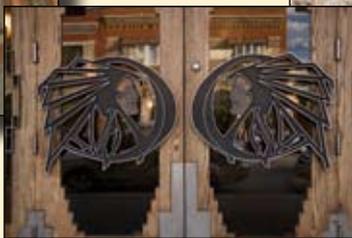


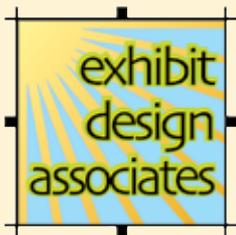
Steam Rails to Ski Trails



An Architectural Walking Tour of Downtown Steamboat Springs



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Back cover: The 1945 Square Dance Festival on Lincoln Avenue. Courtesy The Tread of Pioneers Museum.

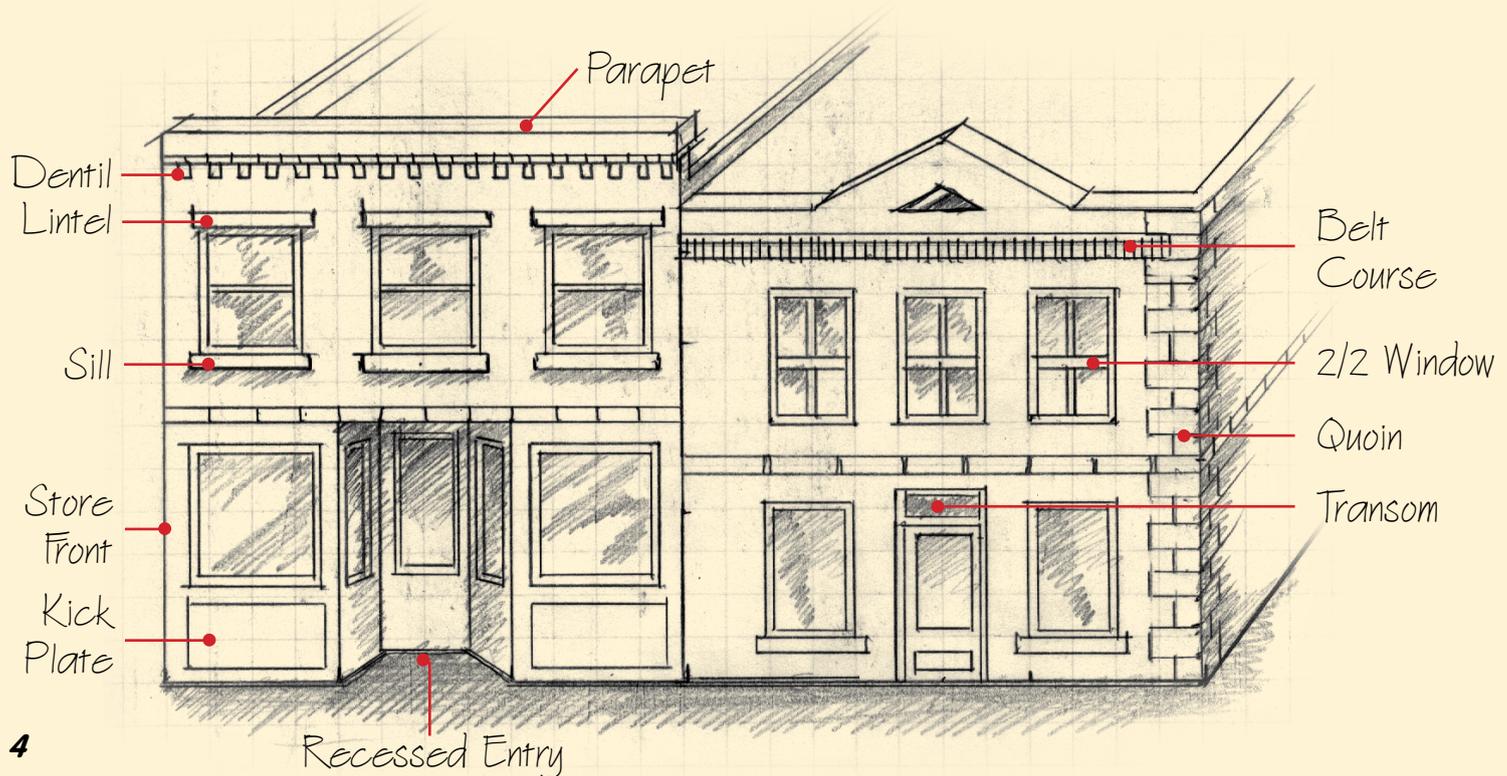
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Contents

Building	Bldg. #	Page #	Building	Bldg. #	Page #
Elements of Commercial Architecture.....	4		Routt County National Bank.....	13	26
The Development of Steamboat Springs	5		First National Bank.....	14	28
How to Use This Guide.....	7		Pioneer Hotel	15	30
Steamboat Springs Depot.....	1	8	Barnum Building.....	16	31
Howelsen Hill Tow House	2	10	Campbell Building	17	32
Yampa Valley Electric Association	3	11	Routt County Courthouse	18	34
Sore Saddle Cyclery	4	12	Schaffnit House	19	36
Chamber of Commerce.....	5	13	Morning House	20	38
Steamboat Pilot Building.....	6	14	Christian Science Church.....	21	39
Victoria Building	7	15	The Tread of Pioneers Museum	22	40
Lorenz Building	8	16	St. Paul's Episcopal Church.....	23	42
Harwig's Saddlery	9	18	Schaffnit Building Addition	24	43
Model Shoe Shop.....	10	19	Carver Power House	25	44
Maxwell Building.....	11	20	Steamboat Laundry.....	26	46
Furlong Building	12	22	Bud Werner Memorial Library.....	27	48
WALKING TOUR MAP	24				

20th Century Commercial Architecture

Many of Steamboat Springs' buildings are designed in the 20th Century Commercial style. Buildings were built lot line to lot line with no setbacks. Look for some of the elements shown here:



The Development of Steamboat Springs



Steamboat Springs is a modest town. It never had a period of explosive gold-rush growth, as so many other Colorado mountain towns did. It never added 10,000 residents in one year, never

produced multimillion-dollar fortunes overnight. But if it lacked the spectacular booms, it also avoided the devastating busts that left other communities' Main Streets in shambles.

And Steamboat Springs did enjoy some distinct growth spurts. The first occurred after 1884, when town founder James Crawford (standing in the center of this photograph) and Boulder investors formed the Steamboat Springs Town Site Company. They promoted the Yampa Valley's boundless pastures and rich coal deposits, along with the mineral springs themselves. Within a few years the city had a newspaper, bank, hotel, stagecoach line, and library, plus a few churches and a smattering of stores. Most of those 19th-century buildings are no longer here; only one — the Springs Drug Store (now Harwig Grill) at 911 Lincoln — appears in this volume.



The railroad arrived in December 1908, launching a new era of growth. The Denver Salt Lake & Pacific Railroad, built by David Moffat, connected Steamboat Springs to the state and national economies. Area mines stepped up production, and local ranchers — now able to ship their steers to Denver, Kansas City, and Chicago — enlarged their herds (and profits) many times over.

Steamboat Springs became a destination for stockmen from all over western Colorado and southern Wyoming. By 1914 this was the busiest cattle-shipping point in the nation.

That expansion continued for more than a decade. The downtown you see today took shape during that period. Business blocks went up on both sides

of Lincoln Avenue, and frame construction gave way to stone and brick, as Steamboat Springs took on a new air of permanence. “Thousands of Dollars in Many New Buildings,” read a typical headline in the *Steamboat Pilot*; the subhead went, “The Sound of the Saw and the Hammer Is Heard from Morn Till Night.” Steamboat Springs already possessed electric and phone utilities — they’d been built in 1900 — and while the community lacked the glamour of the gold- and silver-rush towns, its prospects seemed at least as bright as theirs.

And it had something no other Colorado mountain town possessed: a ski hill. Carl Howelsen, a Norwegian ski-jump champion, moved to the United States circa 1900 and made his

way to Steamboat Springs, where he built one of Colorado's first ski-jump ramps. His passion has helped define this community ever since. That was only part of Howelsen's contribution to the city: An exceptionally talented stonemason, he also laid the bricks for many of Steamboat Springs' more recognizable buildings.

Howelsen's legacy eventually led to another burst of growth in Steamboat Springs. It came after 1960, when the Steamboat Ski Area opened. For the first time in almost 40 years, the city added some significant new buildings. Eugene Sternberg, an architect who'd influenced the look and feel of the burgeoning Denver suburbs, helped shape Steamboat Springs' architecture in that era.

By 2008, a century after the railroad arrived, Steamboat Springs found itself in another period of growth. But it also had discovered an appreciation for its past. Beginning in the 1970s, when local residents raised tens of thousands of dollars to save the old railroad depot, the city found creative ways to integrate yesterday's buildings into the streetscape of today and tomorrow. Citizens invested millions of dollars to rehabilitate old buildings, restoring them to their original use or adapting them for new ones. A number of buildings were placed on historic registers, and new properties were consciously designed to blend with the old. The result: a vibrant, modern downtown firmly rooted in the community's past.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The buildings in this guide are arranged as a walking tour that begins and ends at the Steamboat Springs Depot Arts Center (the former railroad depot) at the northwest end of town. Plenty of parking is available there. Follow the bicycle path under 13th Street and continue east to the footbridge; cross the Yampa River to the Howelsen Hill Tow House, then cross back over to Yampa Street and follow the buildings in sequence. Use the map on pages 24-25 to see the whole route and a list of the buildings.

Please use caution when crossing Lincoln Avenue, which carries U.S. 40 through town. Your best crossing points are at 13th, 9th, 8th, 7th, and 5th Streets.

1. Steamboat Springs Depot, *1000 13th Street*

As part of the deal that brought railroad service to Steamboat Springs in the early 1900s, local citizens agreed to pay for the town depot. They raised \$15,000 for the project and hired famed Denver architect Frank J. Edbrooke, designer of the Colorado State Capitol and dozens of other noteworthy Colorado buildings, to draw up the blueprints. His design incorporated brick and stone from the local Emerald Mountain Quarry, with quoin patterns and a bell-cast hip roof. When the depot opened in June 1909, the Steamboat Pilot brimmed over with pride: “Nothing now stands in the way of the growth of this town. We will go forward with leaps and bounds.”



In 1972, a few years after passenger service stopped, local residents again passed the hat for the depot — this time to convert it into a new home for the Steamboat Springs Arts Council. They raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to fix the place up, adding a theater and

gallery space — and by leaps and bounds the depot moved forward again, resuming its central place in the life of Steamboat Springs.

Year Built: 1909
Architect: Frank Edbrooke
Style: Italianate
National Register 1978



2. Howelsen Hill Tow House, 845 Howelsen Pkwy.

It's no exaggeration to say the Colorado ski industry was born on Howelsen Hill. Carl Howelsen's ski-jump exhibition here for the 1914 Winter Carnival drew huge crowds, establishing skiing's potential as a tourist draw. Over the next several years, Howelsen instilled a passion for the sport that endures to this day — not just in Steamboat Springs but throughout Colorado. Howelsen Hill became the state's first permanent, dedicated recreational ski area and the home of the Steamboat Springs Winter Sports Club, which remains one of the most prestigious such organizations in the country.

The Tow House, completed in 1947, self-consciously evoked the



European Alps with its chalet-style A-frame architecture, a form that later became ubiquitous in Colorado ski towns.

Year Built: 1947
Builder: Rex Gill
Style: Rustic/Scandinavian
State Register 2000

3. Yampa Valley Electric Association, 32 10th Street



People living within the city limits of Steamboat Springs had electrical power as early as 1901 (see page 44), but most of the ranchers in the surrounding

countryside remained without it for another half-century, relying on kerosene lamps, iceboxes, and other vestiges of 19th-century homesteading. The Yampa Valley

Electric Association was formed in 1940 as part of FDR's nationwide program of rural electrification.

By the mid-1950s the YVEA had more than 4,000 customers on the rolls and needed a larger headquarters. Denver architect Eugene Sternberg (see also page 13) designed the building with a prairie-style roof and distinctive stone facade. The YVEA still operates from this building, serving more than 25,000 households.

Built: 1956
Architect: Eugene Sternberg
Builder: W.L. Price
Style: Prairie

4. Sore Saddle Cyclery, 1136 Yampa Street

Kent Eriksen and Bruce Alston built this shop in 1978 from an abandoned sawmill incinerator that once stood on Twenty Mile Road, on the opposite bank of the Yampa. In a creative feat of recycling, they stripped the structure down to its steel frame, plastered the exterior, installed a passive-solar heating system, and turned it into Sore Saddle Cyclery (known today as Orange Peel Bicycles) — one of the most unique bike shops in the country. “We’re not just selling bicycles,” Eriksen said. “We’re selling an alternative way of life.”

That alternative lifestyle became increasingly popular in Steamboat Springs in the 1980s. Traditional



industries like mining, logging, and grazing waned, while values like environmental quality and outdoor recreation became increasingly important. This

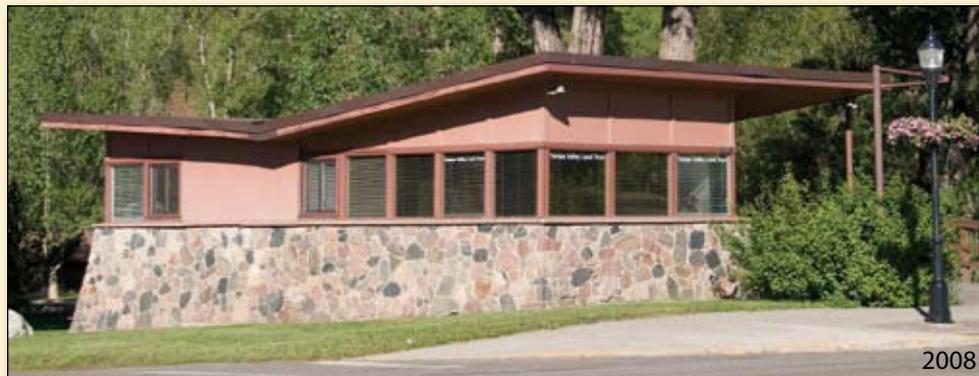
building’s conversion symbolizes the community’s shift in attitudes.

Year Built: 1978
Style: Mission Funk / Novelty

5. Chamber of Commerce, 1201 Lincoln Avenue

This is one of two buildings on the tour designed by Eugene Sternberg (see also page 11), the Czechoslovakian-born architect who helped shape the Denver suburbs. Steamboat Springs hired him as a planning consultant in the late 1950s, and his mastery of the so-called Usonian style — which featured tight integration between buildings and the surrounding landscape — made him a perfect fit for the town, which developed a back-to-nature ethic as the skiing and outdoor tourism industries grew.

Sternberg's blueprint for this building featured local river rock and a distinctive butterfly roof. Designed for affordability, like all



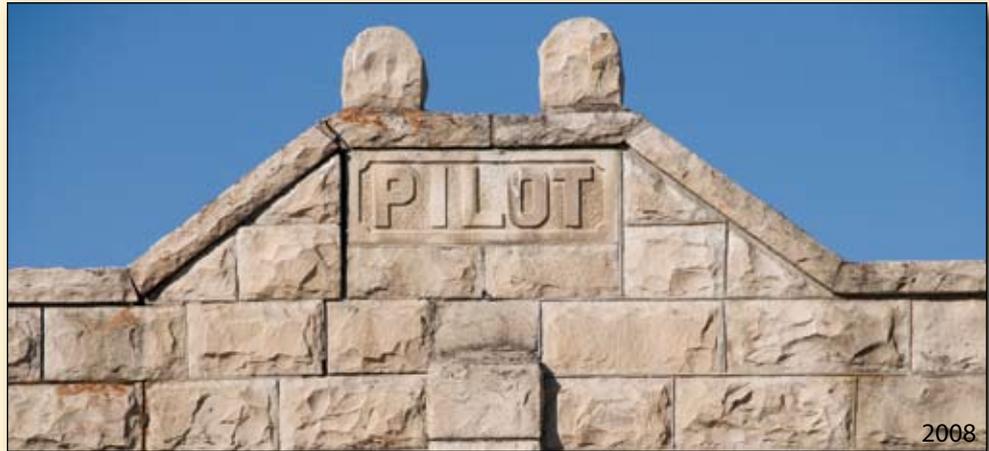
Usonian structures, the building cost just \$2,500, low even by 1960 standards. The Chamber of Commerce did business from here until 1984.

Year Built: 1960
Architect: Eugene Sternberg
Style: Usonian
National Register pending 2008



6. Steamboat Pilot Building, *1009 Lincoln Avenue*

The June 1909 fire that destroyed the original Steamboat Pilot building came at a terrible time. Railroad service had just begun, the population was rising, three dozen buildings were under construction, and many new businesses had opened — and were eager to advertise. The Pilot published from temporary quarters while hurrying this building into service. Constructed from local sandstone (seven tons' worth), it was crowned by two rounded blocks that resemble the "ears" on Rabbit Ears Pass. Five hundred guests attended the opening gala in December 1909; Governor John Shafroth and former governor Alva Adams sent telegrams of congratulation.



The Pilot began publishing in 1885 and played a key role in promoting Steamboat Springs. Publisher James Hoyle was an old friend of James Maxwell, one of the principal investors in the Steamboat Springs Town Site Company. When Hoyle died in

1894, Charles Leckenby (once a typesetter for the paper) took over and built the Pilot into one of western Colorado's best-regarded newspapers.

Year Built: 1909
Style: 20th Century Commercial

7. Victoria Building, 941 Lincoln Avenue

A building need not be old to capture the history of a place. Several recent additions to the Steamboat Springs streetscape self-consciously evoke the look and feel of the past — including this three-story mixed-use building completed in 2008. Developers Steve and Denise Peterson (local residents since the 1970s) and designer Matt Wagar spent many hours studying old buildings and materials in Steamboat Springs and elsewhere in the Colorado mountains. The result: a fresh, 21st-century take on the architecture of the early 20th century.

The corner of 10th and Lincoln sat vacant until some time in the 1910s, when a filling station was



built on the corner. Construction crews uncovered five gasoline tanks when they dug out the Victoria's foundation. The new building serves motorists in a different way: the designers oriented the Victoria's entryway to greet in-

coming cars and trucks on U.S. 40, welcoming travelers to downtown Steamboat Springs.

Year Built: 2008
Designer: Matt Wagar
Style: Neotraditional

8. Lorenz Building, 928 Lincoln Avenue

Erected in 1900, this was the first brick commercial building ever raised in Steamboat Springs. It served as a warehouse for J.W. Hugus & Company, which operated eight stores in northwest Colorado and southern Wyoming. The Hugus retail store stood on the same block, selling everything a farming or ranching household might need — sewing needles, engine parts, overalls, baking tins, you name it.

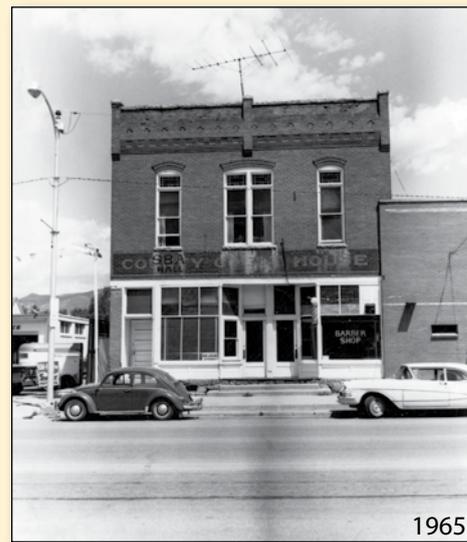
The bricks for this building were most likely fired a few blocks north of here on Soda Creek in Mullin & Babcock's kiln. During construction, the bricklayers' union went on strike, so Hugus had to press store clerks and

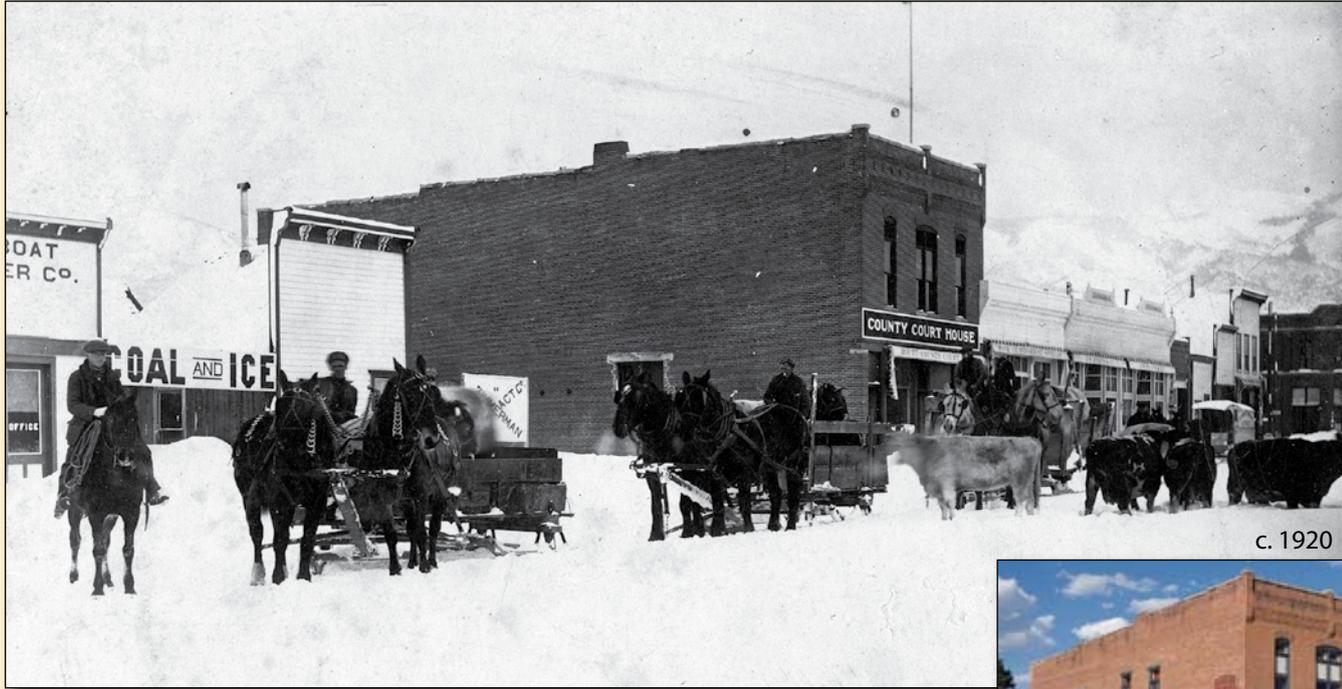
managers into service as masons. The building was finished on time.

The Hugus company vacated the warehouse in 1911. The following year Steamboat Springs became the seat of Routt County, and the county somehow crammed a full complement of offices — courtrooms, jail, sheriff, clerk & recorder, and treasurer — into this building. They remained here until the Routt County Courthouse (page 34) opened in 1923. Thereafter, Routt National Forest established offices on the ground floor of the building, while the upper floor became a dance hall operated by the Steamboat Springs Social Benefit Association. Attorney Don Lorenz bought

the building in 1958, and it has remained in the family.

Year Built: 1900
Style: 20th Century Commercial





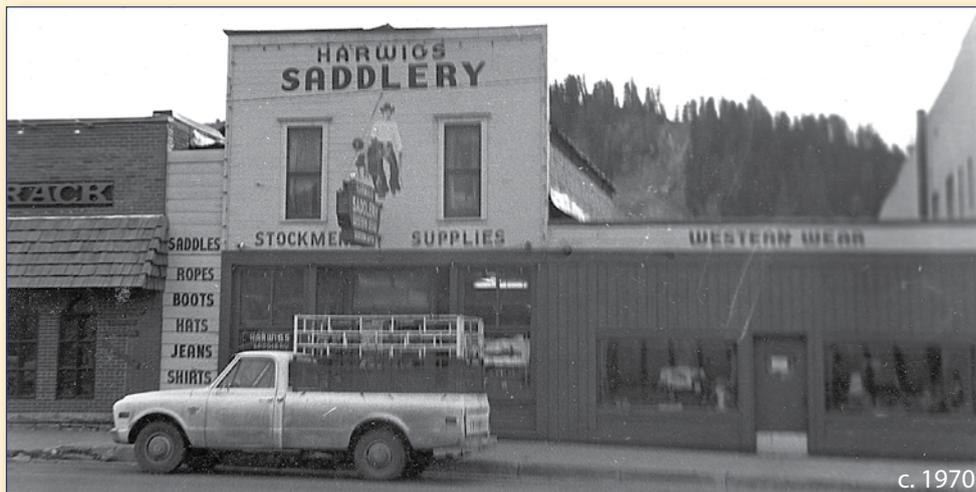
c. 1920



2008

9. Harwig's Saddlery, 911 Lincoln Avenue

This is probably the oldest building in Steamboat Springs. It opened in 1886 as a drugstore, then became a tack shop. When the Harwig family bought it in 1916, they put their own stamp on the building, adding a wood façade adorned with the hand-painted image of a cowboy. Painted for free by an itinerant artist who wanted to promote his talents, that cowboy would overlook the traffic on Lincoln Avenue for more than 50 years. Rocky Mountain weather was hard on the image, which required annual touching up — and “everybody who touched it up made it a little less good,” Katherine Harwig told an interviewer in the 1970s.



Inside the shop, one longtime resident recalled, the air was suffused with odors of leather and neatsfoot oil. Saddles, bridles, whips, harnesses, and other gear covered the walls. It functioned as a saddlery and leather shop

until 1984. Since 1985 it has done business as Harwig's Grill, a restaurant.

Year Built: 1886
Style: 19th Century Commercial

10. Model Shoe Shop, 908 Lincoln Avenue



County records indicate that this building was constructed in 1890, but that's probably an error: 10 years later the Pilot hailed the Lorenz Building (see page 16) as the first brick commercial structure in town, so this building must have been built after that. A 1911 real estate map shows this parcel as a vacant lot. The confusion suggests that an earlier building once stood here — possibly W.C. Shaw's wood-framed structure, which burned in 1909. Whatever the case, this building was in place by 1920: It appears on a real estate map from that year. It stands out for the intricate brickwork on its upper facade, a fiesta of corbelling and running bonds and diamond-shaped patterns.

John T. Sampson, the son of a prominent Kremmling family that relocated to the Yampa Valley, launched the Model Shoe Shop in 1921 after returning from World War I, where he nearly lost a leg to a shrapnel wound. However, it's unclear whether he founded the business at this address. The firm was certainly operating here by 1956, and probably moved in much earlier.

Model Shoe Shop operated here until the 1970s. Since then, the tenants have included a travel company, an interior design shop, and a pair of art galleries.

Year Built: c. 1915
Style: 20th Century Commercial

11. Maxwell Building, *840 Lincoln Avenue*

Before the railroad arrived in December 1908, builders relied on local kilns for bricks — it was too costly to haul them in from elsewhere. At the time the Maxwell Building was erected, the largest brickyard in town was run by Henry Trogler, who pressed bricks out of Elk River clay and fired them by the scores of thousands. The order for the Maxwell Building numbered 20,000 bricks. The brick detailing over the windows and doors on the 9th Street façade was reprised in the Bud Werner Memorial Library addition (see page 48).

This building was commissioned by James Maxwell, one of the five primary investors in

the Steamboat Springs Town Company. He personally surveyed and laid out the town in 1884. An absentee shareholder, Maxwell lived in Boulder and was a two-term mayor there and longtime state senator. He also was one of the most prominent Masons in Colorado.

In the 1880s, while serving briefly as Colorado's state engineer, Maxwell got to know railroad magnate David Moffat. That connection would eventually loom large in Steamboat Springs' history: When Moffat built his Denver, Salt Lake & Pacific through northwest Colorado, Maxwell helped to ensure a Steamboat Springs stop.

The Maxwell building held the Steamboat Springs post office from the time it opened until 1962, making it a natural gathering place. From 1920 forward, when the Iowa-based Chamberlain-Grey firm purchased the building, this property also housed a drugstore and soda fountain, which increased the social traffic on the corner of 9th and Lincoln. Occupied today by Lyon Drug, this remains one of Steamboat Springs' signature buildings.

Year built: 1908
Architect: Henry Schaffnit, Jr.
Style: 20th Century Commercial
National Register 1995



1959



2008

12. Furlong Building, 810 Lincoln Avenue

Among his lesser-known occupations, Edward Furlong was the busiest auction conductor in northwestern Colorado during the first quarter of the 20th century. One source claims he presided over 90 percent of the sales in the Yampa Valley. He also launched Steamboat Springs' first creamery business, which he operated across the street at 803 Lincoln (see page 28-29). Furlong sold that enterprise in the 1920s, but it remained in business for at least another 20 years under the Gold Coin Creamery banner.

But those were just sidelights. Furlong was primarily a hardware man — he and his brothers, James and Albert, owned the

largest store in Routt County. They launched the business in 1904 and erected this building in 1919 to store their ever-growing inventory. Constructed at the same time as the neighboring Routt County National Bank, the Furlong Building used a nearly identical blueprint. Builder Art Gumprecht, whose craftsmanship remains in evidence throughout town, did the gorgeous brick detailing on the upper façade. Inside, the building had reinforced steel columns to support the heavy farm machinery displayed on the second-floor showroom.

Furlong died in 1923 (at only 48 years old). The hardware company he established remained in the

family for another 25 years, and it continued to operate under subsequent ownership until the late 1970s.

Year Built: 1919
Builder: A.E. Gumprecht
Style: 20th Century Commercial





Downtown Steamboat Springs



NORTH

24

Start

1

13th Street

27

Bike Path

5

4

12th Street

Soda Creek

26

11th Street

10th Street

9th Street

8th Street

25

8

10

11

24

12

13

23

22

6

7

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14

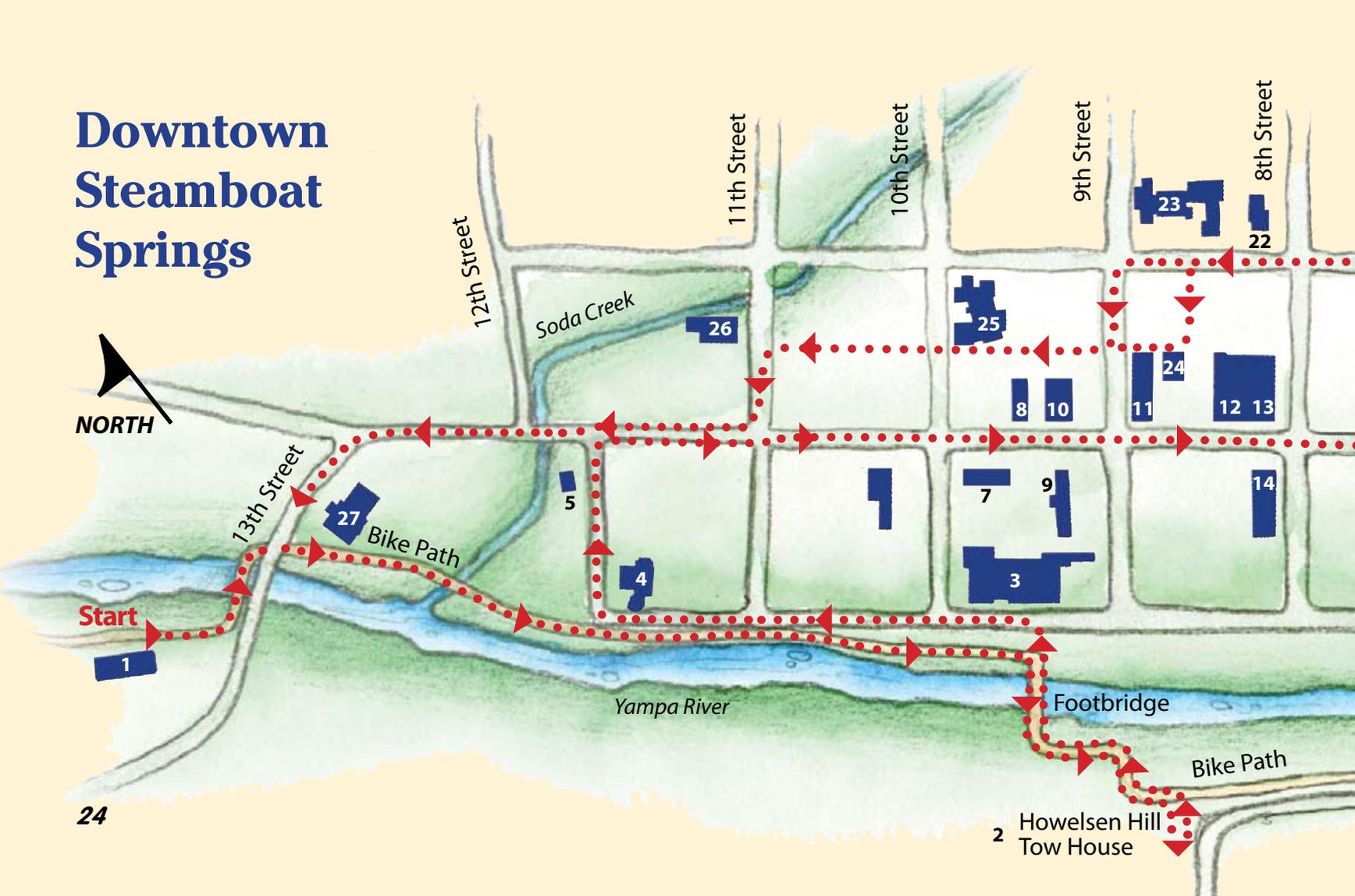
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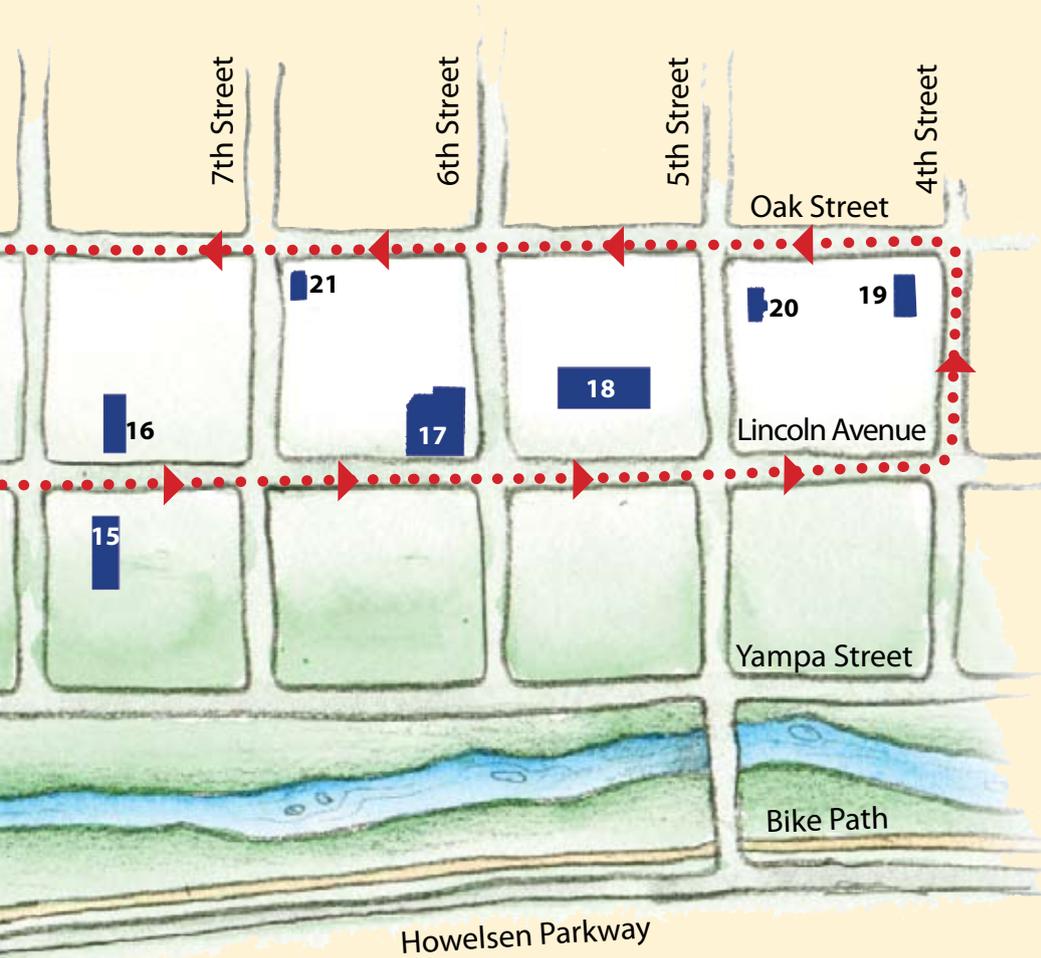
Yampa River

Footbridge

Bike Path

2 Howelsen Hill Tow House





Legend

1. Steamboat Springs Depot, 1000 13th St., p. 8
2. Howelsen Hill Tow House, 845 Howelsen Pkwy., p. 10
3. Yampa Valley Electric Association, 32 10th St., p. 11
4. Sore Saddle Cyclery, 1136 Yampa, p. 12
5. Chamber of Commerce, 1201 Lincoln, p. 13
6. Steamboat Pilot Building, 1009 Lincoln, p. 14
7. Victoria Building, 941 Lincoln, p. 15
8. Lorenz Building, 928 Lincoln, p. 16
9. Harwig's Saddlery, 911 Lincoln, p. 18
10. Model Shoe Shop, 908 Lincoln, p. 19
11. Maxwell Building, 840 Lincoln, p. 20
12. Furlong Building, 810 Lincoln, p. 22
13. Routt County National Bank, 802 Lincoln, p. 26
14. First National Bank, 803 Lincoln, p. 28
15. Pioneer Hotel, 737 Lincoln, p. 30
16. Barnum Building, 734 Lincoln, p. 31
17. Campbell Building, 600 Lincoln, p. 32
18. Routt County Courthouse, 522 Lincoln, p. 34
19. Schaffnit House, 405 Oak, p. 36
20. Morning House, 443 Oak, p. 38
21. Christian Science Church, 641 Oak, p. 39
22. The Tread of Pioneers Museum, 800 Oak, p. 40
23. St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 846 Oak, p. 42
24. Schaffnit Building Addition, 818 Lincoln, p. 43
25. Carver Power House, 124 10th St., p. 44
26. Steamboat Laundry, 127 11th St., p. 46
27. Bud Werner Memorial Library, 1289 Lincoln, p. 48

13. Routt County National Bank, *802 Lincoln Avenue*

In Steamboat Springs' original layout, part of the 800 block of Lincoln Avenue was set aside as a town commons. Local planners envisioned this as the future site of the Routt County courthouse — sort of presumptuous of them, since Hahn's Peak was the county seat at the time. The tract, known as "Court House Square," featured tidy lawns, tree-lined walking paths, and a bandstand. But after 1900, with the railroad drawing near, demand for this parcel reached the tipping point: The block began to fill in with commercial buildings.

The two corner lots, now housing this building, were the last to stay vacant. As late as 1917 they were

still empty, still being used as a quasi-civic park, with the little bandstand clinging to the last patch of open ground.

This building was erected in 1919 by the First National Bank of Steamboat, which had outgrown its original building directly across the street. That institution went under during the Great Depression, and the town's lone remaining bank, the Bank of Steamboat Springs, merged with Routt County National Bank. That business operated here until 1970.

In the 1980s, the owner (the Steamboat Springs Agency) drastically altered the building's façade, burying the arched

windows and brickwork under layers of stucco and covering the second floor with a shingled mansard roof. The result: an alpine chalet appearance, which was then very much in vogue. It stood that way for more than 20 years, until local preservationists secured the funding and tax credits to uncover the brick façade. The front of the building was rehabilitated to its original 1919 appearance, while the 8th Street side now looks as it did in the 1940s.

Year Built: 1919
Style: 20th Century Commercial
National Register 2002



14. First National Bank, *803 Lincoln Avenue*

This was the first of two buildings the First National Bank of Steamboat Springs constructed on Lincoln Avenue. Erected in 1905, three years after the bank went into business, it was one of the first Romanesque Revival buildings in Steamboat Springs. Several of its features were new to local architecture, including the arched entryway, corbelled roofline, and interlaced sandstone quoins running up the corners of the second story. The sandstone was quarried and cut locally, and the bricks came from Yampa Valley clay.

In 1919, First National Bank moved into a new building across the street (see page 26), and auto

dealer E.L. Bradburn bought this property and moved his Searchlight Garage here. Bradburn was a former town marshal with a notorious temper. In 1914, his second year wearing the badge, the city issued him a formal reprimand after he pistol-whipped a suspect.

A few years later Bradburn got into a shouting match with a customer, and the two men went at it. "Hammers and wrenches were the principal weapons," the Steamboat Pilot faithfully reported. Bradburn got the better of the fight, but he ended up on trial for a serious crime: assault with a deadly weapon. The case was tried before a justice of the

peace, who dismissed the charges. Bradburn had to turn in his badge.

Upon moving into this building in 1919, he decided to use the old bank vault to store tires. "It keeps them away from the light," he quipped, "and they are almost as valuable as gold anyway." Bradburn built a one-story addition onto the building and did business here until 1937, when the building went into foreclosure. It was purchased by Harry Rehder, whose name has been attached to the building ever since.

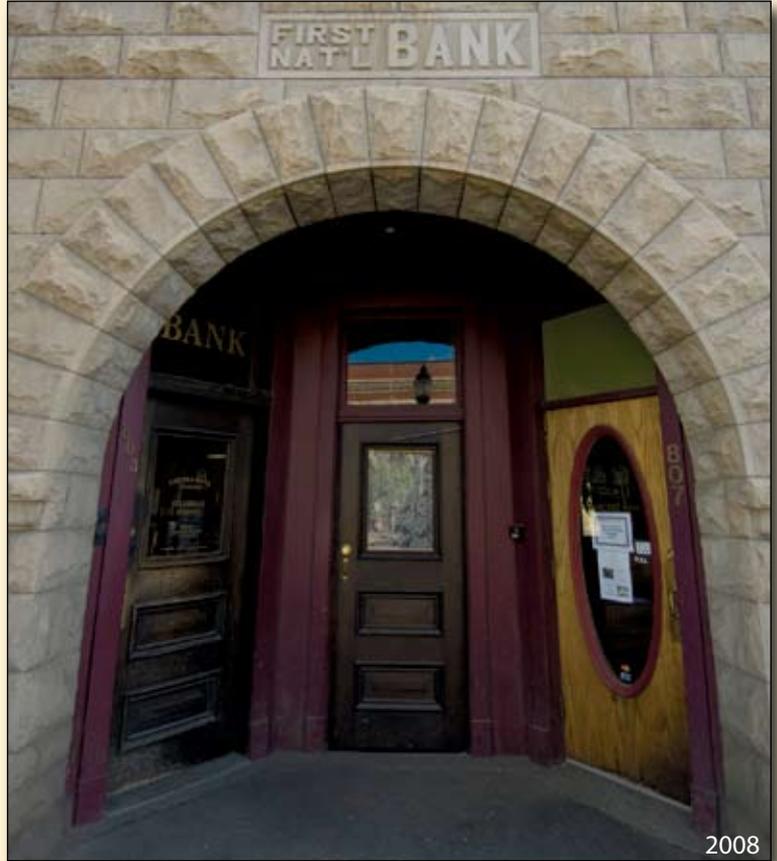
Year Built: 1905
Style: Romanesque Revival
National Register 2001



1940



1936



2008

15. Pioneer Hotel, 737 Lincoln Avenue

The Pioneer stands on the site once occupied by the Bartz Hotel, a log building that burned in the early 1920s. It was replaced by this three-story brick structure, built in 1923 by Joe and Ida Critchfield. They arrived from Minnesota some time around 1900 and owned a small ranch north of town, near the Hot Spring; he was in the lumber business, while she ran a restaurant called the Elkhorn.

The Pioneer Hotel also had a restaurant, but it was better known for its bar, which over time gained a reputation for bawdiness. The Critchfield family had long since departed the scene by then, selling in the 1940s. In the 1960s a new restaurant, the Hacienda Café, moved in and gained a loyal following. It closed down in the 1970s.

Since the 1980s the building has largely housed office space, with a smattering of retail clients on the ground floor. The old Pioneer Hotel sign remains clearly visible on the building's southeast side.



Year Built: 1923
Style: 20th Century Commercial
Local Register 1995

16. Barnum Building, 734 Lincoln Avenue

Arba N. Barnum was an early Steamboat Springs merchant and local official, serving terms as town trustee and justice of the peace. His Spot Cash Store opened in about 1905 and specialized in ladies' and gentlemen's fashions. Until 1912 he ran the business in partnership with Walter Williamson, later one of Steamboat Springs' first auto dealers.

Barnum and Williamson dissolved their partnership in 1912, and Barnum erected this building two years later. But in 1915 it sustained heavy damage in a fire that broke out a couple doors down at the Mutual Theater. Barnum salvaged the property but had difficulty hanging on to his tenants. Half



a dozen tenants cycled through over the next few years; one tried using the space as a funeral parlor, another as a roller-skating rink, yet another as a watch-repair outlet. In 1919 Barnum threw up his hands

and sold the building, relocating to Kalispell, Montana.

Year Built: 1914
Style: 20th Century Commercial

17. Campbell Building, 600 Lincoln Avenue

Built in 1904 as the Albany Hotel, this building served at various times as a post office, hospital, mining exchange, barber shop, movie theater, and electrical appliance shop — and that's just before 1950. The library occupied the first floor for more than 25 years, sharing space with a succession of businesses.

The building saw many of its happiest times after the International Order of Oddfellows (I.O.O.F.) acquired the property in the 1920s. The Oddfellows were enthusiastic partiers — local headlines such as “Odd Fellows Plan Big Time” and “Town Belonged to Odd Fellows Last Saturday” were commonplace in the 1920s. Their meeting space on the second floor of the building doubled as a dance hall, and it received heavy use. Square dances were particularly popular.

In the 1960s the Oddfellows sold the property, and it became the Cameo Restaurant. Still a popular place to gather and socialize, it reflected Steamboat Springs' evolving demographic — skiers and tennis players



used to share pitchers of beer with farmers and ranch hands. In 1984 it changed owners again and became the Old Town Pub, with a 30-foot-long, century-old bar salvaged from a historic saloon in southern Routt County. Through it all, the corner of 6th and Lincoln has always been among the sunnier ones in town — a place to unwind and share good times.

Year Built: 1904
Builder: Ernest Campbell
Style: Italianate



MINING
EXCHANGE

18. Routt County Courthouse, *522 Lincoln Avenue*

In November 1923, a few weeks after this building opened, somebody tossed a lit cigar out a third-story window and caught an awning on fire. In an earlier time in Routt County's existence, such a small accident might have destroyed the whole courthouse — which, for most of the years before 1923, consisted of a crude log building.

The new courthouse was made of sturdier stuff — and so, by 1923, was Routt County. Most of the people who attended this building's ground-breaking ceremony could remember back to when Steamboat Springs was just a wisp of a town, but it was here to stay now — and

the courthouse symbolized that permanence. That September, the local Pioneer Society had the original Routt County courthouse (going to rot on a ranch next to the Yampa River) hauled to the county fair and placed on exhibit — as if to say, “See how far we have come.” The county had paid \$100 for its initial home. The new courthouse cost \$100,000.

It was the highest-profile project to date by Denver architect Robert K. Fuller, who in 1923 was still making a name for himself. He would go on to design another half-dozen county courthouses in Colorado, including Denver's City and County Building. The Routt County Courthouse, a Renaissance

Revival design with Beaux-Arts influences, featured blond brick and local sandstone with Doric columns, terra cotta pilasters, and an arched central entryway.

A pair of restorations occurred in the 1980s and 1990s. The latter effort involved replacement of some of the original brick, requiring the contractor to scour salvage yards in search of a suitable match. He found it at an old brickyard in Denver.

Year Built: 1923
Architect: Robert K. Fuller
Builder: A.E. Danielson
Style: 20th Century Renaissance
Revival
Local Register 2000



19. Schaffnit House, 405 Oak Street

Henry Schaffnit, Sr., filed one of the first homestead claims in Routt County, back in 1874. Like so many Colorado pioneers, he was an immigrant (born in Germany) and Civil War veteran with a broad range of skills. He tried his hand at mining, ranching, hoteliering, and real estate, and did pretty well at all of them.

Schaffnit is best known as the proprietor of the Sheridan Hotel, the city's first modern lodging accommodations. Built in 1888, the Sheridan served as a marker of Steamboat Springs' growing importance: There were enough business travelers and mineral-springs tourists coming here to sustain a hotel. Visitors came and



went via the Whipple Stage line, which went into service the same year the Sheridan opened.

Schaffnit's residence also reflected the town's growing wealth. He built it in 1908, just before railroad service began. Schaffnit was 75 years old by then and certainly didn't build this structure for long-term occupation; it was strictly an investment in Steamboat Springs' robust real estate market. And he turned a nice profit, selling the building four years later for \$3,750.

In the 1980s the home was converted into office space, and since 1991 it has been occupied by Horizons, an agency that serves the developmentally disabled.

Year Built: 1908
Style: Late Victorian



20. Morning House, 443 Oak Street

Old-timers say Frederick Willett would go out at any hour, in any weather, to make a house call, deliver a baby, or slice out an appendix. During the flu epidemic of 1918, the story goes, Dr. Willett went for days on end without sleep.

He came to Steamboat Springs in 1912 and established a sanitarium on the second floor of the Campbell Building (page 32). In 1921, Dr. Willett used his own funds to buy a house on 7th Street and convert it into a 12-room hospital (he's pictured in front of that building). He worked from there for four decades, and somehow found time to serve two terms as mayor.

Willett's residence originally belonged to County Judge Charles Morning. A vernacular wood-frame house with square-cut wood shingles at the top of the gables, it typifies residential construction in Steamboat Springs. Willett lived here until his death in 1970 at age 87.



Year Built: 1906
Style: Edwardian

21. Christian Science Church, 641 Oak Street

Christian Science dates to 1875, the same year Margaret Crawford and her family became the first permanent settlers in Steamboat Springs. Thirty-three years later, in 1908, Mrs. Crawford became interested in the faith and introduced it to Steamboat Springs, where she and seven other people (including Charles and Laura Leckenby, owners of the Steamboat Pilot) established a congregation.

They initially worshipped at the Masonic Hall. In 1919 they brought a renowned speaker and author from Chicago, George Shaw Cook, to the Orpheum Theater for a lecture. The event drew a pretty good crowd and put some money into the coffers — enough to allow the congregation to purchase the former site of the Onyx Hotel at 7th and Oak. More than a decade passed before they finally built a church.

Built by longtime local carpenter Ernest Campbell (see page 32), this simple rustic structure has a river-rock foundation and half-log siding, with whole vertical



logs at the corners and multi-light windows. It has been in continuous use since 1934.

Year Built: 1934
Builder: Ernest Campbell
Style: Rustic
National Register 2007

22. The Tread of Pioneers Museum, *800 Oak Street*

The Tread of Pioneers Museum comprises two historic Oak Street homes, neither of which was built at this address. One, the former Zimmerman residence, was built in 1908 at 5th and Oak and belonged to real estate agent E.H. Zimmerman. He and his wife, Zelma, both had fine singing voices and frequently performed at concerts. After they passed away in the late 1950s, Routt County bought the property. The Tread of Pioneers opened in 1959 at the original address; in 1988 the house was hauled to its present location (see photo, opposite).

Zimmerman House
Year Built: 1908
Style: Queen Anne

In 1997 a second home was moved here and attached to the



museum as an annex. Built in about 1900 at 4th and Oak, this home is most closely associated with John “Doc” Utterback, a veterinarian who bought the property in the 1940s. Utterback was one of the last Steamboat residents who could say he rode to town in a stagecoach — he arrived as an infant in 1908, a few months before railroad service commenced. A popular and colorful character, he served eight years as a Routt County commissioner in the 1970s. Utterback’s daughter donated the home to the museum.

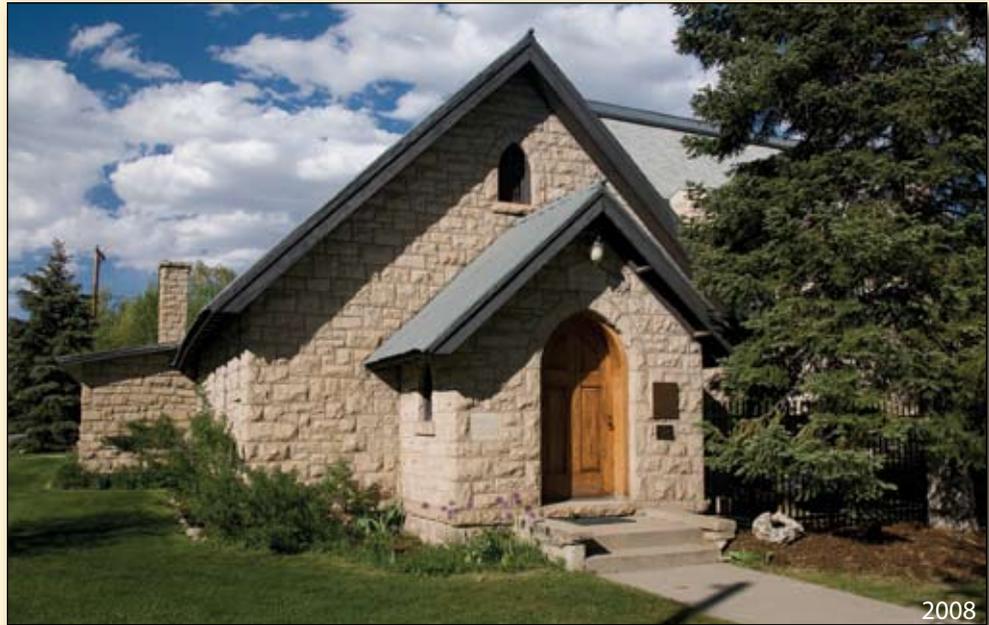
Utterback House
Year Built: c. 1900
Style: Victorian



23. St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 846 Oak Street

Episcopalian worship took place in Steamboat Springs well before 1900, but only when an itinerant priest came to town. The congregation purchased a lot at 9th and Oak in 1897, but they couldn't afford to build a chapel until energetic E.W. Sibbald became archdeacon for northwestern Colorado in 1910. Sibbald led a determined fundraising campaign, the quarry on Emerald Mountain donated the stone, and the church opened in 1913. Note the decorative hip knob on the front vestibule.

The two-story rear addition, built in the 1960s, also used stone from the Emerald Mountain quarry (it was recovered from the razed



Mt. Harris general store). The adjacent school, built in 2000, complements the church.

Year Built: 1913
Builder: A.E. Gumprecht
Style: Gothic Revival

24. Schaffnit Building Addition, 818 Lincoln Avenue

River-rock-and-mortar structures dot the alleyways throughout Steamboat Springs. Some are freestanding structures, while others are rear additions to a main building; people built them to serve as storage sheds, stables, garages, and various other purposes. They were often built from rocks unearthed during the digging of a main building's foundation; rather than haul the excavated stone away, builders kept it on site and put it to use.

The date of construction for this particular structure is unknown. The main building was erected in 1909 by Henry Schaffnit, Jr. The son of a famed pioneer (see page 36), Schaffnit Jr. made a fine name for himself, serving as Steamboat Springs' mayor for a time. Schaffnit leased the building to a clothing dealer, then a pool-hall owner, finally to a grocer. L.B. Shelburne bought the building in 1920, and he may have added the addition shortly thereafter. The site housed a grocery store until about 1960; the current tenant, the Cantina, has been here since the late 1970s.



Year Built: 1920s
Style: Vernacular

25. Carver Power House, *124 10th Street*

“Now Watch Us Grow,” headlined the Steamboat Pilot on October 3, 1900, after the city approved an electric utility franchise. With the impending arrival of David Moffat’s Denver Salt Lake & Pacific Railroad, everybody expected Steamboat Springs to boom — including Moffat, who invested heavily in the power house.

Chief electrician George Smedley supervised construction, which proceeded briskly until it came time to raise the 75-foot-high steel smokestack. Work crews raised it using pulleys and wires, but before they could rivet it into place a wire snapped, and the smokestack toppled over. A few days later they tried again . . .

and again the smokestack came down. According to one report this happened four times, and after each impact the blacksmith had to work harder to restore its cylindrical shape.

When the smokestack was finally installed and the boiler fired up, the Routt County Sentinel wrote proudly: “The electric light wires strung throughout the town give it a metropolitan appearance . . . Visitors and prospective investors speak well of our town when they see the electric lights illuminating every store and residence.”

The building was converted into a warehouse in 1962, and in the late 1990s the City of Steamboat

Springs remodeled it and built an architecturally compatible addition in 2000 to house the city council chambers. A more fitting use could hardly have been chosen, for the council and the power house were born simultaneously. When Smedley sought a utility franchise in 1900, there was no city to apply to — the community was still unincorporated. Local leaders hastily drew up papers and held an election to establish jurisdiction. The new town council then granted the franchise as one of its first official acts.

Year Built: 1900
Style: Vernacular
Local Register 1999



26. Steamboat Laundry, 127 11th Street

You wouldn't think a mere laundry would inspire much excitement. But Steamboat took tremendous pride in this facility, which featured concrete floors inside, a paved sidewalk out front, and a blunted corner framed by dove-tailed brick detailing. "The Steamboat Springs Laundry is probably the best equipped in all of Western Colorado," the Steamboat Pilot boasted. "It is well worth anyone's time to pay a visit to this institution and to see what has been done to make Monday a day of joy instead of a day of drudgery for the housewife."

As the only modern washing service in northwestern Colorado, the Steamboat Laundry served

a clientele far beyond the city limit. Sales agents drummed up business at outlying ranches, neighboring towns and counties, even across the state line in Wyoming. They would haul their clients' clothes here once a week and haul them back out the next day. Business was good — too good. The workload got to be so great that Everett Cole, who bought the business in 1918, had to close the business temporarily on doctor's orders; he'd worked himself to exhaustion.

The growth of the business necessitated two additions to the building, in 1919 (the single-story brick portion next to the creek) and 1923 (the river-rock structure



at the rear). Although it ceased to operate as a laundry in the 1960s, the original sign remains as a reminder of this edifice's proud history.

Year Built: 1910
Builders: G.D. Larkin, Robert Schulz
Style: 20th Century Commercial
National Register: 2007



STEAM LAUNDRY
CLEANING & DYE WORKS

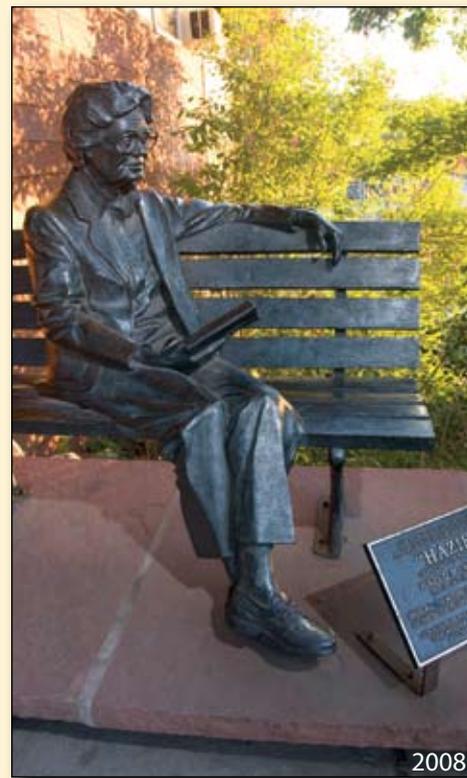
27. Bud Werner Memorial Library, *1289 Lincoln Avenue*

In 1885 a Harvard medical student named William Denison came to Steamboat Springs, hoping to recover from tuberculosis. He died a couple of years later, but he'd grown fond of this community and willed it his personal library of nearly 1,000 volumes.

It was housed first in the Union Church at 8th and Pine, then in a rear room at the Bank of Steamboat Springs, and later on the second floor of the Campbell Building (see page 32), with various other stops in between. By the 1960s it had grown to more than 4,000 volumes, but when the Campbell Building became a restaurant, the library found itself homeless again.

It found a permanent home in 1967, when this building opened on the former site of the luxurious Cabin Hotel (which burned to the ground in a spectacular 1939 fire). The library was named for Buddy Werner, the hometown ski hero and three-time Olympian who, like William Denison, died young — Buddy perished in an avalanche shortly after competing in the 1964 Winter Olympics. A major expansion in 2008-09 ensured that the library would remain here for many years.

Year Built: 1967
Architect: Tor Westgaard
Style: Contemporary



2008

