

THESIS

AN OVERVIEW OF THE FORT COLLINS PARK SYSTEM EMPHASIZING  
CITY PARK AS IT RELATES TO THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF THE COMMUNITY

Submitted by

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In partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the Degree of Master of Science

Colorado State University

Fort Collins, Colorado

Summer 1996



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COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

July 10, 1996

WE HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER OUR SUPERVISION BY CAROL TUNNER ENTITLED AN OVERVIEW OF THE FORT COLLINS PARK SYSTEM EMPHASIZING CITY PARK AS IT RELATES TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMUNITY BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING IN PART REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE.

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS  
AN OVERVIEW OF THE FORT COLLINS PARK SYSTEM EMPHASIZING  
CITY PARK AS IT RELATES TO THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF THE COMMUNITY

Through an overview of the history of the early park system of Fort Collins, Colorado, it is shown that City Park has been a cohesive stimulus over the years in helping to define and maintain the character of the growing city. What happened in the past becomes the segue to the present, and ultimately to the future. In order to preserve this family oriented community character and maintain a healthy balance for its citizens, the historical character of City Park should be the basis for its restoration and preservation.

A city out of balance demolishes or sacrifices its past for its present with no thought of its future.....the best of the past is irreplaceable.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the help and guidance of my thesis advisor, Dr. R. Burnell Held, who taught me the meaning of the words purpose, organization and discipline. Committee member, Dr. Liston Leyendecker, patiently edited and reedited my paper. Dr. Robert Aukerman, graciously took on the extra effort to be part of my committee. Merlyn Paulson guided me through my course work. William Schneider provided invaluable expertise on the presentation of the figures in the document.

I would also like to acknowledge the research help of Wayne Sundberg, Brad March and Ron Mills. To the many interviewees who shared their memories and the people who shared their pictures, I am grateful.

Finally I would like to thank my husband, Joe Tunner, for his support, suggestions and expertise.

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**PART I**

**PROLOGUE**

## Chapter 1

### METHODS USED IN THE STUDY

The initial research for the study of Fort Collins' historic parks was conducted using two documents: the July 1, 1923 and the May, 1926 Report of the Department of Public Works, City of Fort Collins, Colorado. These two reports, submitted by Frank P. Goeder, Commissioner of Works, described the historical framework for the Fort Collins parks that were in existence until that time. Historical narrations such as those of Frank Hall and Ansel Watrous were used to develop the earlier history of the area.

To fill in the gaps and provide data continuing from 1926, a newspaper search was undertaken focusing on the time periods surrounding dates identified from the above reports. Then a survey was made of the historical documents, leases, letters, and abstracts from the archives of the Fort Collins City Clerk's Office. Copies were made from their Parks and Recreation Files and from two boxes of general historical documents; these copies will be filed in the Fort Collins Public Library as the Tunner City Park Collection.

Finally, the researcher used interviews which were conducted with several long time residents. A list of definitions is provided as Appendix A in order to aid the reader not familiar with the historic preservation terms used in the document.

## Chapter 2

### INTRODUCTION

#### Purpose

This study is intended to present an overview of the history of the park system in Fort Collins, Colorado; then to show how its largest park, City Park, has been a cohesive element over the years in helping to define and maintain the character of a growing city; and finally to provide a basis and incentive for preserving and restoring City Park.

City Park is distinctive because of its picturesque English-influence design and mature landscape. But to fully understand why it has become such a special place, one must delve into its rich historical heritage. Based on archival research and personal interviews, the study shows how this largest of the city's cultural landscapes has developed and expanded with the growing community - adapting through the years while maintaining its old-time charm. Today it continues to be a focal point for activity, as it has been for generations of residents, helping the city keep a spirit of community that is so critical in these rapidly changing times.

The results of this study can be used as a planning aid for the Fort Collins Parks and Recreation Department to produce historical interpretation of City Park, and to provide documentation for placing the park in the National Register of Historic Places as a significant local cultural landscape.

## The Historical Significance of City Park - An Overview

Parks have been a part of Fort Collins since the community began and the city's park system has evolved with the city. Parks have been central to the life of the city throughout its history. City Park, the centerpiece of the present park system, was the culmination of a vision formed with the first platting of the town's boundaries. Its roots can be found in the features of the earliest Fort Collins parks; some of these early parks still exist and some have been eroded by progress or have completely disappeared.

Although a later development, City Park was tied to the political, economic and social environment that existed when Fort Collins was founded. Its beginnings can be identified with people whose names are well known in the city's history and the history of the park is closely intertwined with that of the larger community.

The original design of the City Park landscape, still evident today, features broad meadows ringed with groupings of trees. This early well conceived plan has made it possible for City Park to continue to provide restful passive recreation, and still accommodate the growing modern needs for active recreation. Over the years, the park has changed, but its fundamental character has been retained.

From its earliest days the park has been the site of important city-wide events. This is no less true now. Today, on major holidays like Independence Day, tens of thousands of people flock to the park to share in the festivities and celebration, thus enhancing the spirit of community in Fort Collins. Indeed, in the early 1990s, city officials tried to move the 4th of July fireworks to another location, but encountered such a groundswell of disapproval that they abandoned the idea.

For decades the park has been a magnet for families. It has always been a place to take a pleasant walk, feed the ducks, ride the paddle boats and teach children how to fish. In recent years the city has built grand indoor facilities for ice skating and swimming at other locations, but when the weather cooperates, City Park is still the place of choice. Throughout the summer, shelters are reserved months ahead for family reunions, wedding receptions, and picnics for all sorts of groups including city government, scouts, service clubs and businesses.

City Park continues to be popular to this day even while people challenge the need to preserve open space between the communities of Fort Collins and Loveland because the federal and state-owned land within the national forests is so close and accessible. In a similar fashion, the city's planners in 1873 saw the need to plat and incorporate two public parks in the nascent town despite the close proximity of mountain recreation.

It is suggested that a reason for the park's enduring attractiveness is tied to the tradition and continuity that it has provided over generations. While newer parks are often nearly devoid of people, there is always life in City Park. People are drawn by its special character - a character that can and should be maintained and preserved.

It is also true that some elements of the park, such as the bandstand on the lake, have been lost. But historic photos uncovered in this study would permit restoration or reconstruction of those things that would enhance the ambiance of the park. The city might wish to explore restoring these features, just as it has many of the splendid historic buildings in Old Town.

Today, the preservation and restoration of historic parks is a priority for many large cities such as Chicago and Denver. City Park is this city's challenge and opportunity. An understanding of its history will underscore the need to restore those elements of the park that were significant in the development of our spirit of community, and to preserve what remains.

According to the city's 1989 West Side Neighborhood Plan, City Park has been determined to be eligible for designation in the National Register of Historic Places. This paper will provide the incentive, interpretation and documentation needed to prepare the nomination and make this designation a reality.

#### The Setting For Fort Collins Parks

Fort Collins began with the relocation of a military encampment which had been washed out by a disastrous flood in 1864. That encampment, Camp Collins, had been set up at Point of Rocks, just northwest of Laporte on the Poudre River. It was the namesake of Colonel William O. Collins, commander of the 11th Cavalry Ohio regiment stationed at Fort Laramie to the north in Wyoming. The camp had been established to protect the Overland Stage Company and emigrating pioneers from stage robbers and Indians. The flood caused the camp to be moved and a site was chosen downstream on high ground south of the river and just north of the present day Old Town area.

This military tract was a large four mile square area that extended as far south as present day Harmony Road, but the area actually occupied by the military was much smaller, stretching from what is now North College Avenue to just east of Linden Street, and from the river south to Jefferson Street. The encampment was renamed Fort Collins. The military

occupied the most choice lands in the valley until the winter of 1867 when the Indian threat abated and the last troops were withdrawn.<sup>1</sup>

At that time, settlers or squatters moved in, expecting the land to be opened sooner or later. On May 15, 1872, Congress opened the military reservation lands to preemption and homesteading.<sup>2</sup>

A large successful colony known as the Fort Collins Agricultural Colony located in Fort Collins that fall and secured half of the town lots and other lands around the town. They acquired this land from the Larimer County Land Improvement Company, a corporation which had been formed by early settlers to acquire land around the agricultural college in the "Cache-a-la-Poudre" valley. This land was expected to appreciate in value soon, and they wanted every settler to have a fair chance to acquire and develop it.<sup>3</sup>

In Circular No. 1, a Denver Times newspaper advertisement, the Agricultural Colony invited membership and described a number of benefits of the colony indicating that choice lands had been reserved for public parks and a zoological garden.<sup>4</sup> This theme of the community's need for recreational public parks was to carry forth throughout the history of Fort Collins to the present day. That December, one-fifth of the first lots for settlement were drawn in a lottery, and the rush to build began.<sup>5</sup>

The City of Fort Collins was finally platted and incorporated in 1873. It is significant to note that, as had been promised the year before, the founding citizens of Fort Collins set aside prairie land for two small public parks.

## Chapter 3

### THE FORT COLLINS HISTORIC PARK SYSTEM

#### Descriptions of Major Parks

The term historic, pertaining to a site, object, structure, or district, is defined by the National Register as referring to properties over fifty years old. Fort Collins has had nine major parks that were established before 1946: Washington Park, Lincoln Park, Vescelius' Grove, Prospect Park, Lindenmeier Park, two mountain parks, High School Park, and City Park. Some of these parks no longer exist; others established on National Forest land, have reverted to management by the U. S. Forest Service as forest campgrounds. Each in its own way provided recreation facilities which addressed specific needs in the growing community. Grandview Cemetery also had a park-like entrance with rock landscape features that were carried throughout City Park.

Lincoln Park and Washington Park - These first two public parks platted with the founding of the town in 1873 were named, along with the alleys bisecting the park blocks, after the two famous presidents.<sup>6</sup>

Lincoln Park was 334 feet wide from east to west, and was located on the east side of Block 142 where the Public Library is presently located. It was bounded on the north, east, and south by East Oak, Peterson Street, and East Olive Street. Washington Park was 127 feet wide and located on the east half of Block 42. It was bounded on the north, east, and south by Maple Street, North Howes Street, and Laporte Avenue. In 1873, it was

a large marsh that "extended as far as the middle of the present business district." Each park was bordered on the west side by a north-south strip of land known respectively as Lincoln and Washington Places. These were dirt streets 66 feet wide. They stretched westward to the eastern boundaries of lots platted on the western side of each block.

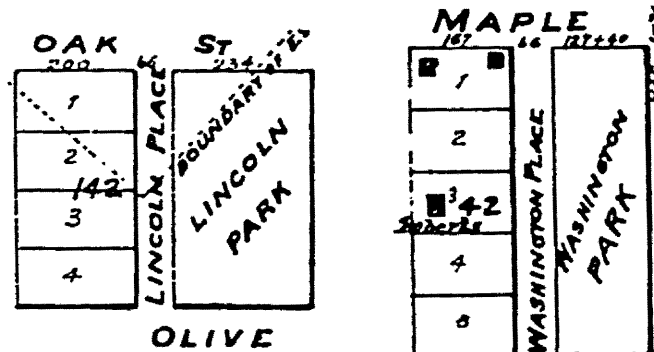


Figure 1. Lincoln Park and Washington Park from "Fort Collins" a Map by W. C. Willits, 1894 from the City of Fort Collins Engineering Department.

City records state that the first official use of Lincoln Park was in 1881 when the town board of trustees gave the "Band Boys" permission to erect a temporary building for band purposes. That same year the land contained in the park was finally plowed, fenced, and some trees were planted. A lawn was planted so that the townspeople could make some use of the park as a recreation area.<sup>1</sup> Beyond this, not much was done to the parks because park administration was provided directly by the City Council. These leaders had many other responsibilities in the growing community and did not see the parks as a priority.

Concerned with this neglect, the Fort Collins Express agitated in 1887 for improvements to the parks. They encouraged the railroad to convert the area between the depot on Laporte Avenue and Washington Park into a park of their own so that strangers coming to the city would be

"favorably impressed." They urged the city to plant trees on Arbor day and to take up Abner Loomis' five-year standing offer to furnish trees for Lincoln Park if the city would "fence and care for them." Lincoln Park was described as "an unsightly place and has been for years surrounded by a tumble down fence and used as a cow pasture."<sup>9</sup>

In 1887, it was discovered that the city had no clear title to Lincoln and Washington Parks, so the City Attorney and a Council committee secured a quit claim deed from the original Larimer County Land Improvement Company. "These deeds did not make any distinction between the parks (parkland) and the "places" (streets), consequently the division was not valid and existed only on paper." Finally a clear title for Lincoln Park was acquired on May 18, 1899 when the city purchased four lots on the western side of the park block (Block 42) from W. C. Stover for \$1,400. This moved the western boundary of the park to Mathews Street so that the park encompassed the entire Block 142 or 4.75 acres, doubling the size of the park.

The future of Washington Park came under fire on April 7, 1903 when the City Council called a special election to sell the park land for not less than \$1,000; however, the vote of 178 to 137 was in support of keeping the park.

At the same time, Lincoln Park was being considered as the site for a new library. On April 20, 1903, a petition signed by members of the Library Board, Women's Club, the Columbian Club (a literary and social club), and the O. T. A. Club was presented to City Council asking that the new Carnegie Library be placed in Lincoln Park. After a lively discussion, the Council majority voted to place the building in a west-central location.<sup>10</sup> Thus began the practice, which continued through the

years, of placing public buildings in both Washington and Lincoln parks rather than reserving the parks as open areas.

Early in 1904, a wind storm of eighty miles an hour caused much damage and many fires, and the bandstand in Lincoln Park was destroyed.<sup>11</sup>

Washington Park continued in its original state and in the summers was leased for pasture or agricultural purposes. The income, though, was only five dollars in 1906. By this time Lincoln Park was commonly known as City park, and as the favored park, it received improvements including 44 iron seats for the public use. Their necessary purchase had been a recurring theme by the beacon of the public conscience, The Weekly Courier: "The great need of seats in the City park, was emphasized again Sunday afternoon. Where are the seats that have been expected for this pleasure place for some time?"<sup>12</sup> The construction of a new bandstand for \$165 facilitated the first public band concerts by the City Band.<sup>13</sup> C. J. Loveland, local contractor, was given the contract by the Park Commission which had been created that year.<sup>14</sup> This bandstand was located in the south central portion of the park.<sup>15</sup> The bandstand served as a community focus and entertainment gathering place for small town America. Couples would dance to the music and parade around the bandstand in a formal manner.<sup>16</sup>

Since the concerts were well attended and the park very small, this prompted the newspaper to call for a ban on "rigs or horseback riders (bicycles and automobiles) to enter the City park while any entertainments were on."<sup>17</sup> Finally this was accomplished as the driveways in the park were closed to horses and buggies.<sup>18</sup>

The City of Fort Collins was privileged to have a fine band to provide music in the parks for a number of years thereafter. A detailed

history of the band is discussed in Appendix B. The band played in Lincoln Park, Lindenmeier Park and City Park.



Figure 2. City Park, Fort Collins, Colo., "No Driving in the Park." Note the Bandstand in the Right Center.

In 1907, the city purchased a much larger area for a new park around Sheldon Lake. The newspapers and Chamber of Commerce played a large role in directing the effort. After that, the smaller parks were to be eclipsed by this grand new jewel soon to be known as "City Park," and that name (in small caps) ceased to be used as a reference to Lincoln Park.

The Weekly Courier did not want citizens to forget its former City park, so they wrote to the people that Lincoln Park was looking very good with "recently laid walks and well defined pathways." The "splendid library building and bandstand" add to the whole effect. As the new grass was very delicate, the newspaper admonished the citizens, "Don't Desecrate Lincoln Park by Thoughtless Vandalism, But Treat It as You Would the Lawn About Your Home."<sup>19</sup>

Washington Park, on the other hand, was the poor stepchild of the park system. During the summer of 1908, the south 200 feet of Washington Park was leased for use as a feed yard for \$20 a month. A fifty foot wide strip north of the feed yard was rented and used by a cement block factory. The feed yard business in Washington Park was short-lived because it was ordered vacated in March 1909 by the Park Commission. Evidently the City Council had never given the proprietors a permit to do business there. Immediately on the vacating of the feed yards, the Park Commission gave most of Washington Park to the Y.M.C.A. to use as a public playground. This use was so successful that the cement block factory was closed and removed for more playground room.

By 1912 the northern portion of Washington Park was used for a wagon yard by the City Streets department. Finally, in the spring of 1917, Washington Park was platted and the stakes set for drives and trees.<sup>20</sup> The grading was completed, trees were planted, the lawns were seeded, and an irrigation system was installed. Once this had been finished, the park was opened to the public as a park for the west side people. This probably represents an increased awareness by the Parks Commission of their duty because many of the same improvements were going on in City Park also.

As City Park developed through the century to be the major community park of choice, Washington and Lincoln parks were treated more and more as publicly owned blocks available for the construction of public buildings or other government use. By 1923, a part of Washington Park was being used by the city to store material and machinery; this caused some citizens to complain that the city could not do that because it was not used for a strict park purpose. City Attorney Frank J. Annis disagreed

and stated "that the city may use the land as it sees fit."<sup>21</sup> This mentality continued toward both of the city's original parks.

In 1941, a red sandstone Pioneer Museum was built in Lincoln Park for the housing of pioneer relics. The grand opening was April 12, 1941.<sup>22</sup> The need for an expanded library in the mid 1970s pushed the city to demolish the small sandstone museum building in Lincoln Park, build a new international style library in its place, and move the Pioneer Museum's collection to the old 1903 Carnegie Library on the west half of the block. An architectural park of moved historic buildings has developed around the museum. As a final insult to its historic roots, in the late 1970s, the increased prominence of the library resulted in the park name change from Lincoln Park, which it had enjoyed for some 103 years, to Library Park.

Washington Park suffered the same fate when a new city hall was built there in 1958. When the city outgrew it in 1978, a second city hall was constructed there. Today the park occupies only one-fourth of the block in the north east quarter.

**Vescelius' Grove** - Not satisfied just with Lincoln and Washington Parks, in 1887 a "company of Fort Collins capitalists, including Abner Loomis, James B. Arthur, W. B. Miner, E. W. Reed and F. C. Avery, ... purchased a tract of land on the north shore of the Cache la Poudre opposite Fort Collins." This twenty acre site (today part of the Gus Swanson Nature Center just south of East Vine Drive) became known as Vescelius' Grove.<sup>23</sup> It was intended to be a free park and pleasure grounds open to "local or neighboring societies, parties, etc." Its purpose was also somewhat economic in that it was intended to be a regional draw for visitors.

It was a beautiful area of cottonwoods, box elders, and meadows with tall grass and wildflowers. The river was broad there with picturesque islands covered with trees, shrubs and vines. The entry was from North College Avenue but plans were to make it easily accessible from the Tedmon House Hotel on Linden and Jefferson by building a foot bridge across the river at Linden Street. It was also proposed to clear the grounds of underbrush and erect a fence, dancing platforms, a bandstand, seats, and outbuildings for picnickers. Grounds were to be laid out for baseball and other athletic games.

The idyllic site of shade and beauty was anticipated to draw visitors from as far away as Cheyenne, Greeley, and Loveland as well as to serve the local people. The newspaper complained that up to that point, these same visitors were compelled to go to Bellevue [sic] or Longmont for "picnic and excursion parties."<sup>24</sup> Seats, benches, a dancing platform, swings, hammocks, a merry-go-round, etc., were promised but it is not known just how much was actually built.<sup>25</sup> There were daily ball games and "cow-boy" matinees, so at least for a while in the 1880s, this park was an early private attempt to provide more varied forms of recreation that were not possible in the limited space of Washington and Lincoln Parks.

**Prospect Park** - A private racetrack open to the public was the next attempt at a park in the area. Horse racing was a sport of much interest in early Fort Collins. From 1878 to 1897, racing matinees had been held every few weeks at the old county fair grounds track east of town. In the spring of 1904, the Gentleman's Riding and Driving Club was organized under F. W. Sherwood as president. Peter Anderson, Abner Loomis and C. O. Culver were appointed to find land suitable for a race track and fair grounds. They paid \$6,000 for the western part of the old John Sheldon

farm (site of the Mercer Colony) about one mile west of the business center of the city.

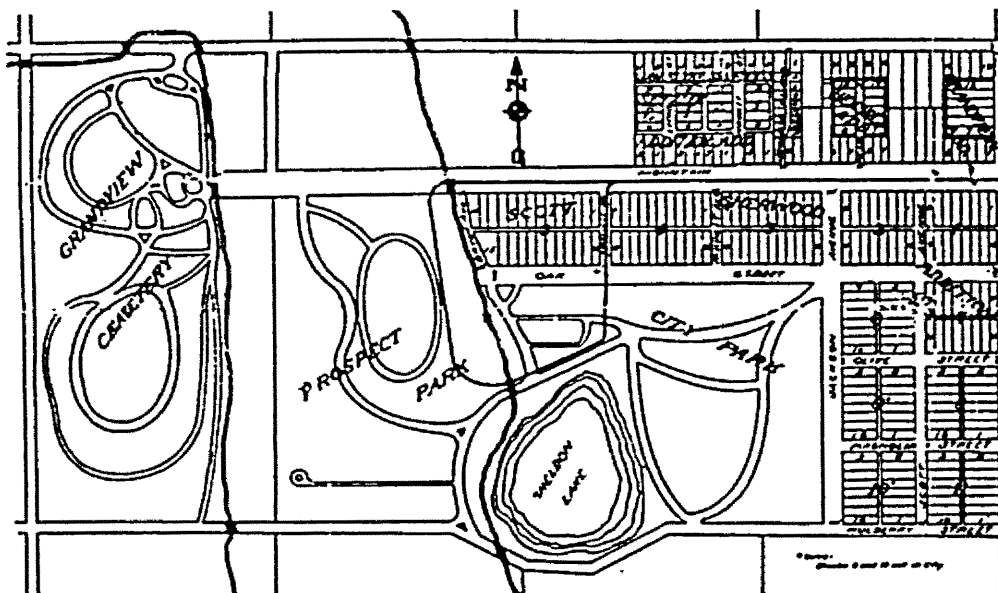


Figure 3. Prospect Park. Map, City of Fort Collins, Larimer County, Colorado, 1 April 1925. From the City of Fort Collins Engineering Department.

This site was called Prospect Park and was fitted up in the summer and fall of 1904 with a speed ring (racetrack), stables, grandstand or viewing stand, judges stand, offices, fair grounds, baseball fields, and a high board fence all around the track. The purchasers of the land incorporated as the Fort Collins Park Amusement Company with directors C. K. Gould, L. R. Rhodes, A. W. Scott, S. H. Clammer and E. D. Avery. The first race meet was on October 6th, 7th, 8th, 1904.<sup>26</sup>

Grand Fourth of July celebrations had always been held in Fort Collins since the earliest days when they were held in a grove of trees north of the river.<sup>27</sup> Now the celebration was held at Prospect Park. The fourth of July "doings" at Prospect Park were free including all sports to be viewed and the grandstand. There were horse races, foot races, box,

potato and sack races, with a balloon ascension as the highlight of the day.<sup>28</sup>

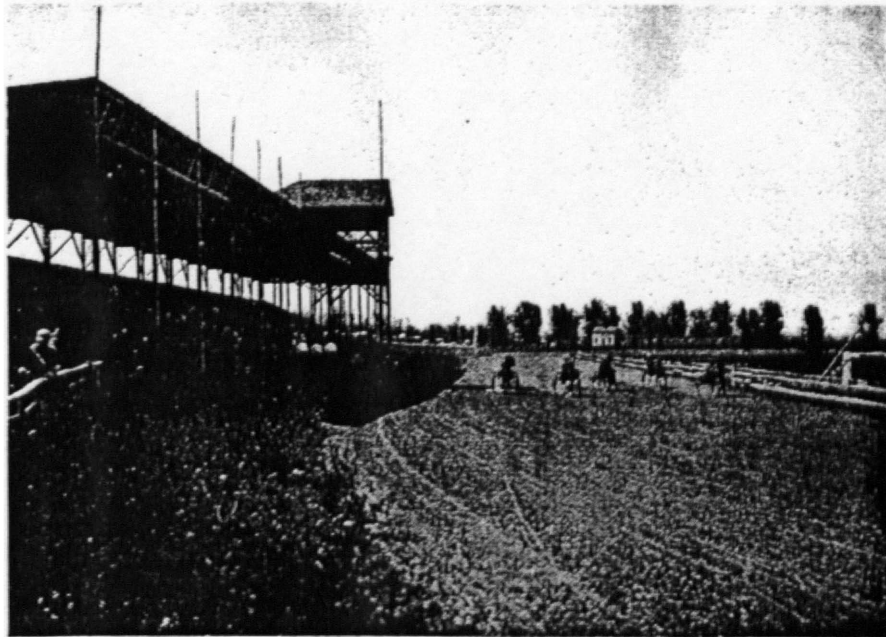


Figure 4. Prospect Park Grandstand, c. 1910 from "The Fort Collins Area" Vol. 1, 1964.

This park was also an entrepreneurial attempt to promote the community and bring economic success through tourist dollars. The Fort Collins Racing and Stock Association held their race meet and stock fair there each year. The Chamber of Commerce was naturally interested in supporting this event which would bring thousands of people to the city. The county fair offered prizes to the best blooded and purebred stock and their racing meet was said to have brought together the best horses in Colorado.<sup>29</sup>

Since Prospect Park was primarily dedicated to horse racing, and this apparently did not draw enough people to support the facility, the many amenities built in 1904 had become a financial liability by 1906. An attempt to raise \$10,000 by selling stock failed.<sup>30</sup> A few months later, still encumbered with a debt of \$13,000, a more feasible plan was devised

by the stockholders of the Park Amusement Company to save Prospect Park. They bonded the property for the sum of \$15,000, and for a while, saved the park from the public sale block.<sup>31</sup>

When City Park was finally purchased by the city in 1907, funds for the purchase of Prospect Park were also authorized, but an exorbitant asking price kept the park in private hands until 1913 when a reasonable offer was extended and accepted. At that time, Prospect Park's future merged with City Park under public ownership.

Lindenmeier Lake Park - Even as Fort Collins was purchasing land in 1907 for a large new park in the west half of the city, pioneer and private developer William Lindenmeier Jr. was preparing plans for a pleasure resort to be located two and a half miles northeast of the city on his 360-acre property surrounding Lindenmeier Lake. It had been homesteaded in the 1870s as a farm by his father when the elder Lindenmeier had been in the cattle business.<sup>32</sup> The Lindenmeier Lake farm had a house, corral, barn, granary, and ice house.<sup>33</sup> The lake was built in 1874 after the No. 10 ditch had been built to provide the water.<sup>34</sup>

Negotiations with the Denver and Interurban Railroad, a subsidiary of the Colorado & Southern Railway which had just begun operating a streetcar line in Fort Collins on December 29, 1907, resulted in the extension of the line in 1908 out to the proposed resort two and a half miles northeast of the city.<sup>35</sup>

When the park formally opened on June 28, 1908, it boasted fishing, boating and a fine band concert in the afternoon by the Fort Collins Band. Water sports were enhanced in 1911 when a long pier ending in a diving platform, springboards, and toboggan water slide made swimming an enjoyable pastime. Also built at that time were landings for rowboats and a

25-foot gasoline launch. The fishing was plentiful and the picnicking very popular.<sup>36</sup>

The Denver and Interurban R.R. Co.  
MAP  
FT. COLLINS = Colo.  
showing  
LOCATION and LENGTH  
of all  
STREET CAR LINES  
Scale 1 inch = 300 ft.

Chief Engineer's Office.  
Denver, Colo.,  
Mar. 26<sup>th</sup>, 1908  
Map correct to May 17, 1914.

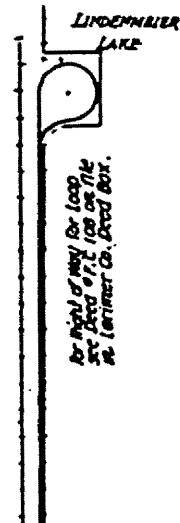


Figure 5. The Denver and Interurban R. R. Co. Streetcar Line to Lindenmeier Lake, 12 May 1914. From the Colorado Historical Society.

A newspaper account proudly compared the park to the amusements common to the parks of the big cities. "Isn't it strange that we have deferred the opening of one of these lakes as a pleasure resort so long?"<sup>37</sup> And again, "Endowed with every possible natural advantage as a public park, the resort has been improved by the hand of man until it has become an ideal spot for seekers after recreation and amusement."<sup>38</sup>

There was an ice cream pavilion with ship-like hatches that gave a view of the lake. A big two-story boat house and a dancing pavilion were also built. Mr. Lindenmeier kept bears and monkeys in cages as part of an amusement park.<sup>39</sup> "Shooting galleries, birds in cages, fortune tellers, and vaudeville performers were among the attractions."<sup>40</sup> According to pioneer Art Collamer, "Buffalo Bill and Pawnee Bill used to bring their road shows to Lindenmeier."<sup>41</sup>

Lindenmeier Lake, Fort Collins, Colo.

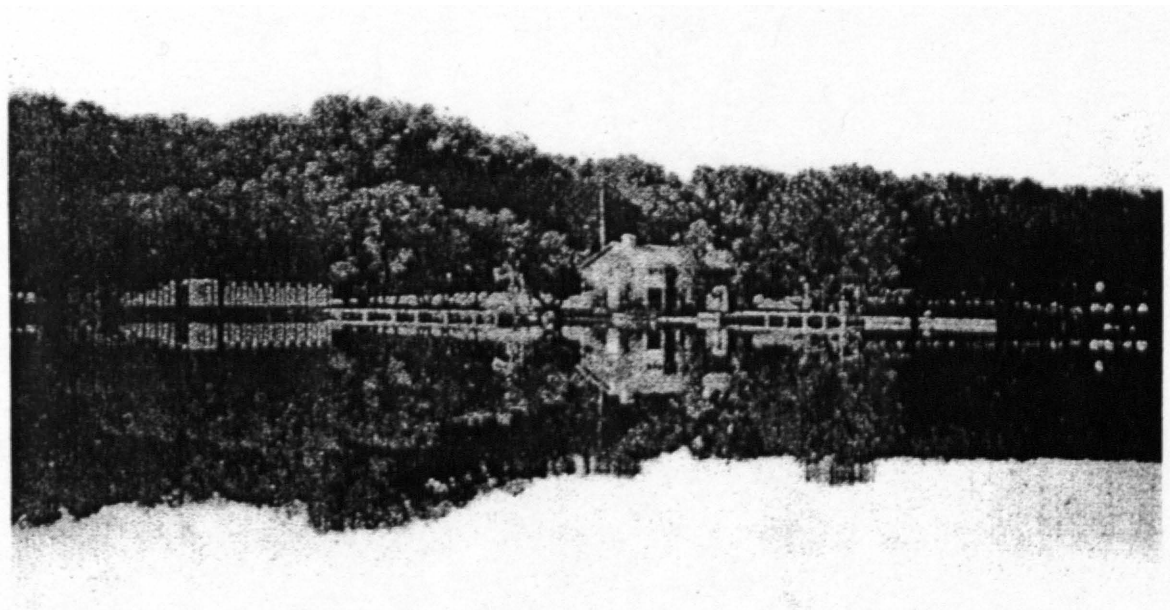


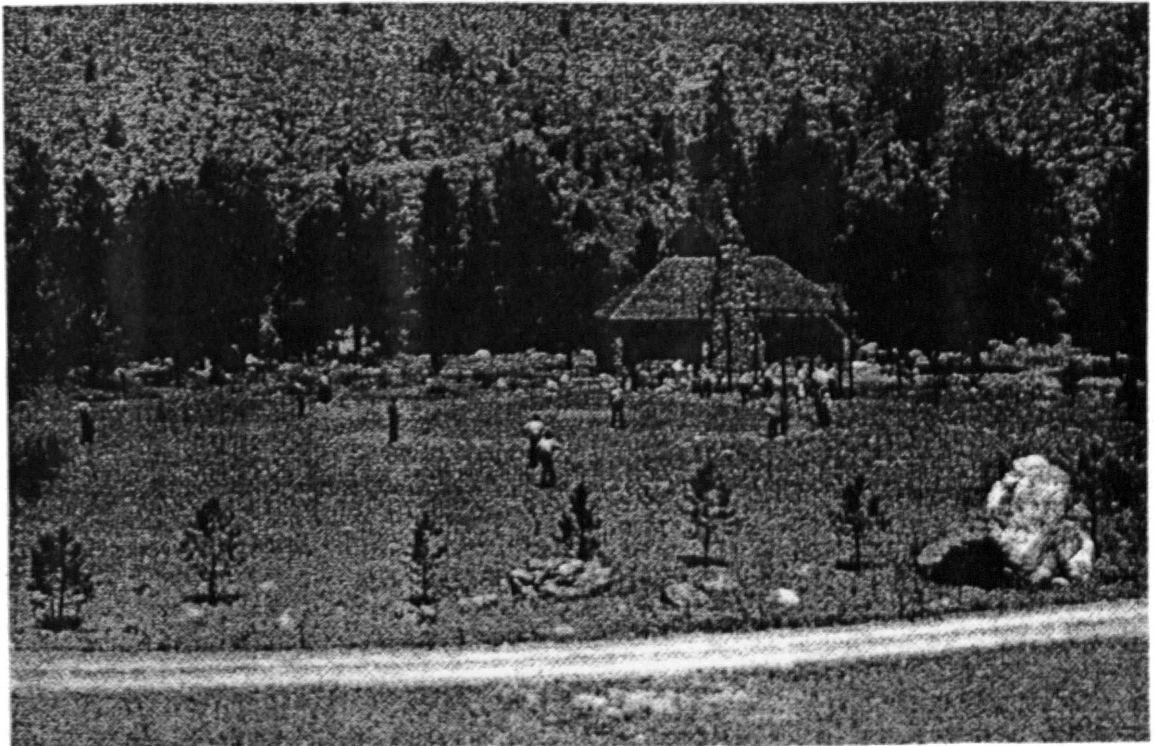
Figure 6. Lindenmeier Lake, Fort Collins, Colo., Ice-Cream Pavilion with Ship Like Hatches. From the Fort Collins Public Library.

The Fort Collins Concert band, which had been practicing in a corrugated iron building, "hotter than the proverbial Dutch oven on summer nights," decided in 1910 to hold their practices at Lindenmeier Lake park. They thought it would attract a higher class of people to the resort and give the band a much cooler location at which to work.<sup>42</sup> The popularity of this park may have contributed to the slow development of City Park which had been purchased only one year before Lindenmeier Park was opened.

Lindenmeier Park thrived until three new developments combined to lessen its popularity. The first was the closing of the Lindenmeier Lake streetcar line when it was purchased by the city in 1919 and economies were to be made. The second was the growing popularity of City Park which duplicated many of the park amenities and was closer as the town developed

around City Park. Finally World War I and its effect on shrinking the economy played its part.<sup>43</sup>

**Fort Collins' Mountain Parks** - By the teens, automobiles were taking hold and with them came much interest in "people going to the hills" as a form of recreation. The city acquired the privilege or right from the United States Forest Service in 1914 to build two mountain parks in the Poudre Canyon: Mountain Park Number One and Mountain Park Number Two on lands of the Roosevelt National Forest. Later, in the 1920s, City Park was to respond to the same auto tourist demand with a small campground. Beyond that, the Mountain Parks were of a different type and user demand than the community's urban parks.



**Figure 7. "Fortunate Fort Collins," Ft. Collins Mtn. Park on the Poudre. From the Colorado Historical Society.**

Duties were divided evenly between the City of Fort Collins and the Forest Service. These two campgrounds provided needed recreation spots, and they were also a very easy and economical way to advertise the City of Fort Collins.<sup>44</sup>

Mountain Park Number One was the land in Young's Gulch and "additional lands at different points along the main stream of the Cache la Poudre River from the mouth of the canon [sic] of the river to Chambers Lake, upon the highway."<sup>45</sup> The details and the formal acquisition for Young's Gulch to be the Fort Collins Municipal Recreation Area were not completed until 1919. The city agreed to build a road through the area and the Forest Service agreed to put in shelters, toilets and fireplaces as well as to provide some assistance with the road work.

Camp Ansel Watrous, for picnickers, had been named by representatives of the city while on an inspection trip to the area in April of 1919. The City Council ordered the work to commence.<sup>46</sup> Improvements included sixteen cooking campfire places, a foot bridge across the stream from Young's Gulch, garbage pits, and two filter boxes sunk in the Poudre River to supply water for the picnic sites. The Camp Collins Camp site, suited for campers, was scheduled for construction of two shelters with fireplaces, garbage pits, stepping stones across the creek, and two latrines.<sup>47</sup>

With the success of Mountain Park Number One, the city then acquired 94 1/4 acres of "picturesque table land adjoining the Cache La Poudre River, 35 miles up the canyon" from the U. S. Forest Service, again for recreational use. In order to enter this park, which was on the opposite bank of the river from the road, it was necessary to make provision for the construction of a rustic timber two-span bridge. The bridge was built

by Casper Zimmerman in November 1921.<sup>48</sup> Casper Zimmerman started a stage line up the Poudre Canyon in 1890.

The city then constructed a roadway into the park. A caretaker's house was built in 1923 to be occupied during the tourist season by the patrolman for the watershed. In 1924 they piped water from a natural spring.<sup>49</sup> Continuing in 1925 with public improvements to the park, that summer a spring house was built for \$551 to provide a roadside fountain for travelers. It was a rustic building built of local stone and the spring was "named Pegmatite spring, after the outcrop of rock from which it flows." A community house was built in 1926.<sup>50</sup>

The Young's Gulch Park evidently had not been improved or used for the purpose for which it had been reserved, and Mountain Park #2 had instead been a substitute for it, so the Forest Service closed the records on it in September, 1938.<sup>51</sup>

In May, 1935, the city began to sub-lease on a yearly basis the mountain parks land near the Water Works filtration plant to the Civilian Conservation Corps (C.C.C.) so that they could make park improvements. One project was the construction of the plant caretaker's house.<sup>52 53</sup> The city's involvement with the C.C.C. lasted only about five years. The city then entered into an agreement with the City of Greeley for their use of the camp buildings throughout the summer months of 1940.<sup>54 55</sup>

In 1942 the United States Government proposed to use the camp to establish a Conscientious Objectors' Camp, and by 1944 it was used by the Regional Administrative Service Division of the Soil Conservation Service.<sup>56</sup>

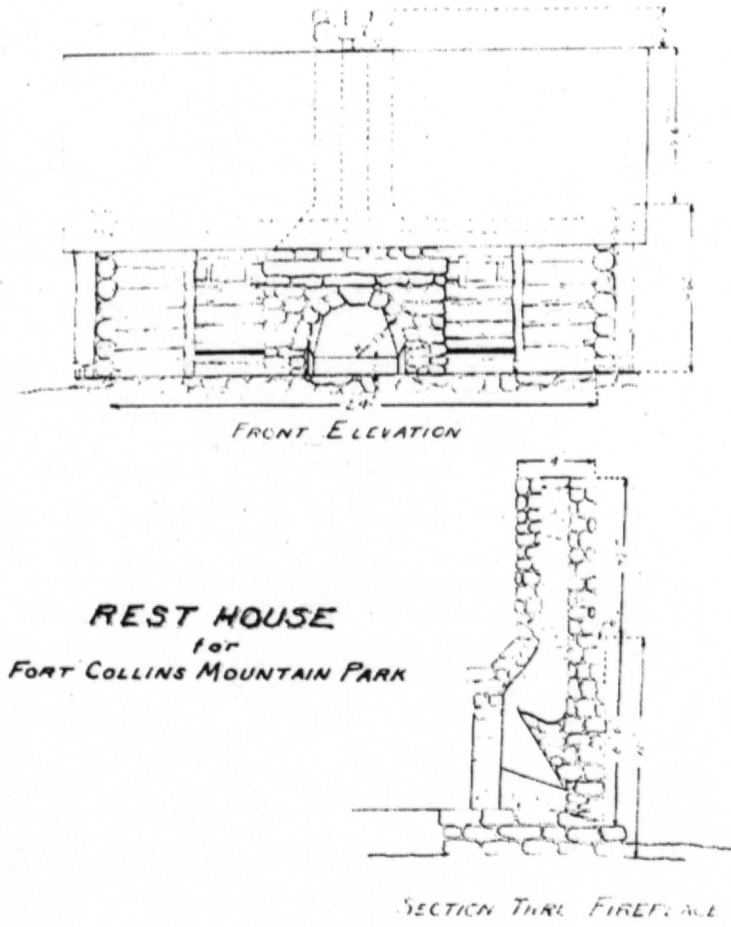
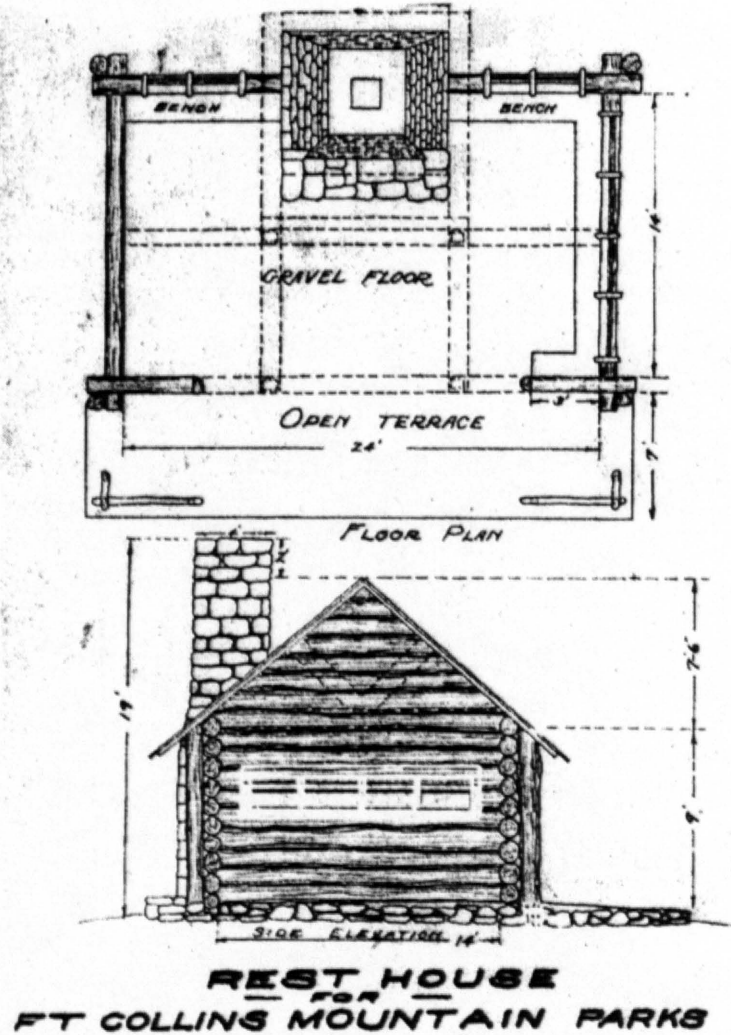


Figure 8. Rest House for Fort Collins Mountain Park. From the Fort Collins City Clerk's Office.

High School Park - A park was dedicated to the city by L. C. (Louis Clark) Moore in June, 1923 from Block 5 of L. C. Moore's Second Addition. Mr. Moore donated the park land and also the land for a high school across Remington Street in the 1400 block. When the school was built in 1926, it was thought that an improved park there would frame the school as people passed by on College Avenue. He was also, however, an astute businessman, and other property he had accumulated around the school was immediately subdivided for home sites.

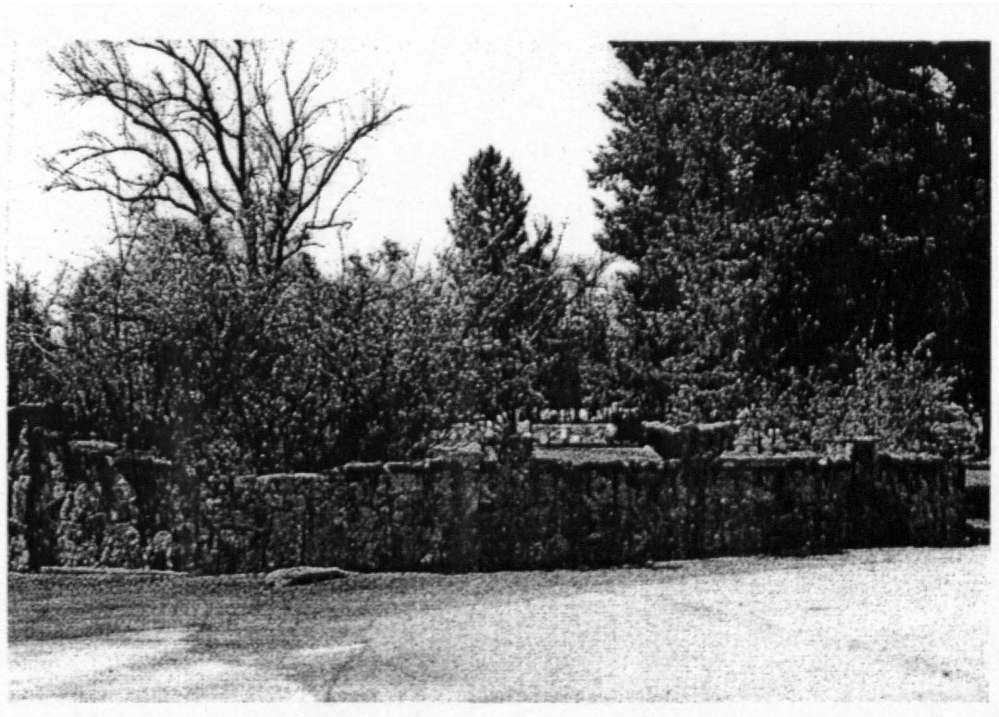
The park was first called "Lake Park" but later, with the high school in place, it became "High School Park."<sup>57</sup> At one time there was an 8 acre artificial lake in this park "surrounded by a broad circular drive lined with trees." During heavy rains, the land still floods.<sup>58</sup>



Figure 9. Fort Collins High School Park. From the Paul Lilyblade Collection.

Grandview Cemetery - On August 15, 1887 the city purchased and paid \$4,000 for 80 acres from Thomas Connolly, to be used for a community cemetery. The property was located a mile and a half to two miles west of the city. The first interment was November 21, 1887.<sup>59</sup>

"Grand View Cemetery Entrance Park" was designed by Professor B. O. Longyear in the block between the canal ditch in the cemetery and the new road between Mountain and Laporte Avenues on the Grandview Avenue. A concrete fountain was planned so that there would be an "artistic entrance to the greenhouses on the south side of Mountain."<sup>60</sup>



**Figure 10. Rustic Bridge With Flower Receptacles at Entrance to Grandview Cemetery, April, 1996.**

An old wooden bridge at the entrance to the cemetery was replaced in 1924 by a reinforced concrete bridge that was moved to the site from 150 feet north of Mountain Avenue on the New Mercer Canal. The bridge had been built by the Denver and Interurban Railway (1907-1918) across from

their streetcar station at the cemetery. Once in place, it was renovated with rustic mountain rock side walls and rustic ornamental flower receptacles "giving the cemetery a very pleasing entrance at a low cost amounting to \$700."<sup>61</sup> This coincides in time with the similar native rock walls that were built in City Park.

With the many improvements and the increased tourist flow going to City Park in the 1920s, it was determined necessary to greatly improve the entrance to the cemetery from 1924 to 1926 with lawn, shrubs, trees, and flowers along the borders.

#### City Park and the Historical Context of Parks and Recreation

Before beginning a discussion of City Park, it is necessary to understand the national ethic of parks and recreation use as it existed by 1907. The historical context is tied closely to the Industrial Revolution, or as it might more properly be termed, Evolution, since this movement developed over a great deal of time and is still evolving today.

The Industrial Revolution from the mid 18th Century to the mid 19th Century began with technological inventions in fuel and power which changed the production of goods from handwork and home workshops to machine produced goods in industrial factories. People moved from the farms to cities which then became overcrowded and polluted with industrial wastes. There were two leaders in the landscape industry who rallied the cry to plan for proper parks and recreation in order to counteract the crowded and polluted cities. These two greensward visionaries were Andrew Jackson Downing and Frederick Law Olmsted.

Andrew Jackson Downing (1815-1852), the son of a nurseryman, was the first American to write about landscape and garden design. He believed that the purpose of parks was to be "great holiday grounds to escape from

the brick walls, paved streets, and stifling atmosphere of towns." Parks should be "gardens of instruction, amusement, and recreation." Amusement should be provided by "bands of music", refreshments, and a magnificent drive for taking one's carriage out in order to see and be seen. Recreation was to be taken on a "most agreeable" grand promenade for visitors, and inhabitants of the city.<sup>62</sup>

Frederick Law Olmsted was the "Father of Landscape Architecture" who with the architect Calvert Vaux, designed Central Park in New York City. "Like Downing, he was convinced that planned landscapes should serve a social and democratic purpose."<sup>63</sup> In 1870 Olmsted wrote Public Parks and the Enlargement of Towns in which he clearly defined the need for parks as a counterpoint for crowded, polluted and industrialized cities.

Olmsted divided recreation into two forms: **Exertive** - exertion like mental games of chess and athletic sports like baseball, and **Receptive** - pleasure without exertion such as music and fine arts. His exertive recreation was better suited to numerous small areas within short walks of every home. For the first half of the 20th Century this was the neighborhood pick-up baseball game on an empty lot. In Fort Collins, it was two neighborhood playgrounds set up on donated lots on East Laurel Street and Laporte Avenue.

Olmsted was more interested in Receptive recreation which he saw as groups of people promenading through a park or as small friendly social events. All classes of people and races would exhibit the "prevailing expression of good nature and light-heartedness."<sup>64</sup>

Into this prevailing historical context, the town of Fort Collins was founded out on the prairie in 1873. Olmsted and Downing's ideas can be seen in the early park efforts of Lincoln (bandstands and stroll

lanes), Washington (playground), Vescelius' Grove (social events and exertive recreation), and Lindenmeier Lake (music, boating, strolling and picnicking.) Lake or High School Park was wholly associated with the high school and because of its topography at its inception, was probably not economically suitable for anything but the park use it attained. The Mountain Parks were of a different type and use of park. They did not fit the historic context of passive/active recreation in urban parks, but offered instead mountain campgrounds, an innovation spurred by the automobile in the twentieth century.

City Park was the result of the growth of the town. The two smaller original public parks, Lincoln and Washington, could not support the rapidly expanding community which grew by 170% between 1900 and 1910 - the greatest pace in its history. The community had tried to keep pace before that time with the private stop-gap measure of Vescelius' Grove, but it also was inadequate. City Park succeeded, has adapted to changing recreation patterns, and still serves Fort Collins well today. City Park at its inception was an example of Olmsted and Downing's theories for recreation as the following analysis of its history will show.

PART II

THE FORT COLLINS CITY PARK

## Chapter 1

### EARLY LAND OWNERSHIP OF CITY PARK

Sixty acres of what is now known as City Park, was once farmland that was settled in 1870 by the Mercer Colony. This religious group from Mercer County, Pennsylvania was the first known white settlement in that area. Alfred A. Edwards and Rev. W. T. McAdams were the colony pioneers who arrived in 1869 searching for a location for the colony. They named it the Mercer Colony and a year later brought out their families and those of George Sykes, Joseph E. Shipler, William Smith and Jacob Collamer. They chose land west of Fort Collins, and since it was up out of the river bottom lands, they needed to dig an irrigation ditch for their agricultural endeavors. They ran out of money and abandoned the ditch project, but ten years later it was completed by another company. This Mercer Ditch runs through City Park today. Lack of funds, an inadequate water supply and discouragement spelled the end of the Mercer Colony.<sup>65</sup>

When the Mercer Colony failed, John Sheldon acquired the acreage, dug the lake and farmed the land. There are four abstracts extant concerning the ownership of the land known as City Park which includes the early Prospect Park and also Grandview Cemetery. The abstracts are numbered 14885, 264, 8214 and 5924.<sup>66</sup>

These abstracts, listing the early settlers who owned the land before it became City Park, read like a description of the history of Larimer County. Their biographies and a title search of the City Park

lands appear in Appendix C. The following map and simplified title chain show the land areas covered by the respective abstracts and trails the land ownership.

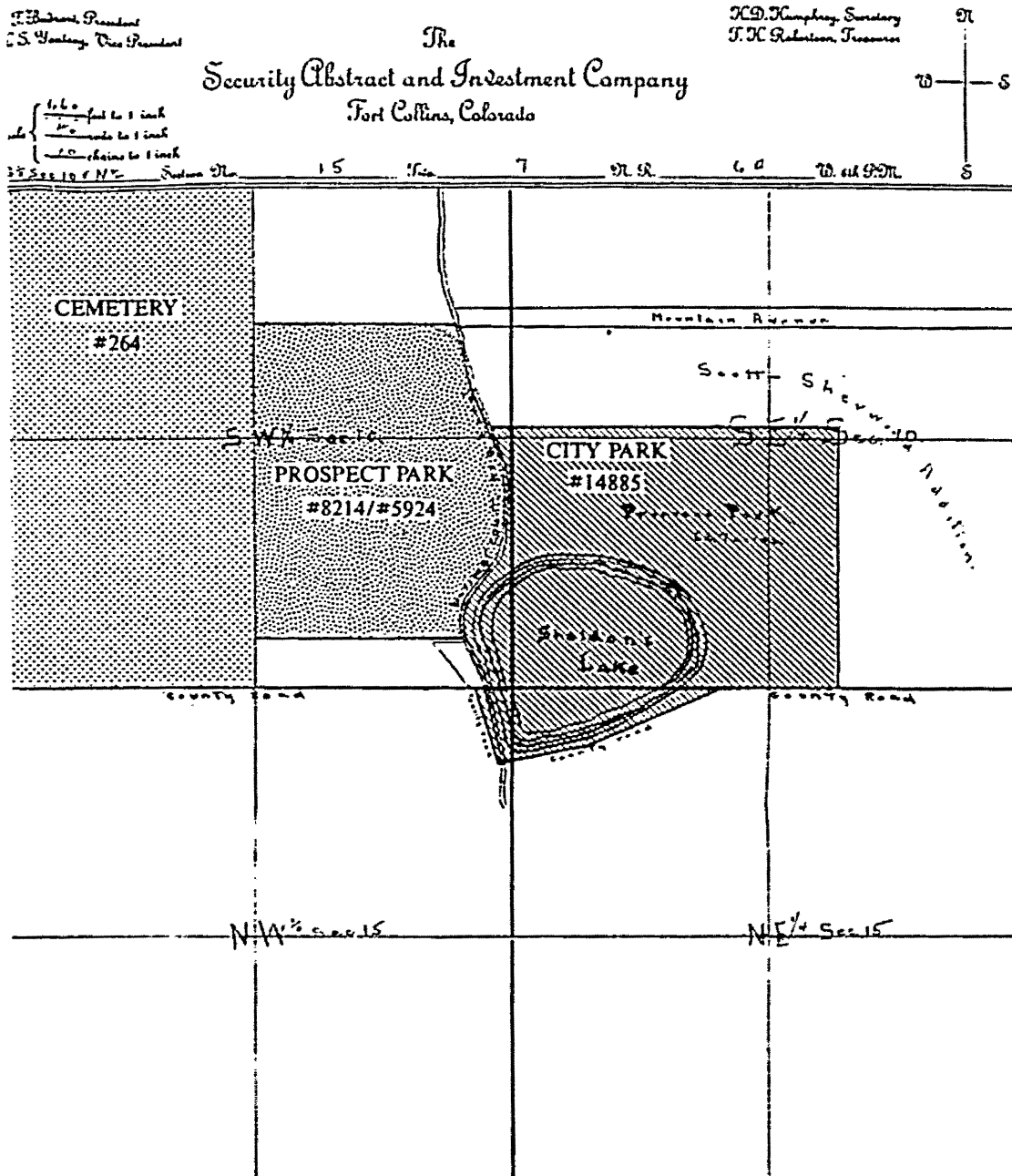


Figure 11. Map of Proposed Park from Abstract #14885.

TABLE ONE - TITLE CHAIN

Abstract #14885 (Proposed Park)

SW Lake (Section 15) ↓ United States ↓ D.P. Railway ↓	NE Lake (Section 10) ↓ United States ↓ W.T. McAdam-Collamer ↓ J. Sheldon ↓ Abner Loomis ↓ A. Loomis - H. Kelly ↓ A. Loomis - M. Maxwell ↓ A.W. Scott, 10 trustees, M. Sherwood, A. Rohling ↓ City of Fort Collins	SE Lake (Section 15) ↓ United States ↓ D.P. Railway ↓ W.T. McAdam ↓
	→ → →	← ← ←

Abstract #264 (N & S Cemetery)

United States  
 ↓  
 Jacob B. Collamer  
 ↓  
 Samuel Luke  
 ↓  
 Clinton Farrer  
 ↓  
 Charles Sheldon  
 ↓  
 John Sheldon  
 ↓  
 Thomas Connolley  
 ↓  
 City of Fort Collins

Abstract #8214/5924 (Prospect Park)

United States  
 ↓  
 Jacob B. Collamer  
 ↓  
 Samuel Luke  
 ↓  
 Clinton Farrer  
 ↓  
 Charles Sheldon  
 ↓  
 John Sheldon  
 ↓  
 Thomas Connolley  
 ↓  
 A. and M. Loomis  
 ↓  
 A.W. Scott, F.W. Sherwood,  
 P.J. McHugh, A.J. Rohling  
 ↓  
 Mrs. F.W. Sherwood  
 ↓  
 A.W. Scott  
 ↓  
 City of Fort Collins

## Chapter 2

### CHOOSING AND ACQUIRING A SITE

#### Political Story Behind City Park's Acquisition

Just after the turn-of-the-century a movement began among Fort Collins' citizenry to acquire a more substantial city park for the community. Lincoln Park was called "City Park" but a one block square park was not at all adequate for a community that would grow by 170% from 1900 to 1910, the highest growth rate in a decade that the city has ever experienced. The year 1907 was a time of much progress; Fort Collins was building a street railway system, a YMCA, and a state armory.

After a failed effort in mid-1906 to acquire the private Prospect Park, Fort Collins citizens began to look at other properties to purchase for a larger park for the city. Within a month, the City Council was looking for parkland east of the city on 20 acres owned by pioneer homesteader, John G. Coy. Mr. Coy was not disposed to sell.<sup>67</sup>

The newspaper quoted Mayor Clammer as being dissatisfied with the inactivity of the Park Commission and he chided them for taking what appeared to be a long vacation.<sup>68</sup> The editor chimed in "agitating the public mind," and suggested that the city buy the 80-acre Doty & Rhodes Subdivision. This land was owned by the Fort Collins Terminal Land Improvement Company composed of 250 stockholders including the members of the Park Commission. Their plan for acquiring the property was to sell half for park purposes and half for residential lots to make money to

secure a right-of-way and terminal facilities to bring the proposed Denver, Yellowstone & Pacific Railroad to town. When the railroad deal fell through, the stockholders, composed of a large part of the prominent residents of the community, sought to protect their investment by having the town buy the land for a new park. Because the proposal involved the Park Commissioners in a conflict of interest, the matter was put to the voters in a municipal election the following spring.<sup>69</sup>

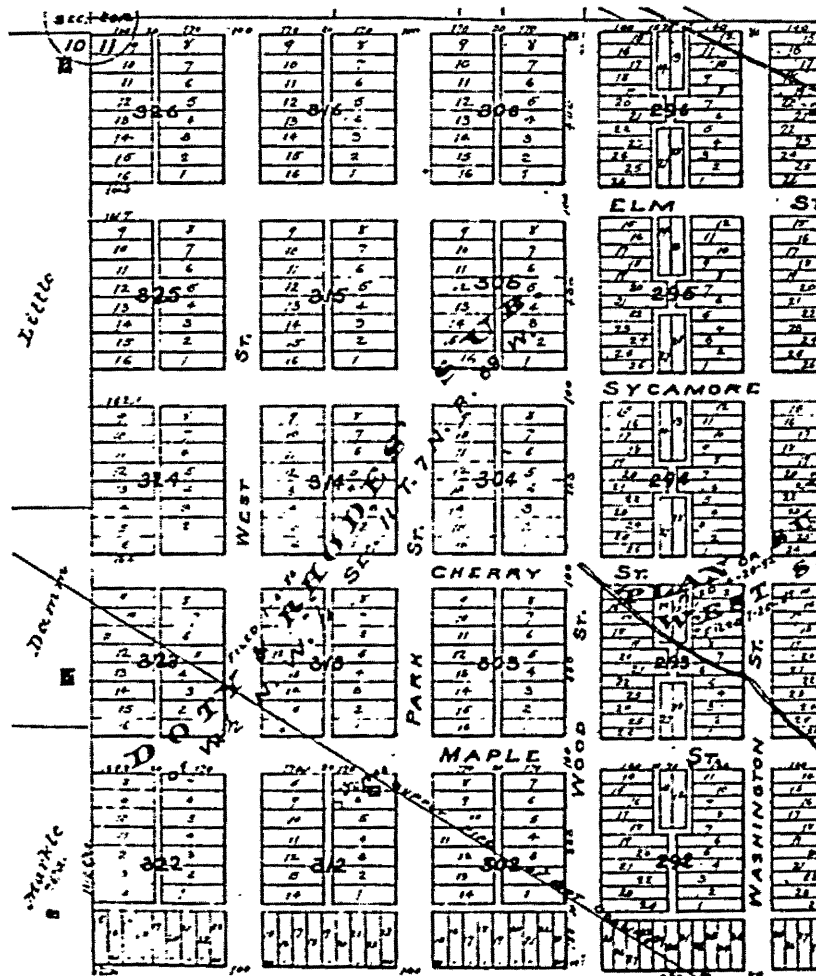


Figure 12. Doty & Rhodes Sub., Map of Fort Collins by W. C. Willits, 1894. From the City of Fort Collins Engineering Department.

The Chamber of Commerce was politically active by sponsoring speakers such as a new resident, Captain Neff, who praised Greeley's

progress in parks beautification.<sup>70</sup> At a Chamber meeting held at the Linden Hotel on January 23, 1907, L. D. Crain, a member of the Park Commission, acted as toastmaster. He stated that the reason there were not more parks was simply that there was no money and even though the commission did not want to burden the city with indebtedness, it proposed to call for a vote on a proposal for a bond issue to purchase parkland.

The cheerleading continued with W. M. Parce of Boulder, who had been hired by the county to beautify the courthouse grounds. He said that New York, Boston, and Philadelphia's experience proved that parks which cost nothing and improved surrounding property values were an economic benefit. He held up recent extensive park planting plans by small town La Junta, Colorado as a challenge to Fort Collins, and even Denver's parks were touted. Mr. Parce had been escorted around by Frank P. Stover and he recommended the 80 acres of the Doty & Rhodes Subdivision because he believed that Prospect Park's use as a race track would attract the undesirable crowds.

Franklin C. Avery, also a member of the Park Commission, urged a vote to appoint a committee of three including City Attorney Cornelius Ferris, to assist the Park Commission to get the matter before the people; motion was put and carried. Mr. Ferris then explained that parks can be acquired by petition of the people, or as in this case, by means of a Park Commission. Parks can be financed "out of the general revenue, out of park fund, by bonds and by special assessment, bonding being the most practical one for this city."

With this firm resolve and strong start, a few notable citizen leaders began a six-month effort to mobilize the vote to purchase more parkland.<sup>71</sup> Efforts moved swiftly as petitions for signatures had already

been drawn urging the City Council to call for an election to vote bonds for park purposes. The Chamber of Commerce committee appointed to aid this effort included Messrs. Cornelius Ferris, S. H. Clammer (the Mayor) and B. F. Clark. Prospect Park was still owned by the Fort Collins Amusement Company and the Doty & Rhodes Subdivision was owned by the Terminal Land and Improvement Company. They were to meet immediately to agree on the price and terms for each of the two parcels of land under consideration. These amounts would be entered on the petitions that would have to be signed by 10% of the tax-paying voters.<sup>72</sup>

The Terminal Company quickly put its petition before the voters; the leaders in that movement were J. A. Brown (First National Bank president), B. F. Hottel (innkeeper), and F. P. Stover (drug store owner). The proposed sixty-four acres (viz Blocks 304, 305, 306, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 324, 325, and 326) lay about ten blocks west of town out Laporte Avenue south of the Stout branch of the Colorado and Southern Railroad. The asking price was \$47,500. The Terminal Company reserved two blocks on each side of the Laporte Avenue entrance for a grand residential effect. Presumably these lots would sell for a high figure. Mr. Stover stated that monies received for the sale of the land could be used to build a race track and attract the county fair, so it would be simply shifting money.<sup>73</sup>

The Prospect Park company also prepared its offer which was for \$47,080. This site included a portion of the Scott & Sherwood farm around Sheldon Lake. Together this area of the historic Sheldon Farm totaled over 106 acres.<sup>74</sup>

A question arose as to what would happen if the people voted for both parks, but the City Attorney made it clear that the city was limited

by statute not go into debt beyond \$50,400. Since the purchase of either park would consume that amount, only one tract of land could be secured legally.<sup>75</sup> Petitions for both tracts of land were presented to City Council; the Prospect petition signed by 246 and the Doty petition by 164 names.<sup>76</sup>

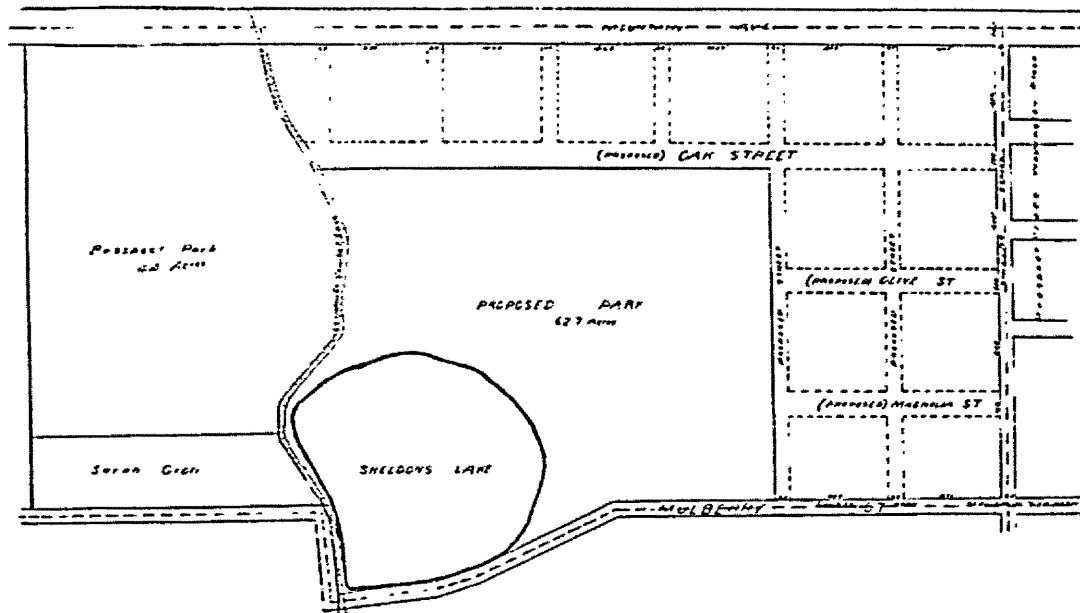
After less than a month of competition, the Terminal Land & Improvement Company suddenly withdrew its petition leaving only one site, the 106 acres including the 23 acres composing Sheldon Lake and ample water rights. The reason for the withdrawal is unknown.<sup>77 78 79</sup>

A possible reason for the withdrawal of the offer might be that the Terminal Company had received a better one, as the following implies. After withdrawing its offer, the Terminal Company immediately turned around and sold the eighty acre Doty tract to Mayor S. H. Clammer. The price received was \$51,250, clearing a profit of \$11,250 because they had bought the land a year previously for \$40,000. Mr. Clammer said, "I am going to cut the whole eighty acres up into city lots, name it the Capitol Hill addition, grade the streets and sell the lots." Approximately 260 town lots were to be carved out of the eighty acres in addition to the necessary streets. The newspaper predicted the addition to "become one of the very finest residence sections of the city."<sup>80</sup>

This resulted in an urgency to acquire the increasingly valuable land by Sheldon Lake for a park. The general election that spring included the Anti-License Ticket of present administrators headed by Mayor Sam Clammer. Their platform was temperance, increased public works projects, and support for the park proposition. The newspaper continued its impassioned plea for voter approval by saying that the early park with a library was too small to be worthy, and the common worker needed a

recreation space when he could not afford to go to someplace like California.<sup>81</sup> This theme had been championed by Frederick Law Olmsted in the previous century. One week before the vote, the newspaper dedicated an entire article in flowery prose to the panoramic view from the high knoll east of Sheldon Lake.<sup>82</sup>

## MAP OF FORT COLLINS' PROPOSED PARK SYSTEM



The foregoing map shows the location of the property that is offered the city of Fort Collins for park purposes and its relative position as regards the western limits of the city at Shields street. As the map shows, there will be two tiers of blocks between Shields street and the east line of the proposed park, and one tier of blocks between the proposed park and Mountain avenue on the north. This north tier of blocks was cut off the grounds offered for a park at the instance of the park commission and other citizens who disliked the idea of having the park border a street leading direct to the cemetery.

The proposed park takes in Prospect park, 44 acres, and 62.7 acres, including Sheldon lake, lying east and south of Prospect park, making a total of 106.7 acres. The east line of these grounds passes north and south just east of the buildings on what is known as the Sheldon ranch, now owned by Sherwood & Scott.

The grounds are admirably adapted to park purposes and when improved and converted into a park will make a beautiful and decidedly pleasing resort.

Figure 13. Map of Fort Collins' Proposed Park System from The Weekly Courier, 27 March 1907: 18.

After the vote on April 2, the results published the next day showed that of a total of 1,054 votes cast, 730 were for purchase of the park, and of 403 votes on the bond issue, 242 favored and 161 opposed it.<sup>83 84</sup>

Immediately, the remaining sixty-eight acre tract of the Scott-Sherwood Farm that lay to the north and east of the newly approved park

became even more valuable and was sold for \$52,000 to the Edwards-Kissock Agency for residential subdivision development. A. A. Edwards was the president. It was touted as the "largest spot cash real estate transaction that had ever been consummated in this city, and is the strongest kind of evidence that Fort Collins is going some." Scott's Addition was proposed to have 194 lots each 50 by 190 feet with six of the blocks fronting on the new city park.<sup>65</sup> Large advertisements appeared for lots with prices from \$400 to \$1,000 in the "finest addition that has ever been platted" and the "bon-ton residence section of the city." The Inter-Urban Electric Streetcar Lines were proposed at that time to pass on two sides of this addition, Mountain and Mulberry, but the Mulberry route never came to pass.<sup>66</sup>

On June 1, 1907 the city bought sixty-two acres of the Scott-Sherwood Tract - to be the nucleus of a city park - for \$25,080. The purchase was financed by park bonds sold at par to a group of Colorado Springs investors.<sup>67</sup> <sup>68</sup>

However, the acquisition of the adjacent Prospect Park would need to wait. Even though the purchase and bonding for the Prospect Park section had been authorized for \$22,000 by the park purchase vote of 1907, it was not purchased because "the committee had been unable to sell said bonds or any part thereof at a price sufficient to purchase both said tracts at the price agreed upon."<sup>69</sup> "The issue of the balance of the \$22,000 of bonds might possibly have exceeded the constitutional and statutory limit concerning bonded indebtedness."<sup>70</sup>

The day before the city park purchase on May 30, the Park Commission directed Jesse Harris to purchase the elk living on the future park ground. The animals had been placed there in a pasture on the west side

of the hill several years before in an effort to establish a zoo. Their activities were newsworthy - "a baby elk was born this morning to Scott and Sherwood, out at Sheldon lake."<sup>91</sup> They had been purchased by the corporation and its trustee, Mr. A. W. Scott, that owned the land which was sold for the new park. The Park Commission planned to use the elk as a nucleus for a wild animal park, but later the expense was decided to be too great, and the elk were never acquired. The city's first attempt at a zoo fell to defeat.<sup>92</sup>

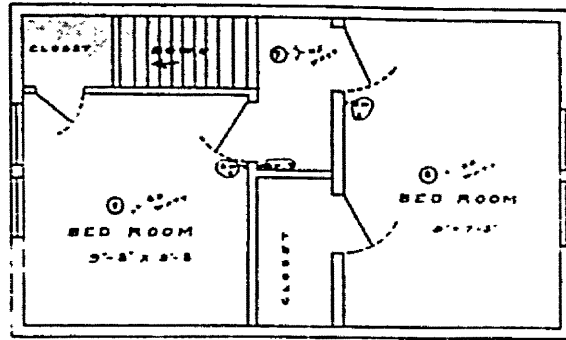
The price of the forty-four acres known as Prospect Park was finally dropped in 1913 to \$10,000, and the city purchased it on December 27 from A. W. Scott.<sup>93</sup> <sup>94</sup> Prospect Park had not been a profitable venture for its private investors.

#### Early Land Use of the Park

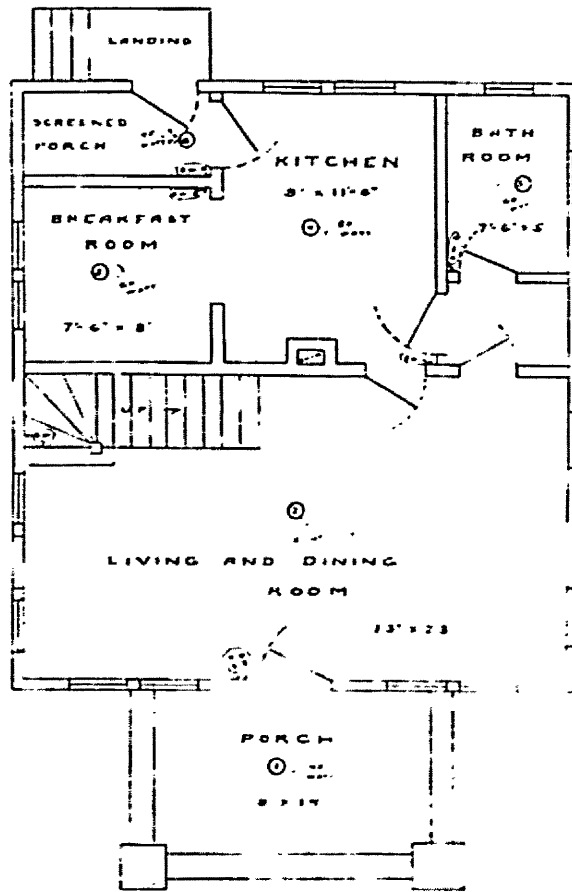
After the city purchased the park there was not much money available for immediate improvements, and as a result, the park's development was slow. The parkland in the south part of the cemetery remained in its agricultural state and was rented out to small farmers for the production of hay, sugar beets, alfalfa and grain. Sometimes the city was paid a small rent and sometimes it received a portion of the crops. The city rented out a little barn remaining from the farm on the east side of the land.<sup>95</sup>

After the city's purchase of Prospect Park in 1913, most of the land also was let out to agriculture, and a large barn, sheds and a caretaker's house were located there for this use.<sup>96</sup>

The land produced good crops of hay each year and the city planted trees as funds permitted. The large barn was used for the stabling of horses associated with the race track. Bert Harris, proprietor of Harris



**SECOND FLOOR**



**FIRST FLOOR**

**PLAN  
FOR  
ELECTRIC LIGHTS FOR THE  
CARETAKERS HOUSE AT  
PROSPECT PARK**

**FORT COLLINS, COLO.      SCALE 1/4" = 1'**

Figure 14. Caretakers House at Prospect Park, 19 January 1923. From the Fort Collins City Clerk's Office.

Livery, a feed and sale stable on Laporte Avenue, leased this barn for the stabling of his horses and had the use of the race track at such times as it was not being used by the city.<sup>57</sup>

Thus, while the city had bought the land, they did not have the immediate funds to make it into a park. So they continued leasing the acreage for farm purposes. Essentially the city was land-banking the property while the Park Commission made plans for the park's future.

### Chapter 3

#### DESIGN AND LANDSCAPE

During the spring of 1909, the new park was surveyed and plans were made for improvements to be constructed the following summer. But the city was not ready to implement these improvements, so planning continued throughout 1910. Finally in 1911, physical work began. Drives and parking were staked out in preparation for grading the drives in the spring of the following year.<sup>98</sup>

The new park was almost five years old and still unnamed, so on January 3, 1912, the Park Commission met to decide upon a name. Many names had been submitted and a lengthy discussion ensued before the name City Park was submitted by L. D. Crain and approved by the assemblage.

The commissioners now turned to the work of improving the new "City Park." Heavy wire woven fencing was used to enclose the property, and the "trees were set out according to the plans which had been prepared by a prominent New York landscape gardener."<sup>99</sup> The identity of this person is unknown. While the name of Frederick Law Olmsted, the father of Landscape Architecture" and designer of New York City's Central Park and many other parks, has been suggested by several long time residents of Fort Collins, he died in 1903 and could not have designed City Park which was purchased in 1907. However, quite possibly, the "prominent New York landscape gardener" was Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., son of the famed Olmsted Sr., and a respected landscape architect in his own right, who was known to have

done extensive work in Colorado during this time period. Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. opened an office in January, 1912 in Boulder and designed parks throughout Colorado.<sup>100</sup> (Note: A search of accounts payable in City Council meeting minutes yielded an entry for a \$200. park plan, payable to Arthur Herrington on November 21, 1910. Further information is unknown and the spelling of the name may be incorrect because of the difficulty deciphering the historic records.)<sup>101</sup>

Regardless of the architect's identity, the widespread influence of Olmsted's design principles became apparent in the layout of the park landscape. Olmsted Sr. had traveled extensively in Europe in his early adult years and conceived of parks "as city and country being a single design." His new concept of landscape urban space was inward-looking, large in size but deliberately small in its many rich and varied elements." The gracefully-curved lines and generous spaces that he was known for designing can be seen in the placement of the trees. The park had natural features that gave it an English picturesque setting; these features included the lake, large open meadows and hills and valleys combined. To this framework, the "prominent New York landscape gardener" added trees in clumps or around the edges of the park to give a sense of temporary escape from urban conditions. This was Olmsted's signature.<sup>102</sup> The Olmsted style of Central Park was continued with curving roadways, and again later in the 1920s when native rock walls were added and a formal entrance was built at Jackson Street. City Park was quite grand in its early days, but much of that character has been eroded by time and lack of maintenance - just as an historic building can be lost to demolition by neglect. As will be noted later, buildings and parks can be restored with vision, planning and financial resources.

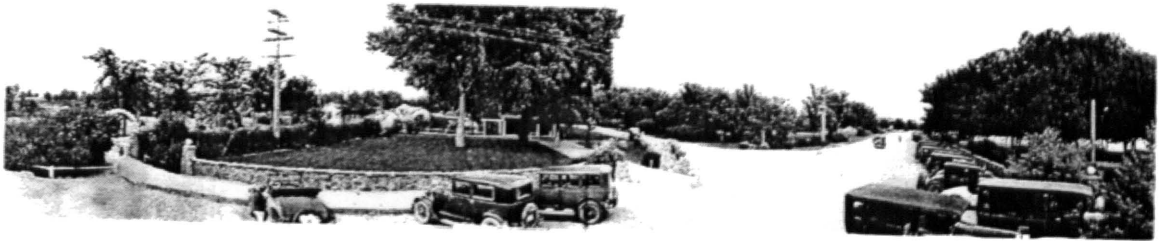


Figure 15. City Park at Fort Collins, Colorado.

Portions of City Park had been used for a tree nursery. Seedlings of from twelve to thirty-six inches in height were purchased and planted in the City Park nurseries. Many of these trees were transplanted in 1916 to the new Grandview Cemetery addition or given to citizens. These trees, now mature, can be found all over Fort Collins today. The nursery planted a variety of species including soft maple, hazel maple, ash, American elm, beech walnut [sic], red oak, chestnut, European larch, pin oak and Colorado blue spruce.<sup>103</sup> A new tree nursery was started north of Sheldon Lake. Flowering and foliage shrubs also were planted throughout the parks and cemetery.

The Parks Department diligently continued to maintain the trees in the park. Between 1925 and 1926, the city purchased a 300 gallon Fitzhenry-Guptill sprayer power pump to fight tree pests, specifically the oyster shell scale that was attacking ash trees.<sup>104</sup>

The period 1918-1921 was a time of great improvement in the park. Commissioner of Works Frank P. Goeder called for replacing wooden culverts, erecting more bath-houses, putting the "drives, walks, lake piers, nurseries, and grounds" in condition so that the park and cemetery could be the "show and pleasure places of the city...." He proposed putting picnic areas where the old nurseries were, and running water up the big hill so trees could be planted. He called for a new roof on the grandstand in Prospect Park and for repair of the fences and gates.<sup>105</sup>

The big hill east of the lake was known as Knobb Hill.<sup>106</sup> Today it is known as Firecracker Hill where people sit to watch the 4th of July fireworks.

Rock benches were built around the north side of the lake for the public, and the park was beautified with many shrubs. Professor B. O. Longyear provided a comprehensive landscape scheme which would take years to complete and would include more playground facilities, tennis courts, and other recreational features.<sup>107</sup>

A new bridge was built over the irrigation ditch in 1921 and a new road around the lake was opened.<sup>108</sup> This bridge at the intersection of South Bryan Street and City Park Drive was constructed of moss rock similar to some benches that had been built in the park.<sup>109</sup> By 1990, the rocks had loosened and the bridge was replaced. The modern one has concrete parapet walls with a three inch diameter aluminum pipe railing along the top and a moss rock fascia.

The roadways in City Park were redesigned over the years. The map in Figure 18. shows two sets of road configurations superimposed on each other. The base map was hand drawn in 1925. It was updated (presumably in the 1940s to show the golf course) and the earlier roads, south half of

the cemetery, cottage camp, bandstand, and tennis courts in north Prospect Park were removed. The loop of the streetcar line and its waiting station in the park is identified.



Figure 16. The Old Bridge at Bryan and City Park Drive, 19 March 1980.



Figure 17. The New Bridge at Bryan and City Park Drive, 3 May 1986.

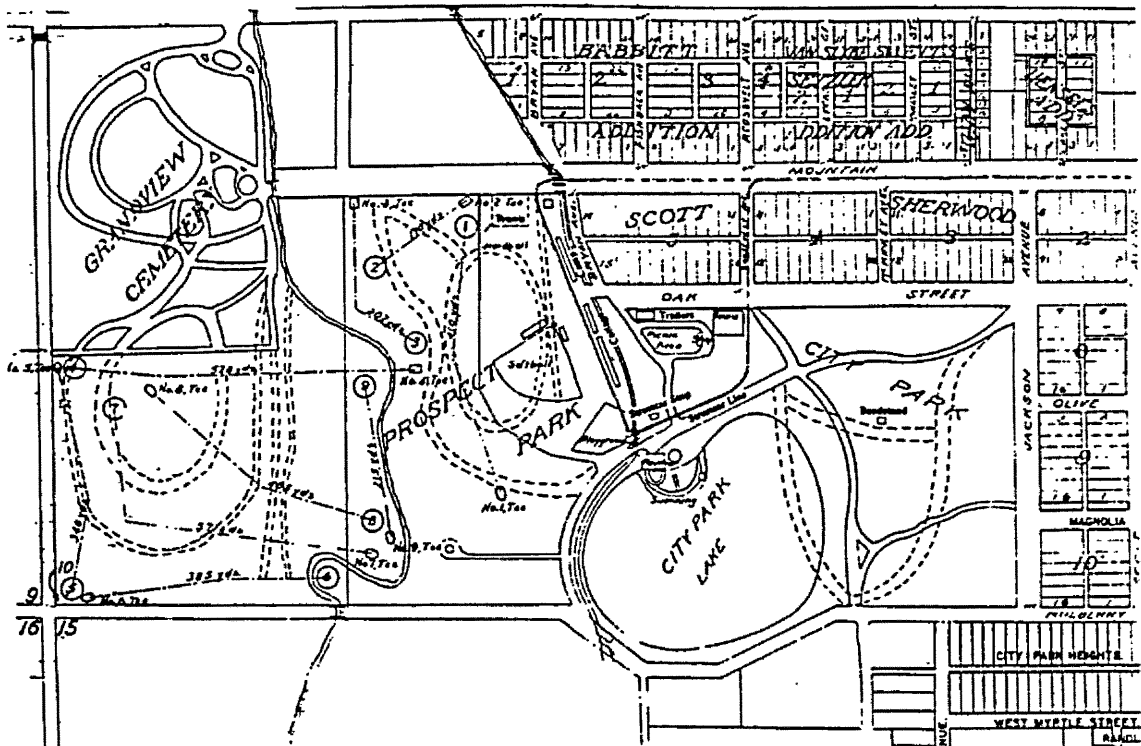


Figure 18. 1925 Map from the City of Fort Collins Engineering Department.

The city eventually graveled the dirt roadways, completing the north-south drive between West Mulberry and West Oak Streets in 1924, and the main drive into the park from Jackson Street in 1926.<sup>110</sup>

New additions in 1927 included rustic stone arches and fences lining the roadways and lawns of the park, along with a rustic gateway entrance of the same foothills moss rock at Jackson Avenue and West Oak Street where they intersect with the main drive through the park, City Park Drive. Large copper light fixtures were mounted on each entrance pier.

Near the pavilion and original playground, 300 feet of rustic wall was built of native moss rock from the foothills. East of a pavilion that had been erected in 1921, contractors erected a rustic fountain, bird bath, and lily pond also of moss rock. Complemented by shrubbery, the whole scene using native materials appeared close to nature. This

Naturalistic or Picturesque form of landscape architecture, copied from England, was very popular throughout the country during the 1920s.<sup>111</sup>

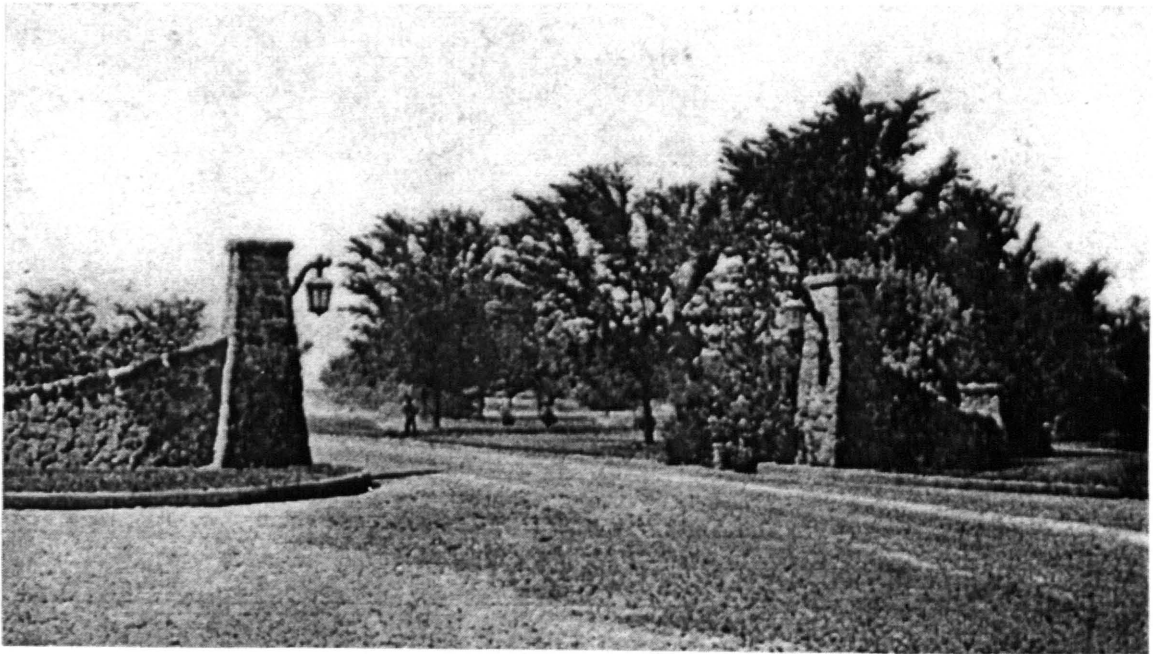
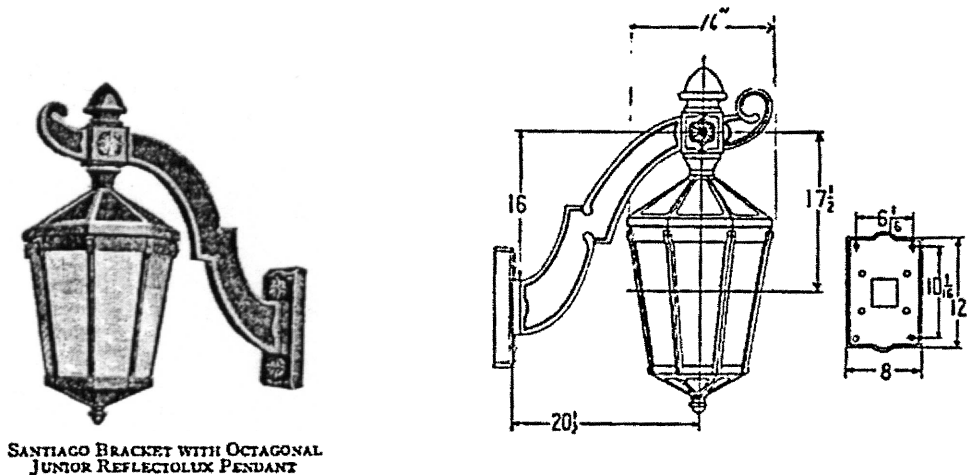


Figure 19. Rustic Gateway, City Park.



SANTIAGO BRACKET WITH OCTAGONAL JUNIOR REFLECTOLUX PENDANT

### Santiago Bracket

The Santiago Bracket is designed for use with Octagonal Reflectolux Lanterns. Price includes bracket only. See page 917 for price on lanterns.

Style No.  
351401

Ship. Wt. Lbs.  
98

List Price  
\$29 00

Figure 20. Santiago Bracket Light, Westinghouse Ornamental Street Lighting Equipment CO., May 1923. From the Fort Collin Public Library.

By the end of the 1920s, the sixty-two acres known as City Park was being billed as a "pleasure mecca" for the city. It was famous for its beautiful lawns, tourist camp, and "nooks for local picnickers." There was boating, swimming, dancing in an open-air dance hall (known as the pavilion) above a bath house, tennis courts, horseshoe courts, a playground, a baseball diamond, and winter skating on the lake.<sup>12</sup>

With the onset of the Great Depression in the early 1930s, funds for landscaping in City Park dropped to a bare minimum so work at the park was chiefly routine. Some of the park was in lawn and some not because of the added upkeep expense on grassed space. The city planted alfalfa and orchard grass in those areas not in lawn, and harvested the crops.

Over the years, there were two significant patriotic monuments that were placed in the park. One was a war cannon and the other a replica of the Statue of Liberty.



Figure 21. Memorial Cannon in City Park, Historical Postcard from the Paul Lilyblade Collection.

The year 1932 saw the dedication of a war monument in City Park in the form of an approximately 5,000 pound cannon. The memorial cannon was a wooden-wheeled relic with a fifteen foot barrel. The American Legion George Beach Post #4 presented it to the city, and it was placed in the park to honor the men who fought and died in World War I. An attempt was made in 1986 by community activists to have the cannon removed as being too much a symbol applauding war and violence; however, others in the community strongly objected and the cannon was allowed to stay.<sup>113 114</sup>

In 1985 a number of organizations proposed and then erected a replica of the Statue of Liberty on the sloping north shore of the lake as a "pledge of everlasting Fidelity and Loyalty." The bronze statue sits on a native rock stone (striated buff brown) foundation planter that is laid into the hill as a twelve point star with overhanging cap rock that forms seating.



Figure 22. Statue of Liberty in City Park, April 1996.

The statue carries a tablet with the letters "MDCCLXXVI." It was dedicated in 1985 by the Boy Scouts of America, Centennial Arc Welding, City of Fort Collins, Elizabeth Woodworth, Fort Collins Round Table, Northern Colorado Art Facility, and the Northern Colorado Council of Camp Fire, Inc.

## Chapter 4

### SHELDON LAKE

The lake in City Park was originally built by John Sheldon who owned the land from 1873 to 1886. An article in the Rocky Mountain News reported his activity:

Mr. Sheldon has commenced to carry out his ideas upon a very large scale. He has set men to work to construct an artificial lake that shall cover an area of about forty acres. The borders of the lake will be planted with shade-trees, and the whole farm will be improved and beautified.<sup>115</sup>

Once the first settlers had claimed the bottom lands by the Cache la Poudre River, the next wave of farmers like John Sheldon moved up to the bench-land north and south of the river. Irrigation of these higher fields was essential for agriculture and stock growing in this semi-arid region. The lake was man-built by John Sheldon around several small natural springs, but Sheldon's stock growing and farming required a greater, more dependable supply of water. Larimer County Ditch #2 was built in 1873 to feed the irrigation lake, making it a reservoir. The lake was valuable to the city because it came with water rights to maintain the park. The purchase of the new park in 1907 included several shares of water; however, they were not enough for use so the Park Commission doubled the number by purchasing more water shares in 1908.<sup>116</sup>

<sup>117</sup> Later, in 1916, a new outlet was constructed from Sheldon Lake. This allowed the lake bottom to be lowered 2.7 feet to its former level, increasing the storage capacity of the lake.<sup>118</sup> "Nine hundred feet of dike

12 feet wide and 4 feet high was constructed between the Larimer County Canal No. 2 ditch and Sheldon Lake as retaining wall with 100 loads of rock to take the wash from the lake." This dike exists today on the north west side of the lake.<sup>119</sup>

After the city bought the park, swimming became a major recreation for Fort Collins. The lake was actually considered relatively safe since it was gradually sloped, had no deep holes, was visible all at once, and the deepest point was only twelve feet. A swimming pier was built out into the lake. Two bath houses and two toilets were built at Sheldon Lake in 1917, but the lake was so popular for bathing purposes that the facilities were still woefully inadequate.<sup>120 121</sup>

Between 1918 and 1923, a number of improvements were made in the lake area. Beach sanding, started by the Commissioner of Highways, Works and Utilities, James F. Vanderwark, was extended to cover the entire bathing beach by the next Commissioner, Frank P. Goeder. A water slide was also installed for bathers. A second pier was constructed and the old bath houses and a refreshment stand of unknown age were removed in favor of a new two-story concrete recreation building or pavilion.<sup>122</sup> The pavilion served as a bath house until 1956 when a new bath house was constructed. The 1956 bath house cost \$11,000 and was financed by a generous contribution from the Elks Club, funds from the City of Fort Collins and the Recreation Commission.<sup>123 124 125</sup>

The lake concession included three steel boats renting for twenty-five cents an hour, and three dozen bathing suits for twenty-five cents each. There were thirty lockers available, twenty of which were locked. The lock cost twenty-five cents which was refundable if the person returned the lock in less than an hour; after that it was ten cents an

hour extra. This was a typical scene repeated in parks throughout the country. The concessionaire policed the grounds and the city furnished him with a lawn mower, hose and scythe for this purpose.<sup>126</sup>



Figure 23. Sheldon Lake Swimming and Boating Area, 1926. From the Fort Collins Public Library.

Bathing was controlled by a lifeguard from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. who would signal the time to come out, after which bathers were expected to be out in ten minutes. No one was allowed to swim across the lake unless accompanied by a boat. Swimmers were expected to stay within the line of posts surrounding the piers and no one but bathers, persons in bathing suits, were allowed on the piers. Bathing suits were required to swim. The rules for the water slides exemplified the problems park managers encountered. "The slides cannot be used without being in a bathing suit. Rough usage of slides is strictly prohibited in any manner

whatsoever; they are to be used by sliding from the top downward. To get to the top, there is but one way, by means of the steps."<sup>127</sup>

Despite the rules and relative safety of the lake, there was at least one drowning and near drownings. On June 17, 1919, a new resident to town, Joseph Block, died while swimming in the lake the same night that there was also a near drowning.<sup>128 129 130</sup> The tragedy underscored the point that even with lifeguards, any large open body of water has inherent risks. There were no community pools, and in the heat of summer, Sheldon Lake served as the safest, lifeguard patrolled place for people to cool off.

The lake attracted bathers during the summer and skaters in the winter. In the winter a snow removal machine was used to clear the ice. It was similar in design to those in use in Denver. The Fort Collins streetcar carried a sign each day on its end panel reading either "ice unsafe today" or "ice safe today."



Figure 24. Streetcar with Sign.

In the winter, the lake froze over and was used for "much skating and frolicking." City merchants provided prizes for an ice carnival each year. The winter of 1925-26 was a mild one so skating was curtailed, but "the city prepared for the crowds, however, by building a house where skaters could come in out of the wind for a few minutes of rest."<sup>131</sup> This structure on the northeast bank of the lake was planned as a summer house as well, and loose panels could be removed quickly by one person. It cost \$450 to build and boasted a concrete floor and built-in seats. Park personnel planted vines and shrubs around the gazebo-type structure from which one had a beautiful view of the lake. Today, in 1996, only the concrete steps down into the lake remain on the northeast corner of the lake.



Figure 25. Concrete Steps, Remnants of the Skating House in City Park, April, 1996.

A 20 foot square wooden band stand was erected early in 1919 out in the center of Sheldon Lake. It was rather a simple wooden platform with

corner posts sticking up out of the water.<sup>132</sup> This construction was in keeping with the frugal construction practices of post World War I.

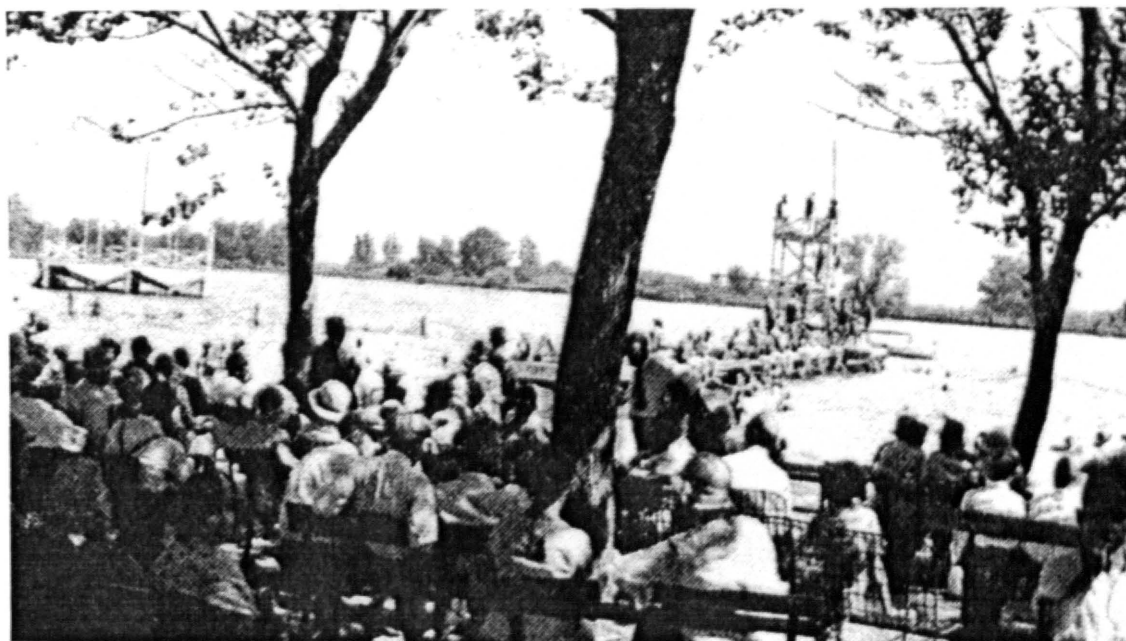


Figure 26. The Bathing Beach at City Park With Bandstand in the Lake.

Small white electric lights were placed on the piers, along the shore near the bath house, and around the bandstand out in Sheldon Lake. This gave a resort-like atmosphere which was very festive and lively at night. After 1920, the band concerts in Lincoln Park were moved to City Park.<sup>133</sup> The Parks Department constructed a new roadway around the east side of the lake where cars could park during the band concerts. It also made a lovely drive. The band would float over to the bandstand bobbing along in the dark in a launch and assemble on the lake bandstand to play music. The spectators would drive in their cars over the big alfalfa field to the east and down to the waterfront, backing up the hill like a drive-in movie theater. Occasionally the lights would go out on the bandstand or the musicians' music would blow into the lake.<sup>134</sup> The beach

was sandy and there were several wire mesh benches that people could sit on to listen to the band.

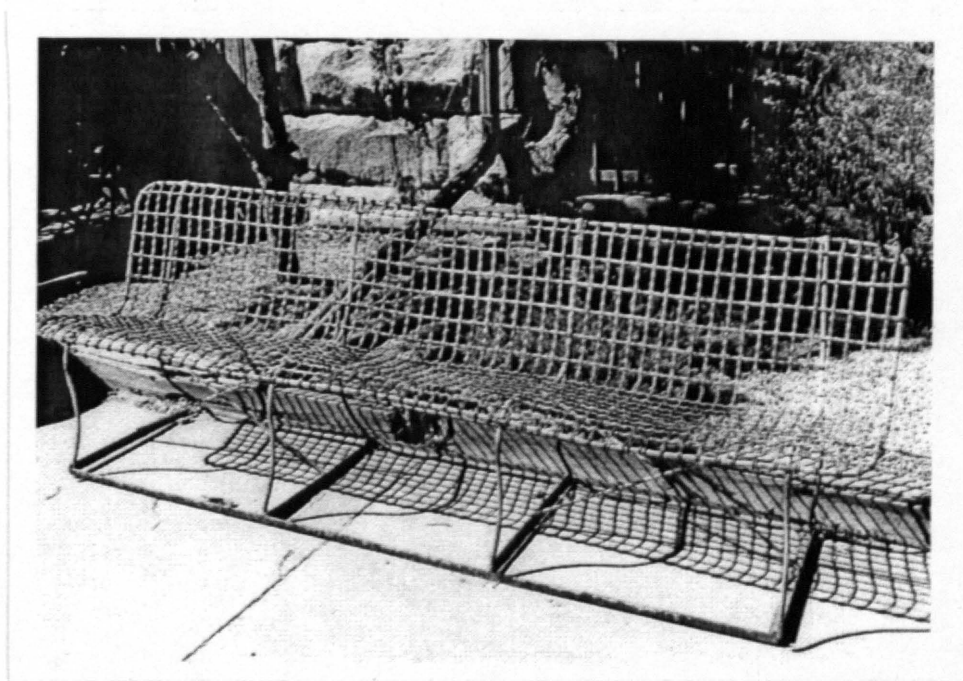


Figure 27. Wire Mesh Benches, Now in Fort Collins Museum's Courtyard, April 1996.

The band leader was Mr. H. G. (Horace Greeley) Petty.<sup>135</sup> The city bore the band members' expense of transportation by streetcar to and from City Park.

The band concerts proved to be a popular attraction. Many spectators would walk or ride the streetcar as far up West Mountain Avenue as it went. The newspaper exhorted the city to extend the line and this became the impetus for a streetcar loop into City Park. After the city bought the streetcar system in 1919, the line was constructed into the park later that year and looped back out through the baseball parking lot in 1922. The concert music could be heard in homes south of West Mulberry across from the lake and bathers swam around the lake as they listened to the music from the bandstand constructed 100 feet from shore. The

structure was surrounded with wire netting for the safety of the band members. The first concert in June 1919 on the new bandstand was filled with patriotic music from Hail to Old Glory to the Star Spangled Banner.

136 137 138



Figure 28. Fort Collins Band with Band Leader H. G. Petty (front row with drum.) From the Fort Collins Public Library.

The concerts attracted rural people as well as local people and some even hoped the music would attract tourists. There was interest in encouraging Band Director H. G. Petty to engage a soloist.<sup>139</sup> The small town feeling of family gatherings at band concerts playing patriotic music in City Park was one of the events of yesterday that made Fort Collins a charming community.

By 1925, the old piers in the lake had deteriorated, so they were torn down and removed. These early wooden structures were most likely

built of inexpensive untreated woods, so they rotted rapidly, thereby requiring replacement. A new pier and diving tower were constructed by using a pile driver operated from the ice to drive heavy piles deep into the lake bottom. The pier was painted with two coats of heavy marine paint and the exposed piles were creosoted. "This method of construction was also employed in a new bandstand which was made much larger than the original stand and placed farther out into the lake to improve the acoustic condition." In addition, a line of piles strung with cable were laid out in the water to mark the allowed bathing area and this made the beach very popular.<sup>140</sup> Eventually, the lake bandstand was torn down. Later undated maps show a bandstand on the north shore and then one located up the hill to the northeast. See Figure 29 on next page.

A children's pier at the beach had been steadily deteriorating, and its destruction was completed in 1931 by the winter ice. A new design was developed using floating airtight pontoons. It was 35 feet by 5 feet and could be hauled out of the water in winter and stored.<sup>141</sup>

Another major historic facility associated with the lake was a swimming pool with wading pool built in 1949 with a \$25,000 donation from the Elks Club in Fort Collins. The pool was built out into Sheldon Lake. The lake was lowered so that dikes could be constructed of impervious clay lined with dredgings from the lake. After letting the dikes settle for a year, the floor and sides of the pool were formed with reinforced four inch finished concrete that was then painted. There were two diving boards.<sup>142 143</sup>

These lake recreation activities, swimming, skating and summer band concerts, served to make the park the most popular community gathering

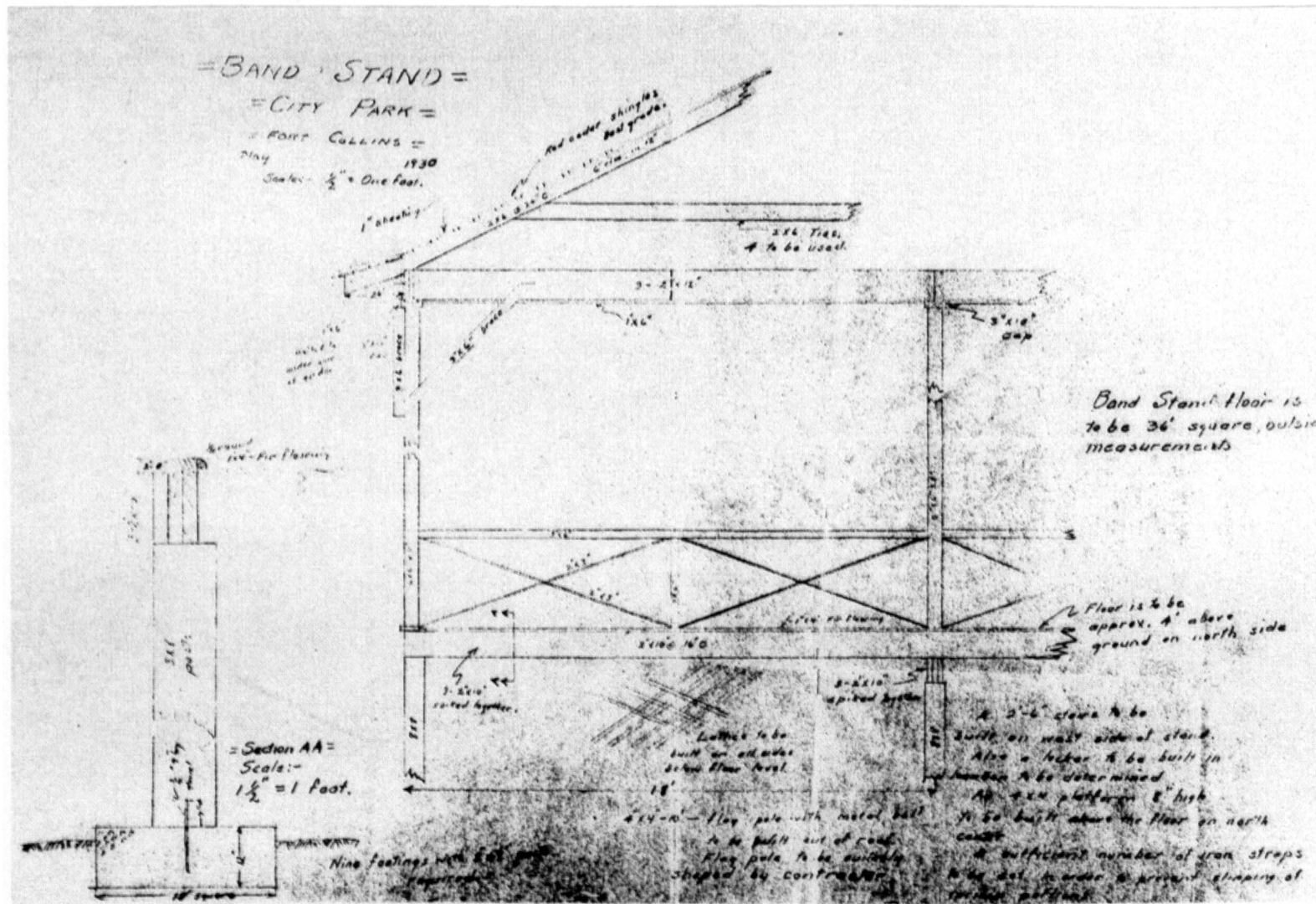


Figure 29. Band Stand, City Park Fort Collins, May 1930. From the Fort Collins City Clerk's Office.

place. Memories of these events from an era that was more simple and slow still draw people back today for family reunions in the park.

The English design of the park even lends itself to reenactments of jousting by knights-in-armor each year with the Society of Creative Anachronism.

## Chapter 5

### PARK PAVILION

A major gathering point in the park for the past 75 years has been the park pavilion. The initial structure was a two-story concrete bathhouse which became known as the pavilion or recreation building. It was built by Robert Lampton between April and July 1921. Subsequently, Lampton entered into a leasing contract with the city for the private concession rights to sell light refreshments, and rent bathing suits and boats. In addition, he was allowed to run a filling station for the sale of gasoline and oil.<sup>144</sup> He kept these concession rights from 1921 through 1935.

The second story of the 40 foot by 64 foot building housed a dancing pavilion, while the downstairs contained dressing rooms and shower baths with 150 modern, double-deck, steel lockers for clothing. The baths and lockers were located in the rear of the building.

Lampton was also required to maintain a 28 foot pressed steel launch for passengers on the lake at ten cents a trip. Estimates were that the new building would cost \$5,000 but it overran its budget by \$1,389.76.<sup>145</sup>

Workers enlarged the west end of the pavilion in 1925 to give the building a uniform appearance. The cost, \$2,509.52, was provided through a loan to Lampton who contracted the addition.

The park pavilion building was enlarged again in April 1926, at a proposed cost of \$3,000. Lampton received the contract to build a "twelve

foot addition to the west end and twenty feet on the south side" of the pavilion. The contract included extending his rights as the concessionaire for five years until 1933.



Figure 30. Boating - Swimming - Dancing Pavilion - City Park.

The many additions to the building explain why it became such a composite structure with no discernible style. Also, the architectural style of buildings in the 1920s was utilitarian and sparse. Park funds were limited because Fort Collins was a working class agricultural town that did not have access to the great mining fortunes or industry located in Denver and other large cities. Therefore, the grand Neoclassical or Beaux Arts public structures that were constructed in parks in the larger cities were not to be found in Fort Collins.

Hundreds of people gathered at the pavilion to dance or to watch the dancing from a new balcony, and the "extension had been made essentially

for that group, but also it was made to facilitate the handling of a dance crowd when the dance floor must be swept and for other like occasions."

146 147

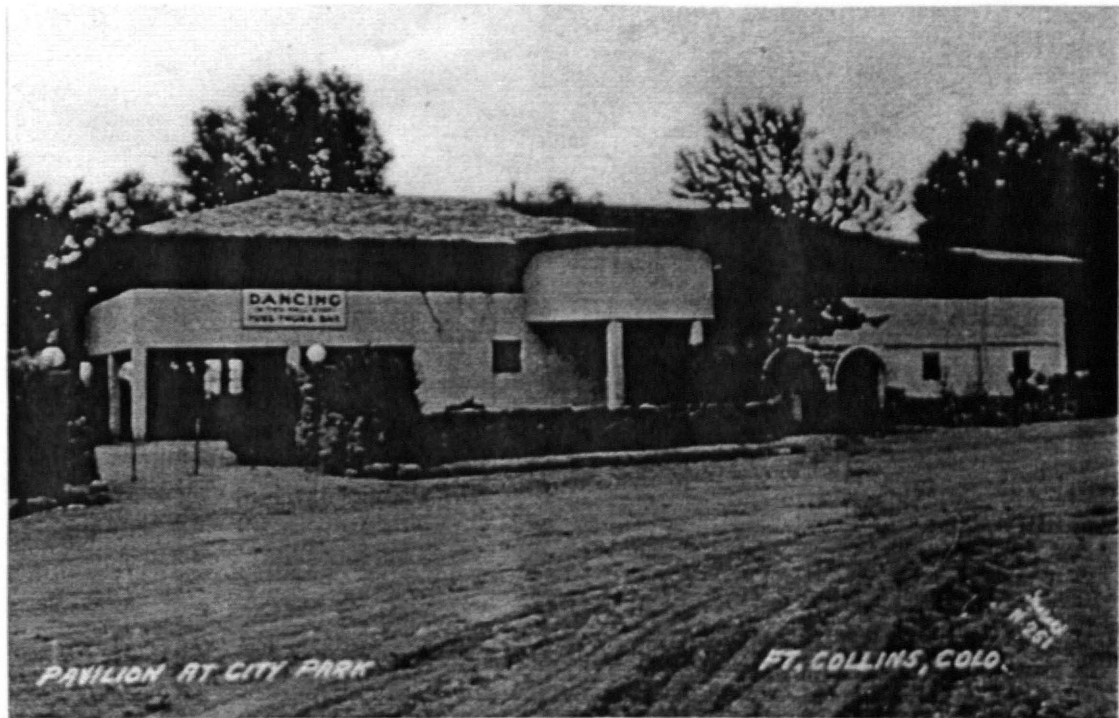


Figure 31. Pavilion at City Park.

More improvements in 1927 were proposed to the dance hall at the pavilion. The orchestra stand was enlarged and placed on the outside of the building in a bowl shape construction (18 feet by 10 feet), the ladies rest room and checking stand were enlarged and fitted with a toilet and lavatory, the rest room and checking stand was moved off the present floor space and put outside of the building but adjacent thereto, and the rest room was equipped with chairs, dressing table and a rug. The stairway was enlarged from four feet to 7  $\frac{1}{2}$  feet wide. The hard-wood benches around the dance hall were replaced with two hundred and forty feet of

comfortable seats for the patrons, and a fire-escape was added to the building on the west side.

When Bob Lampton finally folded his concessionaire rights in 1935 and sold all his personal property in the park to the city, the equipment he sold told the story of what had transpired in the park up to that time: soda fountain equipment, popcorn and sandwich machines, a cash register, orange squeezer, dance ticket machine, motor boat, 86 bathing suits, Kingsbury piano, ice box, stools, chairs, dressing table, oars, skate sharpener, clothes wringers, floor show case, Panatrope, 5 row boats, sideboard, steam table, ranges, sink, water heaters, exhaust fans, banquet tables, fountain chairs, hat racks, washing machine, candy case, ironing board, 40 Yale keys, 35 mattress covers, the list was endless. These items describe bathing, skating, boating, eating, dancing and camping. An era of recreational activities was passing into history.<sup>148</sup>

Wynford Chilton became the new concessionaire in 1936. His tenure lasted until 1940. The closing of his concession is linked to the end of the Auto Camp and Court, and is discussed in more depth in Chapter 6.

The next pavilion concessionaire was J. W. Norcross of Greeley. He began to lease the building in March 1943.<sup>149</sup> The Community House, Trailer Camp, and Dining Hall west of the ditch in City Park were split off and rented with the concession rights to William C. Tipton. He sold refreshments at the picnic grounds and around the softball park.<sup>150</sup>

By 1944, Norcross had converted the old second floor dance hall in the pavilion into the Lakeside Roller Rink, an affiliate of Skateland in Denver and the Rainbow Roller Rink in Cheyenne. All three rinks were part of Warnoco Amusements managed by Norcross in Greeley, Colorado.<sup>151</sup>

Harold Asmus managed the skating and stand concessions for Norcross. A wounded veteran of World War II, Asmus returned to Colorado and worked at the roller rink for about two and a half years in the mid 1940s. He had formerly been a competitive speed skater. He described his job as follows:

We skated Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. On Fridays, we would come at 6 and I would give an hour lesson if they purchased a 35 cent ticket to skate the rest of the night. We had a good crowd.<sup>152</sup>

Dances were held in the pavilion in the summer months; and then beginning in September when school started, the hall was used for roller skating throughout the school year. In the summer months, Asmus would work in the concession stand, selling pop, or circulating in the crowd as a bouncer intending to allay fights. Asmus, who was later to own a sign painting shop for decades, painted the Lakeside Roller Rink sign in front of the roller rink.



Figure 32. 1945 Sign at the City Park Pavilion. From Harold Asmus.

Asmus has a very good memory of those early days:

I had two big brutes to back up what I said, but people didn't fight much in those days, they came to dance. It was called the Warnoco Ballroom and Norcross's daughter, Betty Jo, played

the organ. They would open the windows for ventilation because they didn't have air conditioning in those days, and the breeze would drift in through the dance floor, and for two or three blocks away people would just sit on their porch and listen to the music. It was just a real good home feeling. It isn't like that now.<sup>153</sup>

Not much of a record exists of the appearance of the park at this time, but he describes it and the operations of the roller rink vividly:

The entrance at Oak, there used to be two big pillars with big lights on them, great big bulbs, three of them, one on top and one on each side, up on stone gate pillars. It was a dirt road then, they didn't pave that until after we closed the skating rink. We were out in the boondocks. We would open at 7 [p.m.] and close at 10:25 [p.m.] in the evening. The galloping goose would come by at 10:30 [p.m.] where the little railroad thing is now, and wait till all the kids got on so they had a way home. Then I'd lock up and go home.<sup>154</sup>

There was a streetcar-waiting station located near the corner of South Bryan Street and City Park Drive. It was removed after the streetcar ceased operation in 1951. Today it is the site of the little children's train in the park.



Figure 33. The Streetcar and Waiting Station in City Park.

The roller rink closed in 1948 because of the lack of business. Afterwards, the city considered tearing the pavilion down but a request for a youth recreation center thankfully saved the building. Warnoco Amusements presented the last six months of the lease to Club Tico, a youth organization from Fort Collins High School. The name probably came from the popular dance song, "Tico, Tico."<sup>155</sup> Volunteers set up the recreation center in the pavilion with two pool tables and a jukebox for dancing. The interior of the building was repainted by students and volunteers. Teachers chaperoned the dances. The students rallied and raised \$1,200 to repair and repaint the facility for this endeavor. The old building had a leaky roof, and was in need of maintenance as described thus:

It was kind of fun, the kids would skate around with gallon buckets catching the drips. There were still the dinky one room cabins where the motor court had been, but they were rented for long term use now.<sup>156</sup>

Eventually the city became more involved in maintenance and routinely repainted the interior.<sup>157</sup> It was a time of togetherness and wholesome activity for the youth of the community, and they were grateful for the allotted space.

The one single event that spelled a decline for Club Tico was the opening of a second high school, Poudre High, in 1964.<sup>158</sup> The high school rivalry, including some racial tensions, resulted in incidents at the social functions where some students were seriously hurt. "Pot" smoking in the 1960s was also a problem and the park was an isolated area. Parent support declined because of these happenings. Eventually, the recreation center was closed because of too many problems and a lack of volunteer supervision.<sup>159</sup>

Since that time, the building has been used for storage, and a number of events including square dancing and senior citizen gatherings.

## Chapter 6

### AUTO TOURING AND CAMPING

By the second decade of the 20th century, the automobile was gaining popularity as its reliability improved and it became more affordable. The year 1914 marked the first time in the United States that the production of motor vehicles exceeded the production of wagons and carriages. Gulf Oil introduced the free road maps at their gas stations in 1913 so travelers could more easily take to the road. Long distance auto touring was beginning.

The first rural concrete road was poured in 1908 in Wayne County, Michigan, and in 1915 the Lincoln Highway became the first coast-to-coast hard surfaced highway. It passed through Cheyenne and Laramie Wyoming, thus bringing it relatively close to Fort Collins.<sup>160</sup> After the ordeal of World War I ended, America was ready to satisfy a national wanderlust with this new-fangled contraption, the automobile. Tourist camps, courts and cottages sprang up all over the country providing a place for travelers to stay for the night. "According to the *Architectural Record*, tourist cottage construction was the only growing division of the building industry during the 1930s."<sup>161</sup>

Fort Collins became involved with automobile touring in 1919 when the old tree nursery along West Oak Street was converted into a Free Municipal Camp Ground in City Park. Ever since the park had been purchased in 1907, the Chamber of Commerce had publicized the benefits of

stopping in Fort Collins on the way to visit the scenic Poudre Canyon. Later, cabins were built as travelers were willing to pay more for the added convenience. A license was required each year in order to run the Automobile Tourist Camp.

The initial surveying and planning of the park included 26 lots or campsites for tents. They were laid out averaging 30 by 60 feet and staked out with 4 by 4 inch posts painted white. The following description is given of the camp-sites:

Back of the first tier of ten lots, an entrance road 25 feet wide was provided, running parallel with Oak Street, entrance being made from the present road which runs south through the park from the Bryan Street entrance. A two inch water service line was laid through this road on the south side, provided with fire risers and faucets, and a new sanitary toilet established at the east end.<sup>162</sup>

The Lions Club assisted by building seven new fireplaces for the camp sites. The Parks Department provided free wood for the fireplaces and set out trash receptacles. The tourists were expected to burn their trash paper, to keep the area clean, and not damage the trees. They were also allowed to use all park facilities. Lights were turned off at a time set by the Commissioner of Works.

In 1921 the use of the campground was free for the first two weeks, and thereafter users were charged one dollar per week or any part of a week for the next two weeks. After that time the fee was increased to two dollars per week or part thereof.<sup>163</sup> Campground amenities included a shady sanded lot where a tent could be pitched, hot-and-cold shower baths, washrooms, toilets, laundry, community kitchen, outdoor fireplaces, horseshoe and tennis courts, automobile washracks and day and night police protection.<sup>164</sup>

On March 24, 1923, the city contracted with Robert W. Lampton, Park Concessionaire, to build a stucco-faced community house on a concrete foundation at 1541 West Oak, the west end of the municipal campground. The architect was L. L. Jones. The agreement stipulated that the city was to repay the total cost, \$12,318.18, in five yearly installments and Lampton was to pay \$18 per month for the concession rights to sell groceries and supplies to campers during the tourist season from May through October 1 of each year. The first floor of the building was for the use of the tourists, and Lampton was to reside on the second floor.

A description of the community house follows:

The community house contains a kitchen with a number of gas plates and a laundry where an electric washer is available. There is room to rest and write letters and a grocery store. The camp itself has city water and lights, modern toilets for men and women, concrete fire places... There are also, tables, benches, a wash-rack for automobiles and other necessary conveniences.<sup>165</sup>

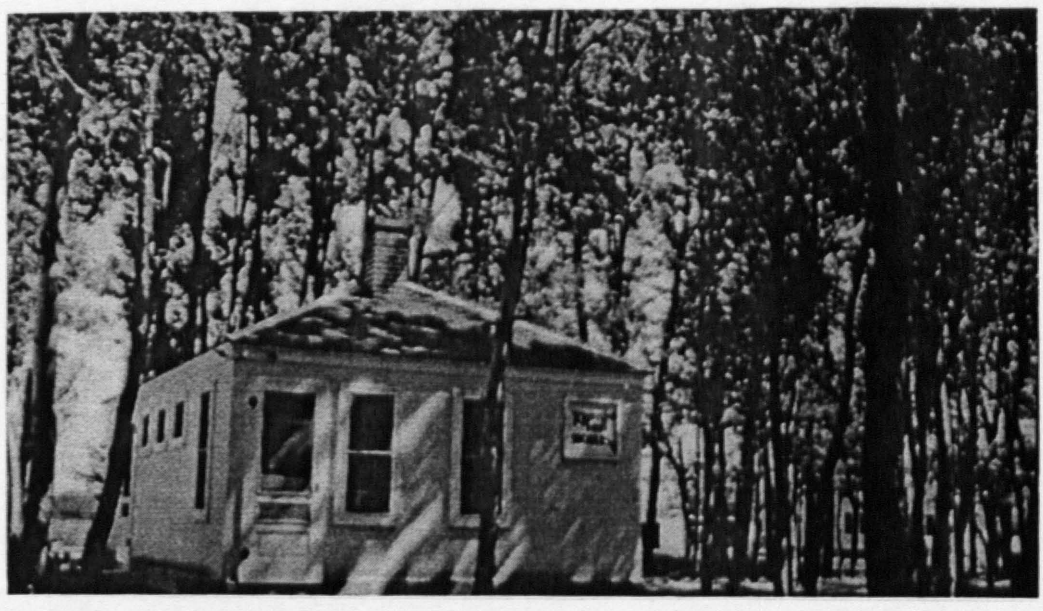
Altogether, the first floor contained an assembly room, dining room, kitchen, laundry, gasoline filling station and small line of groceries.<sup>166</sup> An associated building, a combined toilet and tool house at the Municipal Camp Grounds, was built by Ralph T. Bonham in 1928 for \$1,445.<sup>167</sup>

Municipal campgrounds in Fort Collins and elsewhere in Colorado had been provided at cost or only a nominal fee until 1924. At the annual session of the Municipal League of the State of Colorado in that year, the representatives of cities and towns with municipal campgrounds discussed the matter and agreed that a fee of fifty cents per car per night was a justifiable charge and Fort Collins began to impose that fee at its City Park campground.<sup>168</sup> Tourists did not seem to mind for they received many services and conveniences for their money. Some also felt that a fee would discourage the use of the area by those who were

considered undesirable. The city did not intend to make a profit from the campground and spent more money than it received. In 1924, the first year of charges, revenues totaled \$2,264.85 and in 1925, \$1,786.30.<sup>169</sup>



**Figure 34. Community House and Toilet/Tool House. From the Ed Hilgenberg Collection.**



**Figure 35. Toilet/Tool House. From the Ed Hilgenberg Collection.**

A shower bath house was built in the summer of 1925 by the Lindenmeier Brothers (Jefferson, Robert and George), a partnership. The cost agreed upon with the city was \$1,610.<sup>170</sup> It contained a heating plant, shower rooms for men and women, and an office for camp attendants who were on duty twenty-four hours a day. This substantial structure, which ultimately cost \$2,500, was a frame building finished with cement stucco outside and cement plaster inside.<sup>171</sup>

The year 1927 was again a time of intense building in City Park. In February, R. W. Lampton petitioned City Council to allow him to build and furnish the first 16 cabins to be located on the camp grounds in Prospect Park at an anticipated cost of no more than \$5,000. Increased demand for lodging necessitated these structures. All over the country, tourist camps were becoming cabin camps, and some even motor courts, and later motels (a term penned in the late 1940s) for those who graduated from open tents and "roughing it." The cabin camp was a step above tenting, but still fairly economical.<sup>172</sup>

Even with the 16 new cabins that had been built that year, by September Fort Collins already was considering construction of 16 more cabins and a community building (kitchen and a shower-bath house/toilet).<sup>173</sup> The cabins were architecturally simple, vernacular, wood frame cottages that were free-standing and typical of the 1920s construction industry. They were arranged in a line and they possessed a certain homeyness.

The tourist cottages were very popular and almost always filled during the summer months. A register was kept, and in July there were entries from fourteen other states: Montana, California, Florida, Ohio, Iowa, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Oregon, New York, Wyoming, Washington, Pennsylvania, Indiana, and Wisconsin.<sup>174</sup>



Plans for the second sixteen cabin units were completed and Lampton built the units early in 1928. The original plan called for three, two-unit cabins, each to be 21 feet by 14 feet 4 inches, and also ten single-unit cabins, 14 feet 4 inches by 10 feet 6 inches. A month later, the Council decided there should be eight two-unit cabins instead, making the sixteen total. The cabin roofs formed an unbroken line with roofed spaces in between where cars could be parked. They were sided with painted, 4 inch, drop siding, and had shingled hip roofs, concrete foundations, and flooring lumber inside. Furnishings consisted of beds, springs, mattresses, chairs, small mirror, and a table on hinges. Each cabin was wired for electric lights.<sup>175</sup> A typical cabin in 1934, as described by a writer for *Fortune*, provided:

... a small, clean room, perhaps ten by twelve. Typically, its furniture is a double bed--a sign may have told you it is a Simmons, with Beautyrest mattress--a table, two kitchen chairs, a small mirror, a row of hooks. In one corner a washbasin with cold running water; in another, the half-opened door to a toilet. There is a bit of chintz curtaining over the screened windows, through which a breeze is blowing.<sup>176</sup>

This could have been the description of the City Park Auto Camp, except for the communal toilet facilities.

The construction of the sixteen additional camp cottages in City Park required grading Bryan Street in preparation for the construction of a \$600 bridge.<sup>177</sup> This bridge across the Larimer County Canal #2 was located at the intersection of South Bryan Avenue and West Oak Street.<sup>178</sup> The Bryan Avenue Bridge had a superstructure of riveted steel through girders and a solid stone retaining substructure. The top of the steel parapet walls were curved. White painted concrete decorative piers capped each end of the one-lane bridge. Its span length was 25 feet, its overall length was 27 feet and its roadway width was 18 feet.<sup>179</sup>



Figure 37. Oak Street Bridge Over the Larimer #2 Canal (North Side), Early 1980s. From the City of Fort Collins Engineering Department.

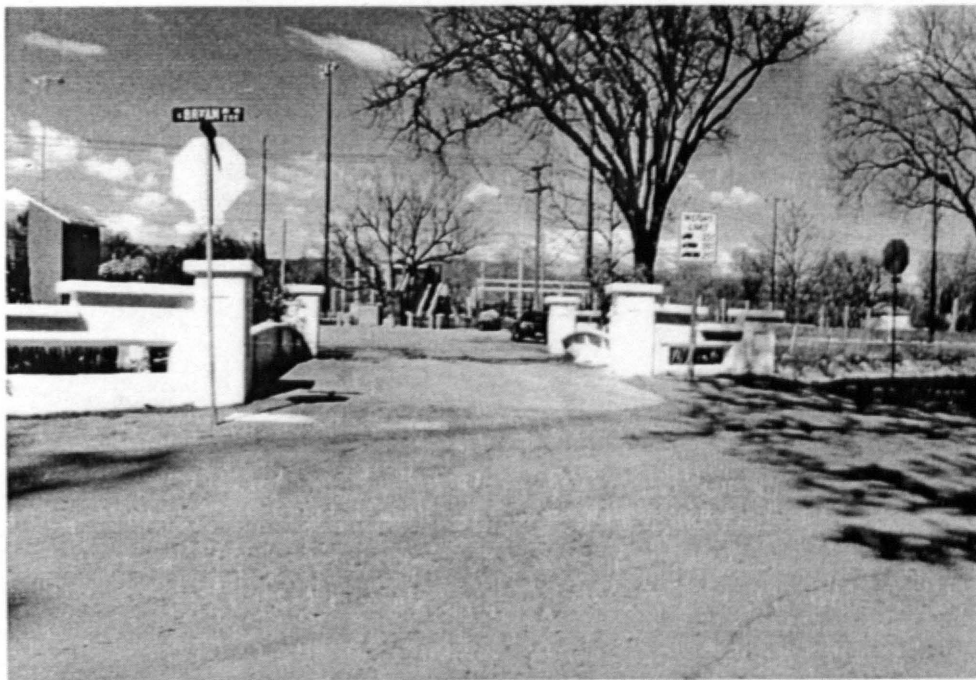


Figure 38. Oak Street Bridge Over the Larimer #2 Canal (East Side), Early 1980s. From the City of Fort Collins Engineering Department.

This unique bridge over the canal was the entrance to the auto camp. In recent years it was considered too narrow and difficult for cars, bicycles and pedestrians to navigate simultaneously, a point that was especially noted by people who played in the baseball leagues. Consequently, in 1988, the bridge was demolished and a modern wider bridge of concrete parapet walls with steel tubular railing and moss rock facia was installed in its place.



Figure 39. New Oak Street Bridge Over the Larimer #2 Canal, Late 1980s. From the City of Fort Collins Engineering Department.

The new community house main building, 26 feet by 50 feet, together with shower/bath house and toilet proposed the year before, were also built by Lampton in the summer of 1928 in Prospect Park. The cost was \$4,921.24 paid for by a loan from the City of Fort Collins with arrangements for Lampton to pay it back through 1936. It too was to be clad with 4 inch drop siding, a shingle roof, concrete foundation and painted. Lampton was the official caretaker of the Municipal Campgrounds,

and expectations were that rents from the cabins along with concessionaire rights would garner enough return to pay off the loans and provide a satisfactory livelihood. All these new structures were to be located with the cabins in Prospect Park, west of the Larimer Canal #2.<sup>161</sup>

When the tourist season began in May 1928, the Tourist Camp was at its height of popularity. That summer, Bob Lampton petitioned the city to let him build ten more cabin units at a maximum cost of \$3,500. He stated in a letter to Council that business during the month of June was double that of the previous year. He had to turn away campers even with thirty-two cabins available. The city permitted him to erect five more two-unit cabins with open garages and charge \$1.25 a day for their use. The first cabin north of the shower baths and toilets was to be used as a laundry.<sup>162</sup>

162 163 164 165

Fort Collins was riding on the wave of cottage camp popularity that was sweeping the country on the heels of affordable auto touring. "The day appears to be fast passing when the automobile tourist, pulling in at a tourist camp at night, spends a couple of hours setting up a tent, building a campfire and doing a hundred and one other tasks that have formerly made vacations spell hard work instead of recreation."<sup>166</sup> The tent section was still located in City Park to the east of the community house and the new cottage section was west of the ditch and South Bryan Street. Predictions were that with a decrease in popularity of the tent section, it would be eventually eliminated.

Not all citizens were happy, however, and the park tourist camp came under fire. A petition was circulated around the city to close the camp. E. W. Hoskins of Fort Collins retorted by writing a letter to the City Council imploring them to maintain the Municipal Camp for the tourist

trade because it increased the business trade in the city. He wrote as someone who gratefully used tourist camps on his own travels. He intimated that the issue was political because one of the petition signers was connected with an auto camp near Fort Collins and did not like the competition. Other petition signers were hotel owners, but Hoskins noted that they were probably not going to receive business from outdoor campers anyway.<sup>16</sup> The actual petition claimed that the city tourist camp was detrimental to business and residential interests in the city.<sup>16</sup> It evidently did not carry much weight because business went on as usual. The campground attendance in 1928 numbered 5,479 using the cabins, and 3,493 using the camp grounds for a total of 8,972 users.<sup>16</sup>

After all the construction of 1927 through 1928, an inventory for insurance purposes at the Municipal Campground was furnished by the Al. G. Scott Agency ("We insure everything but your disposition"): 6 cabins known as Group "A", Bath House known as "B", 15 cabins known as Group "C", 11 cabins known as Group "D", Community Kitchen "E", 5 cabins known as Group "F", 5 cabins known as Group "G", and fire fighting equipment. The facilities were insured for a value of \$19,040.<sup>16</sup>

An incident related to park camping user fees gives an insight into one type of steady customer of the campground. Rates for a camp site at the tent campground were 50 cents a day but even that was too much for some camp users. C. M. Todd, Superintendent of Schools in Maple Hill, Iowa, wrote to Professor George T. Avery that he was in the habit of camping in the campground while attending summer school at the college, and he and his wife, who accompanied him, would appreciate it if a special rate for college students were negotiated with the Park Commissioner. He had high praise for the accommodations, but thought it would "boost the

college" to have special dispensation for students staying full time in the summer session.<sup>191</sup> No record could be found of any follow-up of this request.

Cabin rates by 1930 were \$1.25 a day, \$6 for six consecutive days and \$1 a day thereafter.<sup>192</sup> For that year, 2,554 guests occupied the cabins, and receipts were \$3,081.75. Bills for the Camp Cottages amounted to \$329.55 including sheet purchase, printing, laundry service, sign rental, and Public Service Company bills. The net receipts, \$2,752.20, were divided evenly between the city and R. W. Lampton, concessionaire.<sup>193</sup> However, the next year, as the Depression took hold of the country, camp visitation began to fall off.

The Municipal Cottage Camp entry at 1600 West Oak, appeared for the first time in the 1931 City Directory.<sup>194</sup> Late that year and on into the following year, the camp cottages were repainted completely. The cabin roofs were painted green which was a popular practice at this time.<sup>195</sup> <sup>196</sup> Painting the roofs extended the life of the roof shingles.

Cabin rates were reduced in 1932 to \$1 per day or \$6 for 7 days with 75 cents per day beyond 7 days.<sup>197</sup> Lower rates were not offset by higher use and camp receipts declined. Receipts totaled \$1,299.50 and disbursements came to \$202.60, for a profit of \$1,096.90, again split by the city and R. W. Lampton.<sup>198</sup> City Park had become very popular for the State Picnic, farmer's picnics, bathing beach, and night baseball games. Activity at the campground was noticeably quiet, reflecting both the worsening economic situation throughout the country, as well as the declining condition of the cabins. City documents stated "maintenance and running expense far exceed the revenue received and the spread between overhead and revenue is becoming wider every year."<sup>199</sup>

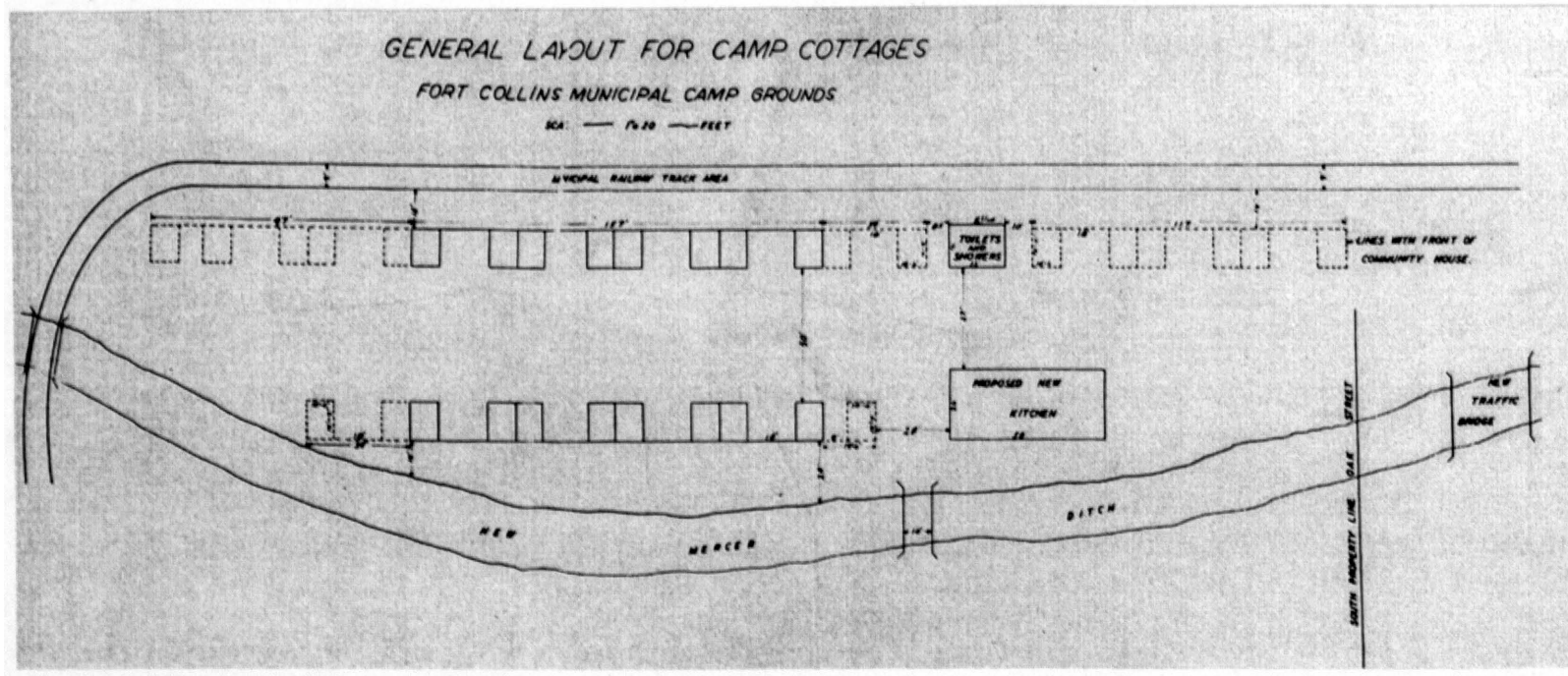


Figure 40. General Layout for Camp Cottages, Fort Collins Municipal Camp Grounds. From the Fort Collins City Clerk's Office.

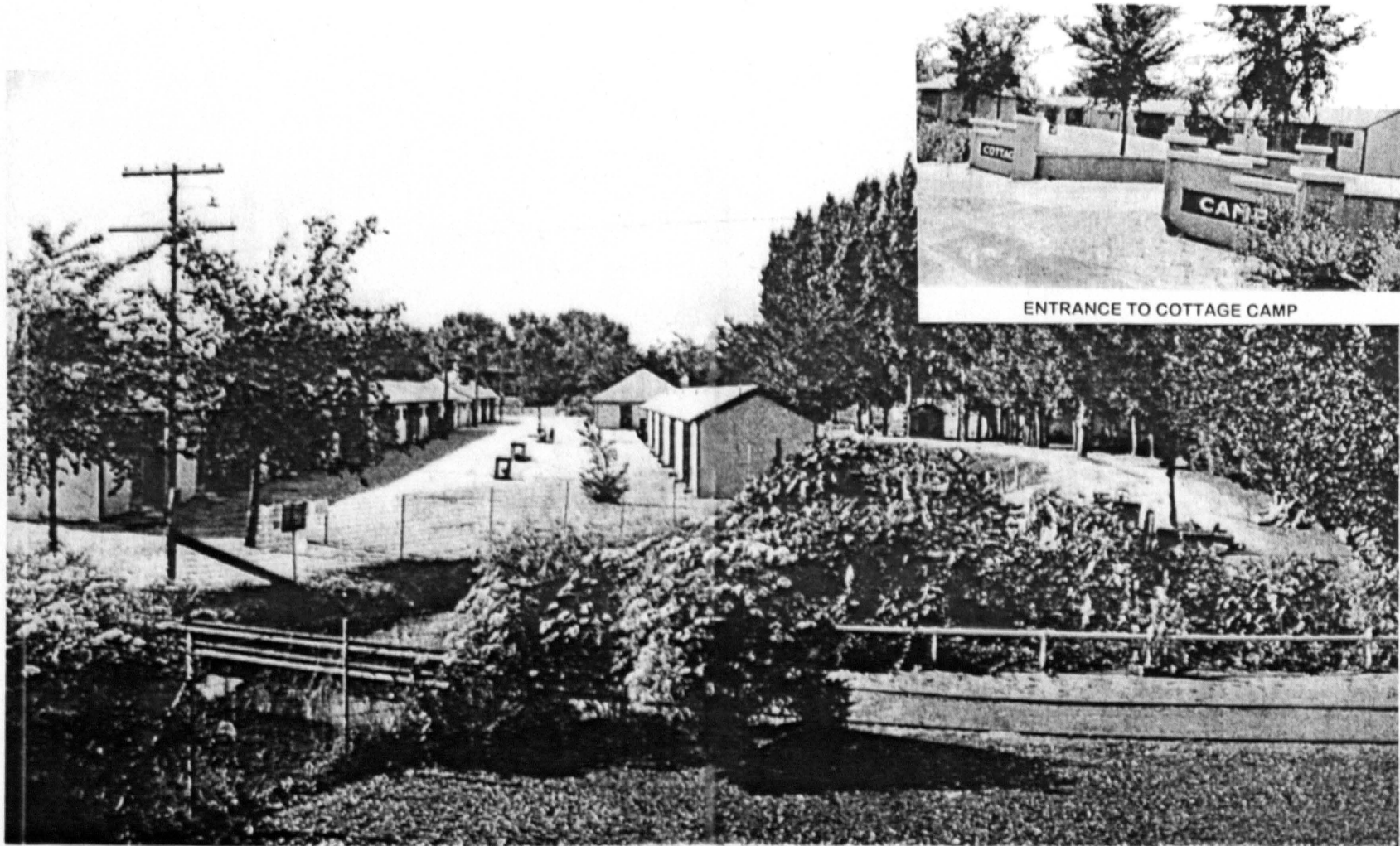


Figure 41. Fort Collins Municipal camp - CITY PARK. From the Colorado Historical Society.

The declining cash receipts of the previous year indicated the troubles that Lampton and the city were experiencing in City Park. Bills were not being paid, and in 1933 the Mawson-Peterson Lumber Co. sued the city to recover \$1,554.35. City Council passed a Resolution to settle the suit for \$1,300, to terminate all previous leasing contracts and agreements with R. W. Lampton because of a dispute over terms and conditions, and to enter into a new comprehensive contract with him from May, 1933 to February, 1936.<sup>200</sup> This contract was terminated at the end of the 1935 season when Lampton relinquished his concessionaire rights and sold all his personal property in the park to the city. It can be deduced that declining revenues and disagreements with the city finally convinced him to sever the relationship. He was the concessionaire in City Park from 1921 to 1935 when he surrendered his contract with the city.<sup>201</sup>

Wynford Chilton became the new concessionaire. At City and Prospect Parks, he took over the pavilion, community houses, camp cottages and camp grounds. This agreement was to run from March 1, 1936 to February 1, 1940 with a one year option for further extension of the lease. The same general rules of the concession continued as before. Chilton also rented the community house in City Park at 1541 West Oak Street for his own use.  
202

The City Council continued Chilton's lease until it expired in February, 1940. In April, he sub-leased the softball field and the softball stand located in Cabin No. 1 of the Municipal Cabin Camp for \$50 to Harold McClinock.<sup>203</sup> In June, July and August, Chilton defaulted on paying the rent on his lease of the concessions. The city extended the payment period to December 15 in return for a chattel mortgage on certain property used in connection with the operation of the concessions.<sup>204</sup> He

had petitioned the City Council to continue his lease through 1944, but "for a valuable consideration in hand paid by the city" he relinquished his lease of the Municipal Camp and City Park concessions.<sup>205</sup>

Equipment surrendered to the city and located in the camp cottages, pavilion, and community house included a gas range, a radio, two 9 foot by 12 foot rugs, washing machine, 3 metal beds, 66 swimming suits, 36 rubber swimming caps, an electric pop cooler, an electric corn popper, 42 pillows, 48 bed sheets, 35 blankets, 30 small awnings, 1 large awning, 5 folding cots, 45 brooms, 5 mops, 2 mop pails, 2 dust mops, 8 bottles of fountain syrup, 70 electric light bulbs, 2 wash boards, 1 ironing board, 8 Coco Cola kegs, 20 one-gallon glass jugs, 50 soda glasses, 5 soda trays, and 1 silverware tray. These items were silent testament to the many activities that thousands of people had enjoyed in Fort Collins since the park's inception in 1907.<sup>206</sup> With the release words on a piece of paper, two decades of City Park history were dissolved.

The cabins were used for a time as low income rental, but eventually all but one was removed. No records could be found of when most of them were removed.

Two of the cabins were moved in 1942 up the Cache la Poudre River canyon to the 1914 Fort Collins Water Treatment Plant. There, they were joined together around a constructed middle section for a residence. The work was done that summer by Herb Alexander who directed the water works plant operation for 38 years until his retirement in 1978. He used the doors, windows and plumbing from the structure, but there was no bathtub since the City Park Auto Camp patrons had used the community house shower facilities. Everything was essentially frozen during World War II and a bath tub could not be purchased. Warren Riddell, Commissioner of Works

for the city, had a plumbing business, and he sold Mr. Alexander a bath tub as a "dipping vat." The City Park auto court shower house was also moved up and used as a garage.<sup>207</sup>

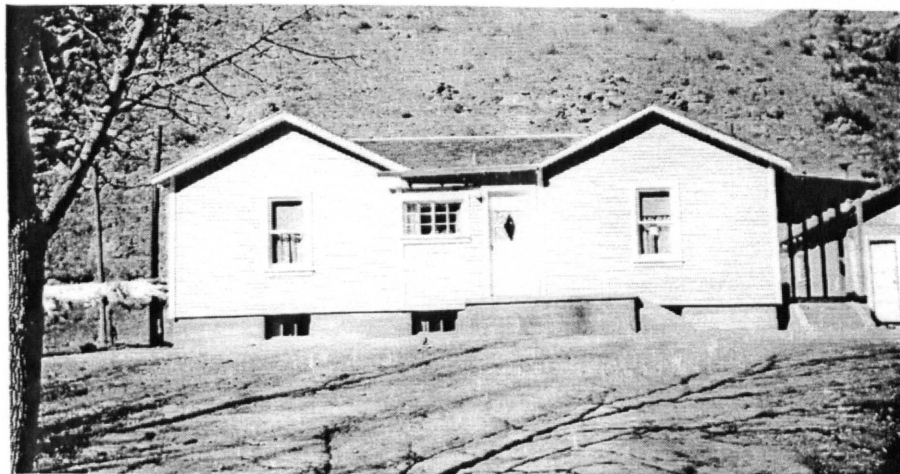


Figure 42. City Park Cabins After They Were Moved Up to the Waterworks on the Poudre River, 1942. From Herb Alexander.

One cabin still remains in the park. It is believed to have been the "proposed new kitchen" from the General Layout for Camp Cottages, seen in Figure 40. In 1952, it was given to the Girl Scouts for an office and it became known as the Girl Scout House.<sup>208</sup> Today it serves as the Fort Collins Youth Baseball Office.



Figure 43. Fort Collins Youth Baseball Office, April 1996.

## Chapter 7

### EVOLVING ACTIVITIES

City Park was a public recreation ground that serviced many active and passive uses. These functions evolved, but the park was always many things to many people. As uses of the park expanded, it became necessary to institute some public rules of conduct. The rules shown below for park use were first posted in 1918 and reflect the times. They seem to suggest many behaviors had been observed which were inappropriate to the area:

#### RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE USE AND OPERATION OF

#### CITY PARK AND PROSPECT PARK

##### GENERAL NOTICE

1. Please throw all trash in the waste cans.
2. The OCEAN WAVE and small swings are for children under 12 years of age. (Later this was changed to 6 years.)
3. Please be careful not to trample the plants and shrubbery.
4. Loud, boisterous talking or profane language is prohibited.
5. Drinking intoxicating liquors, drunkenness or disorderly conduct, are prohibited.
6. The using of any equipment, swings, benches, etc. other than for the purpose for which they are made is strictly prohibited.

The speed limit in the park was 15 miles per hour; cars were not to drive past the bath house or make any undue noise and people were not to

come and go in vehicles during band concerts. Parking was prohibited on the west side of the lake and within the railing about the "bath houses." People were asked to "remember it is a playground and not a speed-way." They were to stay off the race-track (Prospect Park) unless they had a signed permit, and they were "prohibited from driving upon any lawn, hay land or shrubbery or in any way to mar or injure the growth about the park." The most restrictive rules included, "Do not mar or destroy any tree, shrub, flower, bird or animal, or any thing what-so-ever."<sup>205</sup>

Once the initial park grounds were planted to grass and the trees had been set out, the city planned space for a number of individual activities in the park. These activities included Prospect Park community events, horseback riding, Independence Day celebrations, a playground, picnicking, tennis, baseball, golf, and the later use of the campground community house for craft and pottery classes. The park always provided a full range of active and passive recreation, but these popular activities evolved and changed locations over the years.

**Prospect Park Events** - Prospect Park, with its race track and grandstand, had been the site of community events since its inception by the Gentlemen's Riding and Driving Club in 1904. These events created many happy memories for people as they attended the Colorado Agricultural College Lamb Festival, circuses, Wild West shows, motorcycle races and exhibitions.

The aging wooden facilities were used so heavily that they needed many repairs. Between 1918 and 1923, the grandstand was re-roofed for \$635, and an old board fence on the north side was replaced with a modern wire fence. Prospect Park hosted a Wild West show on July 4, 1919 to celebrate the holiday, "from which no receipts were derived by the city."

<sup>210</sup> The round-up, continued in 1920 and 1921, was managed by Frank Miller, a member of a local pioneer family and person of many trades. The Wild West show on July 3, 4, and 5 in 1922 was held to benefit the Fort Collins Hospital Association. Although the city realized ten percent of the profits, the shows were more of a community service because there was considerable expense in 1921 and 1922 as necessary repairs had to be made to fences and the grandstand in connection with the Wild West shows. Other expenses were for guards, ticket takers, and the concert band.<sup>211</sup> In between events, portions of the track and barns were leased for short periods, for example, to the Russell Brothers Livery Stables.<sup>212</sup>

Early in the century, the automobile was gaining over the horse in popularity, but horse-back riding for recreation was still available at Prospect Park. Russell and Haymaker built a big brick livery barn and sale stable in 1906 at the southeast corner of South Bryan Street and West Mountain Avenue, address 1529 West Mountain Avenue. It was the largest and best equipped stable in the city when it was built to hold sixty horses.<sup>213</sup>

Well known pioneer Bob Swan ran a saddle livery in the Russell & Haymaker barn in 1929. Russell & Haymaker were horse traders who boarded and bred horses. Bob Swan recalled the red brick with white trim barn as having two-stories with haymow and living quarters upstairs where he lived. People could rent horses to ride around the trails in Prospect Park under his supervision, but he also used to break horses on the circle racetrack. His job as a saddle livery lasted only a year because the crash of 1929 cut it short.<sup>214</sup>

Prospect Park was a very lively place and was used for many types of entertainment. H. N. Lloyd rented the race track for a June 10, 1920

motorcycle race.<sup>215</sup> A "bucking contest or show" was held February 22, 1921, by Homer Rerark, Blake Bullard and others. Six hundred fifty-three people attended and paid fifty cents plus five cents war tax.<sup>216</sup> The grandstand and area in front of it were used for a wrestling and boxing exhibition on August 30, 1921.<sup>217</sup>

A natural catastrophe, a gale with 62 mile per hour winds, struck the city on Sunday, January 7, 1923. There was much damage to the trees in both City and Prospect Parks, but the heaviest loss sustained was to Prospect Park's grandstand which was turned over and demolished. A recent inventory had placed a value of \$4,100 on the sheds and grandstand in the park. The wood framed and roofed grandstand was estimated to be worth \$2,500 to \$3,000 of that amount so this was a great loss to the city.<sup>218</sup>

Despite that loss, Prospect Park continued to be a very busy place during the summer in the mid-1920s. The State Agricultural College requested the use of the space inside the race track of Prospect Park in order to stage its College Day Program or Carnival in May 1924, 1925 and 1926. The Live Stock Club hosted a program to benefit the livestock judging team which represented the college at the International Contest in Chicago each year.<sup>219 220 221</sup> The park was also used for the site of a big five-ring circus known as the Al. G. Barnes Circus. It was set up at the "circus grounds" at City Park and the grandstand had reserved circus seating.

Although the race track was still used in the early 1930s, its days were numbered as baseball diamonds encroached on the space. Park Superintendent Tinker began to complain that the National Guard's mounted unit was using the park to run their horses without permission. They were cutting up the baseball diamonds, endangering the baseball teams who

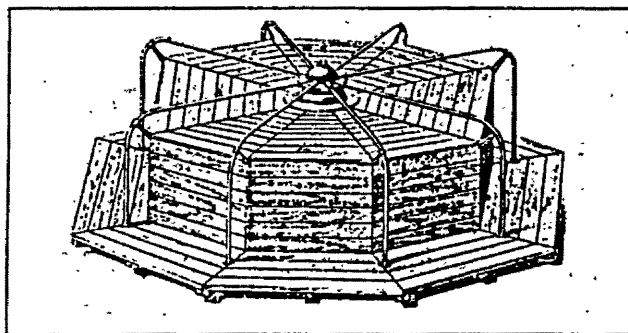
played there morning and evening and playing polo in the alfalfa field which was destroying that crop.<sup>222</sup> Publication of this condition in the Express-Courier brought a response the next day from Captain Joseph E. Ryan, commander of Battery A, 168th Field Artillery. He stated that they had ceased using the diamonds or alfalfa field after being notified that the city did not want them there, but that they were still using the "old race track and the circus ground for equitation and drill with the guns." He angrily pointed out that it was only because of great efforts on his part that this unit of the National Guard had not been assigned to Enid, Oklahoma, and that its presence brought \$12,000 annually to the city. Since the city sponsored the battery, he felt that it should furnish water for the horses and a drill ground near the stables that the State of Colorado was renting for the unit.<sup>223</sup> It can be seen from this interchange that the race track was considered "old" by now, and that the team sport of baseball was becoming firmly entrenched in the Prospect Park area.

**Independence Day Fireworks** - In 1936 a special event occurred which was to become a community-wide institution. A July 4th fireworks exhibition was proposed for City Park by the American Legion. The proposal was outlined in a letter from the City Engineer as a cooperative venture, with the City Works Department being drafted to clean up the litter left from the event. The tone of the letter suggests that this was the first fireworks exhibition in City Park. This festive celebration, perhaps more than anything else, has made City Park the most popular park in the city.<sup>224 225</sup>

**Playgrounds** - Between 1918 and 1923, the first playground was built east of the pavilion with swings, an ocean wave, and teeter-boards.<sup>226</sup> By 1925, the city was building the native moss rock walls around the area,

and a rustic fountain, bird bath, and lily pond were also constructed near the playground east of the pavilion. This area was designed to be more picturesque, so new plans were developed to reestablish the playground across the street away from the lake. It was rebuilt west of the irrigation ditch and south of the Municipal Railway tracks. Shrubbery enclosed the area so children would not fall in the ditch or run onto the streetcar tracks. Trees were planted and plans were laid in order that when the trees began to give shade, the playground equipment would be moved to the location. In 1924-25, the city spent \$750 to purchase and install six swings, one ocean wave, one merry-go-round, one giant stride, one horizontal ladder, one four-board see-saw, and one wave slide.<sup>227</sup>

## MEDART PLAYGROUND APPARATUS



**Revolving Platform**

Figure 44. Revolving Platform, circa 1959 - Medart Playground Apparatus, St. Louis, Missouri. From the Fort Collins Public Library.

When the Depression called for frugality, much playground and other equipment was built using salvage from the city yards. This included swings, bars, a teeter, lifeguard look-out chair, Rock-a-way, bird bath, flower urns and a tennis court leveler.<sup>228</sup> Parents brought their children to the playground historically just as they do today.



Figure 45. The Pike Twins, Billy and Bobby, November 1930. From the Dr. Robert Pike Collection.

The third and final location of the playground is its present location north of City Park Drive and between South Bryan and Sheldon Streets. This larger playground was built when the streetcar line was removed from the park after the Municipal Railway ceased operation in 1951.

**Picnicking** - Certainly one of the earliest uses developed in the park was picnicking. The picnic grounds have always been in the same area near the corner of South Bryan and West Oak Streets since 1918 when Commissioner of Works Frank P. Goeder proposed putting picnic tables in the old tree nurseries located north of Sheldon Lake.<sup>229</sup> Soon this would be the location of tent campgrounds, and picnicking areas were needed in close proximity.



Figure 46. Picnic Grounds At City Park. From the Colorado Historical Society.

During the Depression, the expense of travel was restrictive, so picnicking increased in popularity with the public. Four new tables were built in the south portion of the auto camp, and the section south of the road was converted into a picnic ground. The tables were large, costing \$400, and some may still be in the park today.<sup>230</sup>

Tennis - Lawn tennis was a popular sport in Fort Collins back as early as the 1880s, and was offered at the first summer public playground for children on Laporte Avenue in 1909. The Business Men's Tennis Association, Inc. requested permission to construct three tennis courts within Prospect Park in 1925, and to construct three more the following year. They were located east of the old barns and near the northwest corner outside of the race track on a tract approximately 130 feet by 130 feet. They were surrounded on all four sides by a 12 foot high poultry wire backstop fastened to four-by-fours set in concrete. "One court would have a foundation of 6 inches rock and sand, the other two to be of 2 inches sand." The Association would own and maintain the courts for the exclusive use of their membership but after five years they would become

the property of the city.<sup>231</sup>

Six new tennis courts were built in May 1932 near the Mountain and Bryan Street intersection to augment the old courts. They were built by Social Services but the city provided equipment, supplies, and supervision. These were so popular that three more new tennis courts were quickly laid out in July.<sup>232</sup> Tennis courts were also available by 1928 on the corner of West Oak Street and Sheldon Drive, in order to service the campground directly to the west of the courts.

Other activities that were located in the park included winter coasting on the big hill east of Sheldon Lake, plus a model airplane field and croquet courts in Prospect Park.<sup>233</sup>

Golf - A nine hole golf course was eventually developed on the racetrack land in Prospect Park and on the ground known as the "south part of the cemetery." Through the early years, the south part of the cemetery was leased for agricultural purposes.<sup>234</sup> <sup>235</sup> The land had been acquired by the city for future expansion of the cemetery, but when it had not been developed for that use, a group of persuasive local businessmen convinced the city in 1938 to use the land instead for the city's first public golf course.

The Fort Collins Municipal Golf Association was incorporated and its by-laws written in 1938. The golf association signed an agreement with the city that it would pay the "sponsor's share" of a federal Works Project Administration (W. P. A.) job to construct a municipal golf course and to partly compensate the city as long as they used the land as a golf course. Because of the Depression, raising funds was very difficult. Through small donations, the association raised \$10,000 and the W. P. A. paid wages amounting to about \$40,000. An architect for the course was a

luxury they could not afford, so local golf enthusiast, Don Chapin, incorporator of the first investment company in Fort Collins, designed the course himself based on his experiences at other golf courses.<sup>236</sup>

Grading work and pipe lines were laid in the fall and winter of 1938. This W. P. A. project to employ men during the Depression was to be completed by the fall of 1939. All work was done laboriously by hand and the course was finally completed in 1940. The golf course was built on the land south of West Mountain Avenue and it wrapped around Grandview Cemetery in an L-shape.<sup>237</sup>

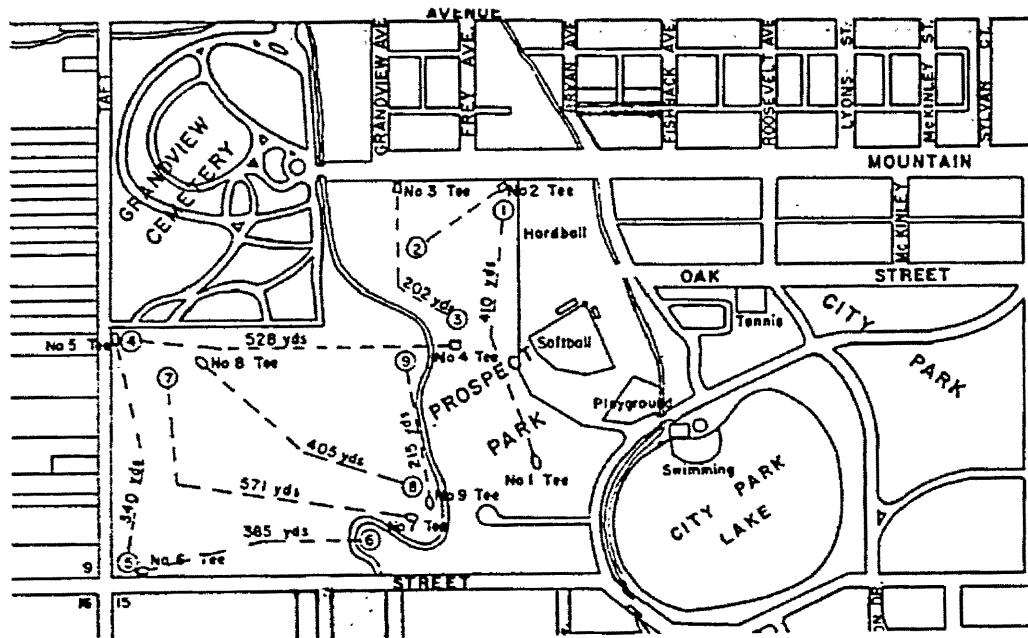


Figure 47. Map of the Golf Course, 1953. From the City of Fort Collins Engineering Department.

The completion of the work began the city's long lasting association with the City Park Nine golf course. It has been a very popular activity in the park over the years. The annual rent in 1940 was set at \$750. The agreement with the city was that the land was to be used exclusively for a golf course and club under the control of the Board of Directors of the

golf association.<sup>238</sup>

**Craft Classes** - The community house at City Park, built in 1923, was once the home of the park caretaker and later a building for community activities. It took on a new role as the home for pottery classes which in 1974 had outgrown their assigned facilities at Riffenburg School. Subsequently, it was recommended that the name of the building be changed to "Pottery Studio." The Fire and Building Codes had disallowed the use of the upper floor of the structure, so "Pottery Studio" was a better identification for the only activity that could safely be held in the 1923 building.<sup>239</sup>



**Figure 48.** The "Pottery Studio," April, 1996.

## Chapter 8

### PARK ADMINISTRATION

In the early days of Fort Collins, the parks' administration was provided directly by the City Council. In 1906, however, since state statutes permitted it, a Park Commission was created, "formed and invested with the power to improve the municipal parks and spend the money appropriated for that use." The six citizen members authorized by the Council to be appointed by the Mayor were: T. H. Robertson, president; F. C. Avery, vice-president; L. D. Crain, secretary; T. A. Gage, A. W. Horn and Jesse Harris. Despite a small budget, they made many improvements in the parks and educated the people to the "real value of city parks and recreation places."<sup>240</sup>

An analysis of the 1908 park's budget explains its management at that time. Between park appropriations and the sale of materials from the parks, \$2,677.54 was available for park use. Bills amounted to \$2,038.51 so that the next year began in a stable condition with a \$639.03 credit.

By 1916, profit generating events in Prospect Park such as circuses, along with revenues from leased agricultural land, provided a total income that permitted City Park to be operated without revenue from municipal taxation. This was not to continue as the aging wooden facilities became more expensive to maintain.

Budgeting for maintenance and improvements in City Park were deducted from the general park fund, but about 1924-1925, the city began giving this item a separate appropriation.<sup>241</sup> It seemed that the park had finally been recognized for its value.

City Park's value could be measured in park use. Due to intensive maintenance, all of the parks were very popular in Fort Collins' recreational life, and most especially the city's jewels, City Park and adjoining Prospect Park. "One fund is appropriated for both, and the one caretaker superintends both."<sup>242</sup> City Park received most of the improvements, while Prospect Park was the site for ball games, circuses, rodeos, and other sports. Many trees and shrubs had been planted, and with lawns established, City Park's popularity, as stated in the 1926 Public Works Report, "is shown by the increasing number of picnics, parties, and luncheons held here during the vacation time of year."<sup>243</sup>

The city experimented a great deal as it sought to maintain the numerous activities and facilities in City Park. Not only did it lease concessions and buildings to private vendors, but it also contracted with a non-profit corporation, the Fort Collins Recreation Commission. This organization was established to further recreational activities in the City of Fort Collins; thus, on September 28, 1949, the city signed an agreement with them to turn over to the commission the formal operation of various recreational facilities in City and Prospect Parks. The commission had already been informally doing this job. The agreement was for one year and renewable yearly.<sup>244</sup>

Richard S. Baker, was sworn in as Director of Parks and Recreation for the city in 1955. He had previously been the Assistant City Manager

and City Purchasing Agent. A member of the pioneering Baker family, he was an avid local historian.<sup>245</sup>

The late 1950s and early 1960s were times of growing pains for the city. The City Council devised a new method in 1962 to handle the increasing recreation maintenance demands by creating, in conjunction with Poudre R-1 School District, a Fort Collins Area Recreation Commission. Of the eleven members, two were appointed by the School District, two by the City Council and seven at-large elected at the annual meeting of the commission. They were charged with providing the proper public recreation for the community.<sup>246</sup>

"The Commission recommends policies for recreation, prepares a budget, conducts recreational activities, appoints a Recreation Director, and plans for future development."<sup>247</sup> H. R. Phillips Jr. was hired to be the Recreation Superintendent and the recreation office was in a small house at 202 North Meldrum Street.

Also in 1962, the city contracted with a prominent landscape architect from Denver, S. R. DeBoer, to formulate a Park & Recreation Plan for Fort Collins, Colorado. The DeBoer Plan explained the role of parks in the city plan very eloquently as follows:

With the radical changes which have occurred in our civilization since the turn of the century, especially in regard to communication and transportation, it may be well to review the Place of Parks in the plan of a city. The old park idea was to create a quiet rural atmosphere in some area where people could go and enjoy themselves and get away from city life. The nation's outstanding park, in this respect, is Central Park in New York. It was laid out about one hundred years ago by Frederick Olmsted, who designed on that principle that inside of the city this would be a place for a quiet enjoyment of life. The fact that Fort Collins purchased over ninety acres of Park land in 1907 and 1913 shows the foresight of the city administration at that time. It was the time of park land acquisition everywhere.<sup>248</sup>

It would appear that DeBoer was suggesting that park design should return to its roots in order to fulfill its original purpose. The plan also proposed a combination of school and park ground for efficiency of use. This plan is being carried out today in the construction of new school playgrounds with adjacent parks.

Soon after H. R. Phillips was hired, the idea surfaced to combine the Fort Collins Park Advisory Committee and the Fort Collins Area Recreation Commission in order to consolidate these two departments. This recommendation to City Council was discussed at joint board meetings in June, 1965 and on July 13 a letter to this effect was submitted to the city. A new volunteer Parks and Recreation Board was set up and H. R. Phillips was named Director of Parks and Recreation.<sup>249 250</sup> The new department became effective January 1, 1966, and it brought recreation into the modern era.

Some interesting statistics, compiled regarding Parks and Recreation Department budgets from 1956 to 1971, are described in Appendix D. It can be seen that the new Department of Parks and Recreation increased the number of full-time employees from two to nine, and part-time employees from 160 to 196. The budget more than doubled from about \$53,000 to \$120,000, but activities only increased from fifty to fifty-three offerings. It would appear that the city had moved from depending on volunteer help to salaried workers, and with this change the program was more professionally managed.

This administrative organization of the Parks and Recreation Department continued until 1987 when City Manager Steve Burkett reorganized the city's structure. He eliminated the Director of Parks and Recreation position and instituted the Cultural, Library and Recreational

Services Division with H. R. Phillips as director. In 1988, Mr. Phillips resigned. After an interim director, the position of Director of Cultural, Library and Recreational Services was assigned to Michael W. Powers.

## Chapter 9

### USES OF THE PARK TODAY

Today, City Park still represents a myriad of active and passive uses to fulfill the needs of residents. Active recreation is most evident on evenings and weekends. Still available are playground equipment and facilities for baseball, tennis, skating in winter, and swimming - but only in the formal pool. A new offering, soccer, fits into the large open meadows of the original park design. A small scale train has been added for the enjoyment of children. The more passive activities of strolling, sun-bathing, reading, feeding the ducks (although not encouraged), and fishing are still popular. A tree identification program is a new activity where people using a tree identification brochure can stroll through the park as if they were in an arboretum. Picnicking is perhaps still the most often enjoyed activity in the park and the covered picnic areas are reserved way in advance for family picnics, reunions and company picnics.

The most attended public event in Fort Collins is the Fourth of July Celebration around Sheldon (City Park) Lake. This event has been changed in recent years only by the addition of a food court, a portable concert shell for presentations and music, and the presence of police, made necessary by the intense crowds. The pavilion continues to serve small groups.

Gone are the historic activities of camping, the cabins for tourists, weekly concerts, croquet, and swimming in the lake which has not tested safe for swimming for years.

However, one feature of the park that has returned is the Fort Collins Municipal Railway in the form of Birney Streetcar #21. The electric railway system had stopped running on June 30, 1951, a victim of aging equipment and the automobile that caused declining ridership. In December 1984, the Fort Collins Municipal Railway Society, Inc., an organization formed in 1980 to restore the 1919 trolley to operating condition, began operation of the rebuilt car from a loading area in City Park east of the tennis courts. A car barn was built in 1983 at 1801 West Mountain Avenue, north of the golf course. In June 1985 the trolley began regular summer operation from City Park.

H. R. Phillips, Director of Parks and Recreation at that time, can be credited with directing that the new trolley barn be placed in the golf course maintenance area and that the restored tracks travel down Roosevelt Street again and into the park to a new loading area. He reasoned that all parking for the trolley would be in the park instead of on West Mountain Avenue in front of people's homes. This became one of the most important factors in the success of the rejuvenated line, because many riders are simply users of the park.

The Fort Collins Municipal Railway Society moved the 1925 Colorado State University student passenger depot into City Park in the spring of 1988, to be used as a service building at the loading area of the streetcar. The group subsequently restored the depot by digging a new foundation, replacing one window sash, putting on a new wood shingle roof,

and repainting its historic colors that were carefully researched.<sup>251</sup> The depot's new address is 1501 West Oak Street.

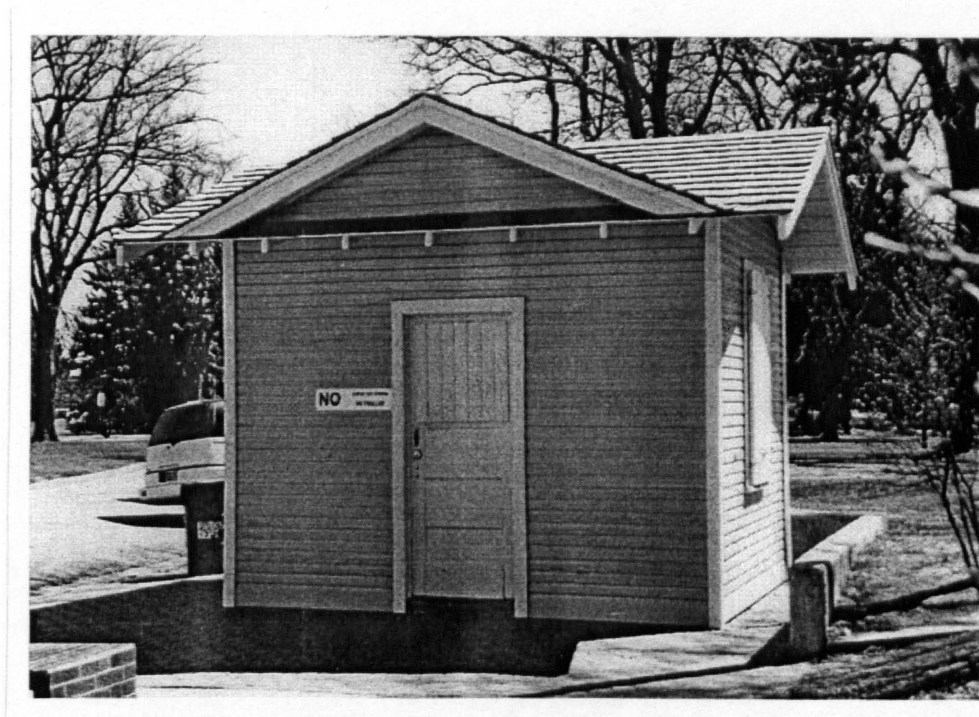


Figure 49. "Aggie" (Colorado Agricultural College) Depot in City Park, April 1996.

This small building endured a colorful history on the campus next to the railroad tracks and behind Old Main. Originally constructed in the late 1890s of vertical board and batten siding with gable-end gingerbread, it was burned down in 1924 by football rival, Colorado University students. Rebuilt in 1925 with horizontal clapboards and exposed eave rafters in the style of the 1920s, it served student passengers of the Colorado & Southern Railroad line. In the 1940s, a group of rambunctious Colorado A. & M. students tied chains around it and to the train. It reportedly ended up in downtown Fort Collins. After passenger train service ended in the 1950s, it was removed from the campus to a pasture on

South Overland Trail. Now serving the restored trolley line, it continues to serve as a transportation facility.

Although the park has changed over the years, it continues to be a natural place for people to congregate. Unlike most of the newer parks in Fort Collins, City Park is surrounded by neighborhoods, within easy walking distance of young families, children and retired people. In fact, surveys done by the Parks and Recreation department consistently show City Park to be the most popular park in the community.<sup>252</sup>

**PART THREE**

**THE FUTURE OF CITY PARK**

## Chapter One

### HISTORIC PRESERVATION OF CITY PARK

From the days of the first village green in colonial times, a community's park has been the heart of the town - both in location and social activity. As the Western United States was settled, many new communities followed the colonial tradition by setting aside parkland with the town's incorporation. In Fort Collins, this tradition was carried out by the establishment of Lincoln and Washington Parks. As the town grew, however, these parks were too small and featureless to be major recreation areas, and their high land value made them attractive sites for public buildings. The large new City Park was to better meet the needs of the expanding community.

One newcomer from New England remarked to the author that he was surprised to discover that City Park, the major recreation park serving the older neighborhoods, was located so far from the center of town. As noted earlier, the park's site was chosen because the Sheldon Farm with its beautiful lake was the most picturesque area within the city limits and it was fortuitously available at the time that the city was considering a serious recreation purchase. Whether a village green, a town center block park, or a major city park, a park can be the heart of a community's focus.

Preservation and restoration of the Fort Collins City Park would build on this historic community focus. It would be particularly

appropriate in view of the renewed enthusiasm for historic preservation in Fort Collins. An example of this is the success of the Old Town Historic District. It has made downtown Fort Collins a vibrant and commercially successful place, while surrounding cities have declining downtowns with high vacancy rates. Today, with Historic Old Town serving as a popular attraction for both Fort Collins' residents and visitors, everything old is new again. The return of the streetcar has received many local, state and national awards. The tenth year of operation and 100,000th passenger was celebrated on September 4, 1994. New preservation incentives such as grants, design assistance funds and tax credits have made landmark designation more popular than at any time since the city's landmark ordinance was instituted in 1969. Thousands of people attend the Avery House Historic Home Tour each September, which stimulates the rehabilitation of other stately older homes. The city has set an example to the community by preserving its own historic buildings: the Old Power Plant, the Sugarbeet Factory, the 1907 Streetcar Barn, and the Old Waterworks. Restoration of City Park would be a natural continuation of this trend. The city has designated the Old Power Plant, the 1907 Streetcar Barn and the Old Waterworks as local landmarks. City Park also merits designation as a local landmark district.

City Park is one of only three significant designed historic landscapes in Fort Collins; the others are the grotto at the Old Power Plant and the Colorado State University Oval. These landscapes are valuable cultural landscapes that should be preserved for their historic, artistic and educational nature.

Chapter Two  
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REHABILITATION  
AND FUTURE USES OF CITY PARK

As stated previously, there was a major change in parks and recreation patterns from passive to active recreation towards the middle of the twentieth century. The stroll gardens and winding pathways that were meant "to see and to be seen in" have given way to roads that are laid out to provide a quick thoroughfare through the park. That is City Park today. Swimming, feeding the ducks, and playing on the playground are still popular activities, but the auto camp is gone, the auto court has given way to baseball batting cages and parking, and the meadows share a use as soccer fields. Maintaining both active and passive uses is recommended to continue the park's popularity with people from throughout the city. It is also important that the Independence Day fireworks display remains at City Park.

The auto camp and court are gone with the passing era. They are an obsolete land use, but a brochure or interpretive plaque installed in the park could preserve their memory. A physical fitness trail around the outside edge of the park is a good example of the shift to active recreation in our health conscious society. It is non-obtrusive and an excellent addition that helps the park meet modern needs. Returning croquet courts and similar low exertion activities to the park would serve

to provide an historic use and serve as a recreation for the growing senior population in Fort Collins.

The pavilion, now known as the City Park Center, has received a facelift in the last few years with the addition of a handicapped elevator in a glass block faced circular tower. The design was sensitively executed in a 1930s theme; however, post-modern architecture like the bath house replacement built in the 1980s does not add to the park's historic character.

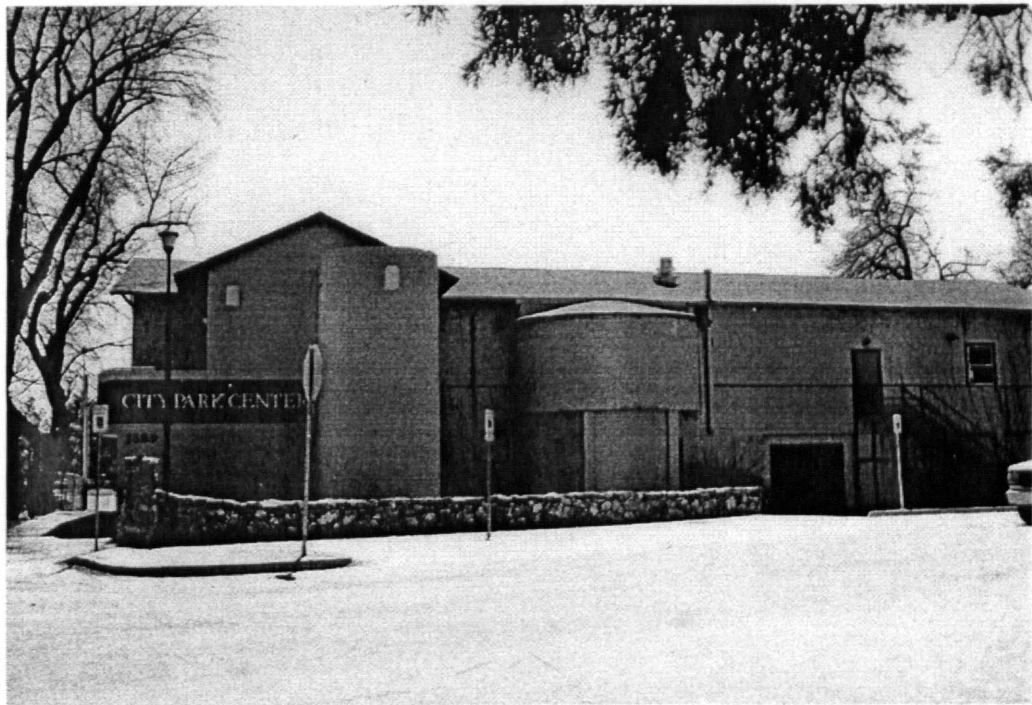


Figure 50. The "Pavilion," April, 1996.

Historic preservation rules define that new construction should be clearly distinguishable from the historic architecture, but be compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the property and environment.

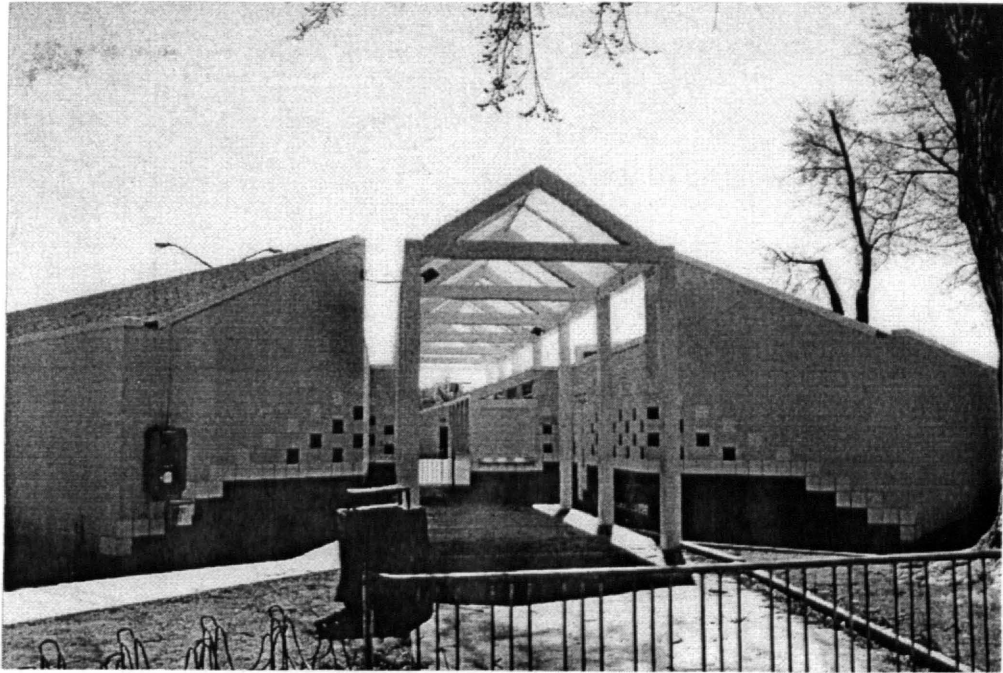


Figure 51. The Modern "Bath House," April 1996.

Another contemporary addition to the park is a walking self-guided tree tour for tree identification. It is an example of a modern activity that is sensitive because it is an informative passive activity reminiscent of the historic stroll garden concept.

There are few things that reflect a community's health more than the condition of its urban parks. City Park may not be run down, but it may be in danger of losing its National Register of Historic Places eligibility if the landscaping design continues to change or if insensitive building additions are allowed in the park. The park is eligible because it would appear to meet National Register Criterion A: be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad [recreational] patterns of our history; Criterion B: be associated with the lives of persons significant in our past [such as Sheldon, Scott, Sherwood, Loomis and others]; and Criterion C: embody the distinctive

characteristics of a type [*historic picturesque*], period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master [*if further research determines that Olmsted Jr. or Professor Longworth designed the original park*], or that possess high artistic values [*as a designed historic landscape*], or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction. Only one criterion needs to be met for entry in the National Register.

Restoration should begin with the rock walls and lighting throughout the park. Wherever rocks have become loose from the walls, they must be replaced with the same stone and matching mortar. The stone fountain and lily pond could be rebuilt. The historic lights are gone, from the round lights on pedestals that lit the pathways to the metal lanterns that graced the Jackson Street main entrance. Historic photo documentation of the materials is available. It is recognized that small design changes may be necessary where durability is a concern. But every effort should be made to maintain historic character. More lighting in the park in all corners would help to discourage vandalism and other undesirable nocturnal activities.

Recent landscape design in the park has deviated from the original intent. The small pocket flower beds seem incompatible with the existing tree groupings. Railroad tie or four-by-four pine board edged flower beds are not in keeping with the Olmsted theory of picturesque landscapes known as the English garden. Grouped shrubbery beds with curving borders would be more compatible. The Victorians were known for using flowers in carpet bedding and these colorful mass plantings in focus areas would be appropriate. Above all, stone mulches should be avoided and natural materials should be used.

It would be an exciting re-creation to build a bandstand out in the lake again and use it for weekly summer evening concerts. There are high school and jazz bands that would welcome the opportunity to entertain. It would help to return a greater community focus to the park. Already there is a well designed gazebo built in the last few years for handicapped fishing on the southwest corner of the lake. Its design could provide the pattern for a contemporary lake music pavilion. Also, the edges of the lake are in poor condition and should be repaired to create a more attractive appearance. Returning the lake's name to Sheldon Lake would celebrate its history and encourage people to learn more about it.

Changes to the park should incorporate these early theories of Frederick Olmsted: The recreation ground should be easily accessible after work. It should be a contrast to the city's commercial section, an oasis, a retreat. One should stroll and see/feel/hear the "bustle and jar of the streets" but not see it. The park center should have a large, clean, open greensward for play, surrounded by trees which interplay light and shade. These central meadows should be surrounded by a "depth of wood" so as to shut out the city and provide coolness in the heat of summer. A park should have fields, meadows, prairie, green pastures, and still waters for "tranquility and rest to the mind."<sup>253</sup>

In short, there must be a plan for City Park that takes it into the twenty-first century; and the plan must preserve and restore the area's historic integrity. It is hoped that such a plan will prepare the park for its 100th birthday celebration in 2007. It could be a proud event crowned by the restoration of City Park and its designation as an historic district in the National Register of Historic Places and as a Fort Collins Local Landmark District.

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## **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX A

### DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

The definitions which follow are taken from Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Sections 1207.2 and 1207.3.

Preservation. Means the act or process of applying measures to sustain the existing form, integrity, and material of a building or structure, and the existing form and vegetative cover of site. It may include initial stabilization work where necessary, as well as ongoing maintenance of the historic building materials.

Rehabilitation. (Also called "Adaptive Use") Means the act or process of returning a property to a state of utility through repair or alteration that makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions or features of the property that are significant to its historical, architectural, and cultural values.

Restoration. Means the act or process of accurately recovering the form and details of a property and its setting as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of later work or by the replacement of missing earlier work.

Stabilization. Means the act or process of applying measures designed to reestablish a weather-resistant enclosure and the structural stability of an unsafe or deteriorated property while maintaining the essential form as it exists at present.

Reconstruction. Means the act or process of reproducing by new construction the exact form and detail of a vanished building, structure, or object, or a part thereof, as it appeared at a specific period of time.

APPENDIX B

HISTORY OF THE FORT COLLINS BAND FROM 1900 to 1931

The following table lists pertinent data where it was available regarding the Fort Collins band:

TABLE TWO - HISTORY OF THE FORT COLLINS BAND FROM 1900 TO 1931<sup>1</sup>

YEAR	WHERE HELD	# CONCERTS, DAY, AND COMMENCE TIME	MANAGER	# MUSICIANS	ANNUAL CONTRACT PAYMENT	BAND NAME
1900					Volunteer	F.C. Cornet Band
1901			H.G. Petty		Volunteer	"
1906			William Hendrick- son		\$350/Year	F.C. Band
1907			H.G. Petty			
1910	City Park	10-F. 7:45 p.m.	"			
1911	"	10-F. 7:30 p.m.	"		\$600	
1912	"	"	"	20	"	F.C. Concert Band
1913	Lincoln Park	"	"		"	"
1914	Lincoln Park or other	8-F. 7:45 p.m.	"	20-25	\$60 (per concert)	F.C. Band
1915	"	"	"	"	"	
1916	"	12-F. June- Sept.		25	\$600	F.C. Band
1917	"	10-F. June- Sept.	"	"	"	"
1918	Lincoln Park & City Park	10-F.	"	20	"	F.C. Concert Band
1919		12-Thur. (May, June, July, Aug.)	"	"	"	"

APPENDIX B CONTINUED

Concerts were difficult to hold in 1918-19 because so many members were away at war. From 1920 on, the band concerts were held exclusively in City Park.

YEAR	WHERE HELD	# CONCERTS	MANAGER	# MUSICIANS	ANNUAL CONTRACT	BAND NAME
1920	City Park	10-Thur. (May, June, July, Aug.)	H. G. Petty	20	\$700	F. C. Concert Band
1921	"	"	"	"	\$800	"
1922	"	"	W.L. Soles	"	"	"
1923	"	12-Thur. (May, June, July, Aug.)	H.G. Petty	"	"	"
1924	"	12-Thur.	"	"	"	"
1925	"	"	"	"	\$1200	"
1926	"	"	"	"	"	"
1927	"	"	"	"	"	"
1928	"	"	"	"	"	"
1929	"	"	"	"	"	"
1930	"	12-Wed.	G. R. Cushing	40	"	F.C. Military Band
1931	"	"	"	"	"	"

BANDS IN THE FORT COLLINS PARKS (1900-1931)

For many years the city enjoyed the volunteer service of the local band, but in 1900, payment for band services was initiated when 14 band members petitioned the Mayor and City Council for a donation of "the sum of \$100 to be used for the better equipment of our band, said money will be used exclusively for the purchasing of instruments, and music to be used by the band."<sup>2</sup>

The next year, the band was in debt for instrument purchase and repair, so they again petitioned for \$100.<sup>3</sup> Finally, in 1906, William Hendrickson, Instructor and Manager of the Fort Collins Band, asked for and received \$350 for their performances.<sup>4</sup> The next year, 1907, they purchased new uniforms so they requested a \$600 fee.

The band practiced in many places, but eventually they acquired an 18 foot by 24 foot band room which was located on the rear of the lots in Block 18 until the land was developed in 1920. Then the band petitioned the City to move the band room onto a lot owned by the City in Block 12.<sup>5</sup>

J. H. Littlefield, a member of the band, was a composer and known as the "March King of Colorado." His works were widely played in the country but none was so well received in town as his "Hail To Fort Collins."<sup>6</sup>

Horace Greeley Petty was the Band Director for most of the years 1900 to 1931. He had lived in Fort Collins since 1888 and had opened a jewelry store known as "Petty the Jeweler" at 122 N. College in 1900.

The Fort Collins Concert Band continued giving concerts in City Park until 1930 when a serious band rivalry developed with the Fort Collins Military Band (157th Colorado National Guard band) started some years before. There was a division in the Concert Band between those who felt it should grow and those who preferred a small well-trained organization. There was a great deal of bitterness when the city switched services to the new band, and it was likened to "biting the hand that feeds you" after so many years of faithful service. The Concert Band room had been just a "little old galvanized house that Ed Avery had let them put on one of his vacant lots," and this too was a sore point as Greeley and Loveland bands were given "fine building space" in which to rehearse.<sup>7</sup> Nonetheless, some members switched over to the Military Band and this band of 40 members received the city's contract of 1930. A new bandstand, built in City Park, was ready for their first concert, Thursday evening, June 5, 1930. The building was 36 feet square, of frame construction, hip roof to be 6 inches rise to one foot over, covered with cedar shingles fir posts to rest on 18" square concrete blocks. It had a hand rail with cross bracing under it and the stand skirt was covered with lattice around the outside. It was built by John H. Thomas for the sum of \$156.

The last contract on file in the City Clerk's Office, dated 1931, was executed between the City and G. R. Cushing, Staff Sargent of the Fort Collins Military Band. D. Carl Carson was the Director. They were to give concerts at City Park from June to August with all 12 concerts to be completed by September 1. The concerts were held on Wednesday evenings, weather permitting, with all arrangements made by W. McAnelly, Commissioner of Works. There was also to be a July 4th concert although the concert of the week of the 4th could be changed to that date. The band was to play eight full selections of music at each concert, and for those services the city paid \$1,200. Rules were such that if weather forced a concert to be canceled before half the program had been played, then the concert had to be made up.<sup>8</sup>

## APPENDIX C

### BIOGRAPHIES OF CITY PARK LAND OWNERSHIP AND TITLE SEARCH

#### Biographies of City Park Land Ownership

Rev. William T. McAdam and his wife, Caroline M. came to this area in the summer of 1869 from Mercer County Pennsylvania. Rev. McAdam sought a location to establish a settlement colony founded on religious principles.

Jacob V. Collamer (also Collamore in the abstract), another Mercer Colony settler, settled here in 1870.<sup>9</sup> Mr. Collamer was a Civil War veteran and exercised his soldier's claim to homestead the land now known as Grandview Cemetery, including part of City Park Lake. A farmer, he cultivated 100 of the 160 acres he owned and raised his five sons in a frame house.<sup>10</sup>

Samuel D. Luke was one of the best known farmers in the Harmony district, southeast of Fort Collins.<sup>11</sup>

Clinton Farrar arrived close to the present site of Longmont in the 1860s and moved to Fort Collins soon after that. He farmed on the Lindenmeier and Anderson farms northeast of Fort Collins, and then on a farm one mile west of town (City Park?). He was "widely known for his political and industrial activity."<sup>12</sup>

John Sheldon was born January 29, 1813 in Deerfield, Massachusetts. He moved with his father's family to Western New York where he received his early education. Sheldon moved to Colorado from Moscow, N. Y. in the Genesee Valley. He bought the land in 1873 and moved out in June 1874 with "three car-loads of blooded Merino sheep."<sup>13</sup> One of the pioneer farmers and stock growers, he came to Fort Collins in 1874, at age 61, where he bought the land now called City Park and raised sheep for wool. He was known as far as Denver for his efforts to introduce blooded stock. He began by building the 40 acre artificial lake that came to be known as Sheldon Lake. He started his stock growing efforts with an initial carload of blooded sheep including a celebrated Merino ram, Dictator. This animal had been featured in the 1871 agricultural report as having "sheared a fleece weighing 26 and 3/16 pounds." After Sheldon brought some of the purebred Spanish Merino bucks out with him from New York, he planned to breed them to ten thousand Mexican ewes which he anticipated

purchasing.<sup>14</sup> The wool from 1416 graded sheep totaled 7891 pounds in 1878. He sold it through commission merchants in Philadelphia. By 1879 he had a flock of 1700 which were herded by a single herder during the day and put in sheds at night. (This must have required a large number of sheep pens and buildings on the farm around the lake.) Several times through the years, the newspapers reported the wool growing on Sheldon's 480 acre farm of Mexican and Merino sheep.<sup>15 16 17</sup>

He sold his flocks in 1879 to concentrate on cultivating his farm and hay raising. He is credited with introducing alfalfa to the area and advocated it as a forage plant.<sup>18</sup> He was also known for raising wheat, and in 1882 he grew 80,000 bushels of wheat on 1,000 acres of land with 3,900 bushels produced from only one hundred acres alone.<sup>19</sup> His fine farm, reputed to be some 2,000 acres, and his progressive agricultural efforts were widely known. He died in 1886 at the age of 73.<sup>20</sup>

Charles Sheldon, the son of John Sheldon, came to Fort Collins from New York State the same year as his father, in 1874. He became a successful banker, starting the Poudre Valley Bank in 1878 (Norwest Bank today).<sup>21</sup>

Henry Sheldon was another son of John Sheldon and brother of Charles. He was declared insane and committed to an institution in Pueblo, Colorado.<sup>22</sup> The deeds for the property at 147 N. Washington (part of the estate) state that the Sheldon farm had to be sold for a minimum amount that would provide for the care of Henry Sheldon.

Thomas Connolly (Connelly) was the owner of the "well-known Connolly wagon and carriage manufactory at Dubuque, Iowa."<sup>23</sup> Although not a resident, Connolly owned various businesses in Fort Collins and occasionally visited them.<sup>24</sup>

Hiram "Hi" B. Kelly (Kelley) was a colorful character of the old west. Born in Missouri in 1834, he grew up in Kansas. After buying a bull team, he freighted along the Santa Fe Trail between Missouri, Kansas and Colorado settlements until he settled in Chugwater, Wyoming as a cattle rancher. He worked for Ben Holliday on the Overland Stage Line and built the stage station and barns at Virginia Dale, Colorado. After he sold his ranch in 1884, he moved to Cheyenne and was one of the area's wealthiest men. Business dealings brought him to Fort Collins frequently where he settled his and his sister's (Malinda Kelly Maxwell Loomis) mother. Together with Abner Loomis, Hiram Kelly owned considerable property including parts of City Park by 1886. He was one of the group who built the 1881 Jefferson Block in Old Town; his building stood on the end at the corner of Pine and Jefferson Streets. The building burned down in the early 1970s. A 1924 obituary listed the extraordinary feats of his life and he was labeled "a pioneer and commonwealth builder of the West."<sup>25</sup>

26 27 28

Abner Loomis was born December 17, 1829 in Fredonia, New York. Loomis came to Colorado as a prospector where he filed a squatter's claim in Pleasant Valley in 1860. He raised vegetables and hay for the mining camps in the mountains and became a very successful farmer. In 1867 he turned to cattle ranching for fifteen years and engaged in cattle business dealings with Hiram Kelly. Loomis served as president of the Poudre Valley Bank, and as a member of the organizing board of Larimer County Commissioners. As one of the earliest Cache la Poudre pioneers he became a pillar of the community as well as a significant land holder. After the death of his first wife, Isabelle, he married his business partner, Malinda Maxwell. Having been partners for a number of years, they quietly slipped away for a private marriage ceremony on December 21, 1896. He died on August 23, 1904.<sup>29</sup>

Malinda Kelly Maxwell Loomis - Born in Missouri in 1838, she was a very admirable and high-spirited person like her brother Hiram. She married Thomas Maxwell in 1859. She moved to Chugwater to join her brother after she was asked to leave Missouri during the Civil War for insulting Union soldiers. Her husband became station master for the government's Deadwood-Cheyenne waystation. Sitting Bull and Buffalo Bill visited the Maxwells as did Custer on his last march before his death. After her husband died in 1878 she took her two daughters to Fort Collins and began amassing real estate including part of City Park. She married her business partner, Abner Loomis, on December 21, 1896. In 1902 she owned properties in town worth \$755,240. She died August 31, 1913.<sup>30 31 32</sup>

A. W. Scott (Alexander W. Scott), born in New York in 1862, came to Fort Collins in 1883 where he became a successful drug store owner. He engaged in many real estate transactions including the original City Park and Scott-Sherwood subdivision surrounding it. He married Malinda Kelly Maxwell Loomis' daughter.<sup>33</sup>

Mrs. F. W. Sherwood was the widow of F. W. Sherwood, a pioneer farmer, rancher and county commissioner who died February 10th, 1906. Mary Moulton Sherwood taught in the first school in the Timnath district.<sup>34</sup>

August L. Rohling - An investor in the Fort Collins Park Amusement Co.

### Title Search

Abstract #14885 - Ownership of Proposed Park, 62.7 Acres. Portions of the South half of Section 10 and the North half of Section 15, Township 7N, Range 69W.

Abstract #14885 is complicated because land for the proposed 62.7 acre park lay in two sections (10 and 15), and two quarters of each of those sections (SW4 and SE4 of Section 10, NE4 and NW4 of Section 15). A patent for the largest portion, the SE4 of Section 10 (north east part of

Sheldon Lake and the land surrounding), was granted in 1873 by the United States to William T. McAdam, pastor and leader of the Mercer Colony. Jacob V. Collamer, also of the Mercer Colony, accepted the Receiver's Receipt for the land from the United States in June 1874. These people started construction of the Mercer Ditch, but when their finances gave out, the land was sold to John Sheldon and his son Charles Sheldon.

The portions of the park in the north half of Section 15 (south half of Sheldon Lake and adjoining land) were originally conveyed by the United States government to the Denver Pacific Railway and Telegraph Company (succeeded by the Union Pacific Railway Company.) The Denver Pacific Railway and Telegraph Company was intended to connect Denver northward with the Union Pacific line. McAdam, of the Mercer Colony, acquired part of the NE4 of Section 15 (southeast part of what would be Sheldon Lake) from the railroad and later sold it to John and Charles Sheldon; Charles eventually quitclaimed his interest in this land to his father in 1884. The portion of the park in the NE4 of the NW4 of Section 15 (south west part of Sheldon Lake) was sold directly by the railroad to John Sheldon in 1880. Sheldon and his son Charles borrowed heavily on portions of the land in 1879 (\$5,000 John and Charles), 1882 (\$10,000 Charles), 1884 (\$18,600 and \$10,000 John).

At John Sheldon's death (d. 01/02/1886), Henry Sheldon, another son, was insane and a ward of the state in Pueblo. The land was sold in default of loan payments to various people. Part (1,120 acres) was sold in a tax sale during April 1886 to Thomas Connolly. Another parcel went to Abner Loomis. The Fort Collins Courier predicted that Connolly would "fit it up with the necessary stock and machinery for improvement, and place it in charge of an experienced man."<sup>35</sup> Instead Connolly sold his interest to Abner Loomis who immediately transferred a half interest to Hiram B. Kelly. Kelly sold his half interest to his sister, Mrs. Malinda Maxwell, which placed the property under the joint business ownership of Abner Loomis and Malinda Maxwell.

Later, in October 1902, Abner and Malinda Loomis, by then married, conveyed a warranty deed for the land to A. W. Scott, Malinda Loomis' son-in-law. This became the Scott-Sherwood ranch. A. W. Scott sold this property (for himself and as trustee for 10 others), along with Mary M. Sherwood (surviving beneficiary to her husband's estate) and August L. Rohling to the City of Fort Collins in 1907 for the proposed park.

The northern and eastern portions of the SE4 of Section 10 became the Scott-Sherwood Addition, a residential subdivision. Originally the park was to have extended northward to West Mountain Avenue but there were objections from a group of citizens and the park commissioners that the park should not front on an avenue that led directly to the cemetery, so the Scott-Sherwood Addition, a proposed housing subdivision, filled those blocks from West Mountain to West Oak.<sup>36</sup>

This subdivision was surveyed and platted on June 1, 1907 by the Edwards & Kissock Agency Company who billed the area in the newspaper as the "bon-ton residence section of the city."<sup>37</sup> Streets, roads, and alleys were dedicated for the public use but Bryan Avenue, Oak Street and Jackson Avenue were excepted and reserved from ever being used for a street railway. Sales were brisk as thus described:

The sale of the lots in the Scott-Sherwood Addition west of the city Saturday was one of the biggest things in real estate that has occurred in Ft. Collins...There are 168 acres in the section, which has been platted and laid out into lots, 198 being on sale Saturday morning...Half of the lots face the park, and one of the most beautiful views to be found near the city can be had from this section.<sup>38</sup>

The addition was annexed to the city on April 26, 1909.<sup>35</sup>

**Abstract #264 - Ownership of Grandview Cemetery and the Golf Course Lands. (West half of the southwest quarter of Section 10, Township 7, Range 69W)**

Abstract #264 states that in June 1874, the United States General Land Office granted Jacob B. Collamer of the Mercer Colony the SW 1/4 of Section 10. Collamer sold it in December 1877 to Samuel D. Luke after the Mercer Colony failed as a result of the expense of building the Mercer Ditch. S. D. Luke transferred the warranty deed to Clinton Farrar within a month during January 1878. Farrar borrowed heavily on the land, \$1,200 (1878 to pay Luke), \$1,800 mortgage loan (1880), and \$1,000 (1881). Farrar sold the parcel to Chas. H. Sheldon in December 1881 and Charles Sheldon sold it to his father John Sheldon in March 1883. John Sheldon promptly borrowed \$13,000 on the land in 1883. He also borrowed \$10,000 in 1884. When John Sheldon died in 1886, a trust deed was given to Thomas Connolly for default of the \$13,000. Connolly gave a Warranty Deed to the city in 1887 and the city bought the land at a tax sale in June 1888. The city paid Connolly \$4,000 for the 80 acre tract, and platted forty acres of the land for a cemetery on December 29, 1887.<sup>40</sup> <sup>41</sup> Fort Collins issued a right-of-way to the public in 1908 for the extension of West Mountain Avenue.

**Abstracts #8214/5924 - Ownership of Prospect Park. (The Land in the East Half of the SW4 of Section 10 West of Larimer County No. 2 Canal.)**

The title search follows the same line as the cemetery land above. Jacob Collamer of the Mercer Colony homesteaded this land (Homestead Application #2142) and obtained a Receiver's Receipt for it in June 1874. He sold it in December 1877 to Samuel D. Luke. Luke sold to Clinton Farrar in January 1878. Farrar borrowed frequently on it (1878 - \$1,200, 1880 - \$1,200, 1881 - \$1,000), before he sold it to Chas. H. Sheldon in December 1881 who disposed of it to his father, John Sheldon, in March 1883. John Sheldon farmed the land until his death in 1886. It was sold in default of payment after his death to Thomas Connolly.

Here the east and west halves of the SW4 of Section 10 parted company. Whereas the west half became the cemetery, the east half went from Connolly to Abner and Malinda Loomis, then to A. W. Scott, trustee for himself, F. W. Sherwood, P. J. McHugh, and August L. Rohling in 1902. Scott was a member of the Fort Collins Park Amusement Company, incorporated in 1904, to "purchase a tract of land known as Scott & Sherwood to use for fairs, expositions, race meets, etc. and to build theaters, auditoriums, etc."<sup>42</sup> Corporation stock amounted to \$10,000. The incorporators were: L. R. Rhodes, J. L. Gray, F. W. Sherwood, C. K. Gerald, F. C. Avery, M. G. Nelson, E. J. Avery, G. R. Haymaker, O. Hisfaoval, Franklin Coskins, and A. A. Moody. The Warranty Deed for Prospect Park was given in August 1904 to the Fort Collins Park Amusement Company.

By the turn of the century, interest in fine imported English horses and horse-racing had reached a peak among leaders of Fort Collins, as evidenced by the following account:

In the spring of 1904 the Gentleman's Riding and Driving Club was organized, with F. W. Sherwood as president. This club held racing matinees every few weeks that year on the old fair grounds track (east of town where Poudre Valley Hospital stands) with much success. In July the club appointed a committee composed of Peter Anderson, Abner Loomis and C. O. Culver to examine and report lands suitable for race track and fair grounds, which were being offered for sale.<sup>43</sup>

These lands were one mile west of the business district and were offered for sale for \$6,000:

Improvement of the grounds and the fitting of them for the race meet began at once. One of the best race tracks, a grand stand, judges' stand, offices, horse stables and a high board fence around the track were built. The first race meet was held October 6th, 7th, and 8th, 1904....One or two attempts have been made to hold an agricultural, live stock and industrial exposition in connection with the race meets, but for some reason these have not met with popular favor. Prospect Park is also used for ball games and other amusements of that character.<sup>44</sup>

The popularity of the park influenced the laying of the trolley line out to the park in 1907.

The successor to "The Gentlemen's Riding and Driving Club," the Fort Collins Park Amusement Company, had financial difficulties because of the expensive improvements they had built in the park. It was drawn into court over judgements in 1907-1909 from two local lumber companies, the D. G. Brooks Lumber Co. and the F. H. Gilcrest Lumber Co. Eventually the land went to a public trustee's sale to settle debts and in October 1911, Mrs. F. W. Sherwood purchased the property. She sold to A. W. Scott in April 1913 and Scott conveyed it to the City of Fort Collins for parkland in December of that same year.

APPENDIX D

PARKS AND RECREATION BUDGETS, 1956-1971

TABLE THREE - PARKS AND RECREATION BUDGETS FROM 1956 TO 1971<sup>45</sup>

YEAR	ESTIMATED POPULATION	BUDGET	COST PER CAPITA	# OF ACTIVITIES	# OF PART-TIME EMPLOYEES	# OF FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES
1956	20,635	\$ 7,689.00 (R)	.37	19	No Record	1
1957	21,398	8,125.00 (R)	.37	20	No Record	1
1958	21,385	8,135.00 (R)	.36	20	No Record	1
1959	26,500	10,522.00 (R)	.39	18	No Record	1
1960	27,800	12,687.00 (R)	.46	18	No Record	1
1961	25,798	14,371.00 (R)	.56	21	No Record	1
1962	28,000	26,000.00 (R)	.93	33	90	1
1963	31,000	31,198.00 (R)	1.01	40	120	2
1964	33,000	37,400.00 (R)	1.17	45	140	2
1965	35,000	53,335.54 (R)	1.62	50	160	2
1966	38,000	120,858.00 (P-R)	3.18	53	P-11;R-185	P-6; R-3
1967	40,000	140,500.00 (P-R)	3.50	54	P-11;R-210	P-6; R-3
1968	42,000	151,512.00 (P-R)	3.56	54	P-11;R-236	P-6; R-3
1969	43,000	176,310.00 (P-R)	4.40	54	P-12;R-260	P-7; R-3
1970	44,000	234,000.00 (P-R)	5.32	65	P-15;R-265	P-7; R-3
1971	45,000	238,107.00 (P-R)	5.29	66	P-15;R-265	P-8; R-3

CODE: P=Parks only R=Recreation only P-R=Parks and Recreation after merger

APPENDIX E

FORT COLLINS BUILDING PERMITS FOR HISTORIC PARKS, 1920-1950<sup>46</sup>

Permit #, Date, Applicant, Street and Number, Block (where applicable), Kind of Building, Estimated Cost, Permit Cost:

City Park

#71	March 24, 1923, R. W. Lampton, City Park, Community House, \$6,000, \$5.50
#1096	May 21, 1925, City of Fort Collins, Municipal Camp Grounds, Frame Shower Bath House, \$1,600, \$2.60
#1115	June 9, 1925, Robert Lampton, Sheldon Lake, Addition to Dance Pavilion, \$1,800, \$2.80
#1420	May 29, 1926, City of Fort Collins, City Park, Addition to Pavilion, \$3,300, \$4.30
#1642	March 17, 1927, City of Fort Collins, City Park, Camp Cottages, \$4,000, \$5.00
#1650	March 26, 1927, City of Fort Collins, City Park, Tool House and Toilets, \$363.10, \$1.40
#1687	April 30, 1927, City of Fort Collins, City Park, Work on Dance Pavilion, \$1,500, \$2.50
#1969	March 7, 1928, City of Fort Collins, City Park, Community House and Shower Baths, \$6,000, \$7.00
#1970	March 7, 1928, City of Fort Collins, City Park, 16 Tourist Cabins, \$5,000, \$6.00
#1974	March 12, 1928, City of Fort Collins, City Park, Tool House and Toilet Rooms, \$1,800, \$2.80
#2144	July 31, 1928, City of Fort Collins, City Park, 10 Tourist Cabins, \$3,400, \$4.40
#2620	May 31, 1930, City of Fort Collins, City Park, Band Stand, \$900, \$1.90

#2729            September 10, 1930, City of Fort Collins, City Park, Re-roofing Pavilion, \$425, \$1.45

#2831            December 12, 1930, Espelin Floral Co., Prospect Park, Raise and Install Stack on Steam Boiler and Remove Old Stack, \$300, \$1.50

#3386            September 29, 1932, City of Fort Collins, Cemetery, Concrete and Stone Restroom, \$1,000, \$2.00

#4746            May 11, 1937, City of Fort Collins, City Park, Remodeling Bath House and Toilets, \$300, remitted by City Council

#5112            January 24, 1938, Espelin Floral Co., Prospect Park, Re-roof with Glass, \$100, \$1.15

#6674            July 22, 1941, City Golf Course, City Park, Remodel Barn, \$300, \$1.45

#9174            May 13, 1946, City of Fort Collins, City Park, Ventilator at Pavilion, \$40, \$1.15

#10053           August 5, 1947, City of Fort Collins, City Park, Remodel Club House, \$700, \$2.05

#10997           February 23, 1949, City of Fort Collins, City Park Pavilion, Remodel Pavilion, \$15,000, \$23.50

Lincoln Park

#1561            November 22, 1926, City of Fort Collins, Lincoln Park, Block 142, Repairs to Library, \$1,300, \$2.30

#5501            September 27, 1938, City of Fort Collins, Lincoln Park, Historical Museum, \$50, \$1.15

#6183            May 10, 1940, City of Fort Collins, Lincoln Park, Block 142, Stone Museum, \$25,190, cost of permit remitted by City Council

APPENDIX F

HISTORIC PARKS SURVEY

Future researchers may wish to explore what other communities are doing in preserving their parks. The following survey form was prepared by the author for a possible future use and is herein made available to other researchers.

Spring 1991  
HISTORIC PARKS SURVEY

The purpose of this survey is to learn more about the state of our country's historic parks. Please complete the following questions based on the situation in your community.

Biographical Background:

1. What is your name? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What department do you work for? \_\_\_\_\_
3. In what town, city, or county? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What is the population of your community? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What is your job title? \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Parks Data:

1. The National Register of Historic Places states that a property should be 50 years or more old to have achieved significance from an historical perspective. In addition, the property should be tied to the history of the community in some meaningful way. Does your community have any parks that are 50 or more years old, and which you consider to have historic value? \_\_\_\_\_

How many? \_\_\_\_\_

Names? \_\_\_\_\_ and age? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. For each park that you consider to be of historic value, please provide the following information as best you can. Use back of form if more space is needed. Please make photocopies of the table if there are more than three parks to describe.

<u>Information</u>	<u>Park #1</u>	<u>Park #2</u>	<u>Park #3</u>
--------------------	----------------	----------------	----------------

I. General Description

- A. Name
- B. Date Founded
- C. Size (Acres)
- D. Architect (if known)

II. Historical Designation

- A. National Register
- B. Local Designation
- C. Future plans to designate?

III. Historical Significance

(Please check any which apply and elaborate as appropriate, using back of form if more space is needed.)

- A. Park is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of your community's history.
- B. Park is associated with lives of important people in your community's past.
- C. Park has distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction.

1. Buildings of particular architectural style, having high artistic value. Define style if possible.
  - a. Houses
  - b. Pavilions
  - c. Bath houses
  - d. Commercial buildings
  - e. Other
2. Other structures associated with a particular type of engineering.
  - a. Bridges
  - b. Other
3. Objects
  - a. Bandstands
  - b. Rotundas
  - c. Fountains
  - d. Monuments
  - e. Stonework
  - f. Arbors
  - g. Other

D. Distinctive Landscape

1. Gardens
2. Terraces
3. Water Features
4. Other

E. Archaeologically Significant Features

Preservation of Parks

1. Has your community in the past, or are they in the process of, or do they have plans to preserve any or their historic parks? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Please describe each project explaining what stage it is in, what was done, e.g. restoration to original appearance, reconstruction of missing materials, removal of non-historic early work, rehabilitation to be useful again to its original use or to a new use, etc.

Preservation Projects: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If you have any readily available documentation of these preservation projects, please enclose it when you return the survey.

3. What was the source of funding for each of these projects and how much has been allocated for each one?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Benefits/Problems of Park Preservation:  
Please complete this section if applicable.

This section is intended to measure the relative benefits and/or problems that you perceive to have been associated with your community's park preservation projects. Some of the information will be in your opinion, but where documentation exists, please be specific with available facts. Please use back of form if more space is needed.

1. Have there been benefits associated with your community's historic park preservation projects? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Please describe the benefits.

- economic value from increased tourism \_\_\_\_\_
- increased awareness of historic/cultural roots \_\_\_\_\_
- educational values \_\_\_\_\_
- increased quality of life \_\_\_\_\_
- decreased park vandalism \_\_\_\_\_
- greater community pride \_\_\_\_\_
- other \_\_\_\_\_

3. Have there been any problems caused by park preservation? \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your Preservation Ethic:

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, do you think historic preservation, in general, is a good idea?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not									Highly
At									Important
All									

2. On a scale of 1 to 10, do you think historic park preservation is a good idea?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not									Highly
At									Important
All									

3. If your community has had experience in park preservation, would it do it again? \_\_\_\_\_

If no, why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

DO YOU WISH A COPY OF THE RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION OF THIS RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE? \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDICES ENDNOTES

1 City Clerk's Office, Parks and Recreation, Recreation-Band (1900-1931) File.

2 City of Fort Collins, Petition to the Honorable Mayor and City Council of the City of Fort Collins from the Fort Collins Cornet Band, City Clerk's Office, Parks and Recreation, Recreation-Band (1900-1931) File, 27 March 1900.

3 City of Fort Collins, Petition to the Honorable Mayor and City Council of the City of Fort Collins from the Fort Collins Cornet Band, City Clerk's Office, Parks and Recreation, Recreation-Band (1900-1931) File, 3 April 1901.

4 City of Fort Collins, Letter to the Common Council of the City of Fort Collins from William Hendrickson, Instructor and Manager of the Fort Collins Band, City Clerk's Office, Parks and Recreation, Recreation-Band (1900-1931) File, 18 June 1906.

5 City of Fort Collins, Petition to the Honorable City Council of the City of Fort Collins by the Fort Collins Band, City Clerk's Office, Parks and Recreation, Recreation-Band (1900-1931) File, 13 February 1920.

6 "Program For The Band Concert Friday Night," The Weekly Courier [Fort Collins], 2 June 1911: 1, c. 4.

7 City of Fort Collins, Letter to the City Council of Fort Collins from B. W. Foltz, 136 Linden St., City Clerk's Office, Parks and Recreation, Recreation-Band (1900-1931) File, 4 April 1930.

8 City of Fort Collins, Contract Between the Fort Collins Military Band and the City of Fort Collins for the Season of 1931, City Clerk's Office, Parks and Recreation, Recreation-Band (1900-1931) File, 29 May 1931.

9 Watrous, 229.

10 Ahlbrandt, 637.

11 Morris, 46.

12 "Pioneer Dies in Boulder Thursday," Fort Collins Weekly Express, 4 July 1912: 4, c. 2.

- 13 "Local Notes," Fort Collins Standard, 10 June 1874: 3, c. 3.
- 14 "City and Vicinity", Rocky Mountain News, 10 June 1874: 4, c.2.
- 15 "The Merinos at Sheldon's Ranch," Fort Collins Courier, 6 February 1879: 1, c. 5.
- 16 "Town & Country - Friday," Weekly Express [Fort Collins], 19 March 1884: 5, c. 1.
- 17 "Local Notes," Fort Collins Standard, 10 June 1974: 3, c. 3.
- 18 Watrous, 282.
- 19 The Fort Collins Courier, 25 November 1882: 2, c. 5.
- 20 "Death of Mr. John Sheldon," The Fort Collins Courier, 7 January 1886: 8, c. 3.
- 21 Watrous, 462-463.
- 22 Brad March, interview with author, 9 February 1995.
- 23 Fort Collins Courier, 27 May 1886: 1, c. 2.
- 24 "Personal," Fort Collins Express, 20 August 1887: 4, c. 5.
- 25 "Death of Hiram B. Kelly Marks Passing of Pioneer Whose Life Was Romance," Fort Collins Express Courier, 8 June 1924: 6, cols. 1-3.
- 26 Hiram B. Kelly, Letter, Denver, Colorado, 22 March 1915, "230 Remington" Property File, Advance Planning Department, Fort Collins.
- 27 "Hi Kelly Digs His Heels Into Wyoming," Wyoming State Tribune and Wyoming Eagle, 26 and 28 July 1966: 19B.
- 28 "Kelly Funeral At 2 Thursday," Fort Collins Express Courier, 4 June 1924: 1, c. 4.
- 29 Watrous, 405-406.
- 30 Watrous, 406.
- 31 Debby Abbott, Maxwell/Abbott Family History, undated, "230 Remington" Property File, Advance Planning Department, Fort Collins.

- 32 Obituary, "Mrs. Malinda M. Loomis," Fort Collins Weekly Express, 4 September 1913: 3, c. 5.
- 33 Tresner, 28.
- 34 Watrous, 399.
- 35 Fort Collins Courier, 27 May 1886: 1, c. 2.
- 36 "Map of Fort Collins' Proposed Park System," Fort Collins Evening Courier, 27 March 1907: 18, cols. 1-4.
- 37 "Ad for The Scott-Sherwood Addition," The Weekly Courier, 5 June 1907: 8, cols. 1-6.
- 38 "Real Estate on the Move," Fort Collins Express, 5 June 1907: 11, c. 3.
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