen. The Gilligan Family was said to have moved to California. The house was vacated, and remained empty until sometime in the late 1930's.

1930(?) to 1952—Assumptions

The cause of historical research was not advanced by myself at all for this period, and only some assumptions are available. The only fact, from the Denver Combined Suburban Directory, shows Dr. Arthur C. Cluff as owner of the cluff Sanitorium at 9100 East Colfax in 1941 through 1952. The only remaining visible testimony to this owner was a sign above a bedroom (then an office?) door (removed in the early 1970's) stating "Dr. Cluff".

The assumptions are that Dr. Cluff purchased the home in the '30's (whenever it was available for sale) and did extensive remodeling to make room for the tuberculosis patients he cared for. The remodeling is another visible remnant to his ownership, since the house was divided to make room "for at least 40" patients. Other remodeling and landscaping could have been done under his ownership.

1952-1975—Ownership and Use

The Denver Combined Suburban Directory is again the only factual information source I had for this time period. Much more research could be done in this area, given more time.

The Directory for 1954 shows Vesta Bowden and Calvin Douthitt owning the Mountain View Convalescent Sanatorium at the current Beeler Street address. Sometime between 1952 and 1954 the Colfax frontage was sold, giving us the present sideway entrance and a view into motel windows. The original address was 9100 East Colfax.

In the Directory for 1955-56, Vesta Bowden, Juanita DePriest, and R. L. Manasco are listed as owners. Unconfirmed rumors abound for this period, when the home continued to serve as the Mountain View Convalescent Sanatorium.

By 1957, Vest Bowden is listed as the sole owner of Vesta Bowden Nursing Home. Not much can yet be said for this period, mainly because Ms. Bowden is on vacation and partly because the rest is unconfirmed rumor. Some remodeling was done under her ownership to meet Nursing Home licensing codes and provide space for the 37 elderly and handicapped persons living there.

1975 to Present

By 1975, Jack Smith, another current businessman in the nursing home industry, had some ownership in the building. Due to increasingly stringent Federal and State licensing requirements for Nursing Homes, the decision was made to close Vesta Bowden Nursing Home. The building was then leased to Suburban Community Services and Training Center (SCTSC), who began the process of meeting the less stringent requirements for an Intermediate Care Facility. Fifteen of the original 37 residents remained in the facility, and history then repeated itself.

SCTSC obtained funds from the Community Development Act of the Housing and Urban Development to do extensive building repair to meet the Intermediate Care Facility guidelines. The roof was repaired, more electrical outlets were installed, the wiring was redone, and modern lights were installed in the main part of the home. A grant from the Batchelder Foundation secured interior decorating assistance to design a model Intermediate Care Facility (ICF) environment, including lowered lighting fixtures, carpet, and furnishings. Other donations were secured to complete the model ICF environment by June, 1977.

Summary

The model house of 1925 now provides a model home environment to the fifteen mentally retarded people living there. This facility is unique among Intermediate Care Facilities in Colorado. Usually agencies for mentally retarded people have barely enough funding to provide adequate programming. In Aurora, at Beeler Street East, funds from the State provide exceptional programming, while Federal and private funds provided an exceptional physical environment.

Aurora's model home has held that distinction twice, once in 1925 and again in 1977. It has been Aurora's 'Model Home' twice this century.

AURORA HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Sent to members January, March, May, July, September and November. Printed by students in the Printing and Typesetting Courses at the Aurora Public Schools Technical Center, 500 Buckley Road, Aurora, Colorado. Articles dealing with the history of Aurora are welcomed for this newsletter. Call 343-3351.

Application Accepted by: Staff member Virginia R Steele Date: May 12/4/89
Application Complete: Yes No

If no, what is needed? _____

Field Assessment: Eligible for local landmark designation - meets criteria - applicant interested in maintaining character & integrity of property.

Other Designations: National Register potential
State Inventory form completed by S. Pence 1985
Other _____

Eligible for National Register? _____

Local Inventory eligible

Staff Recommendation Recommend public hearing & landmark designation

Summary of Actions

1. Presented to Historic Preservation Commission: Date 12/14/89
Scheduled for Public Hearing Yes No
If "No", reasons why _____

2. Public Hearing: Date _____
Recommended for Approval: Vote: _____
Not Recommended for Approval: Vote: _____
Reasons for Denial _____

3. City Council: Date _____
Recommended for Designation: Vote _____
Not Recommended for Designation: Vote _____
Reasons for Denial _____