

srma

# The Rocky Mountain Archivist

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Fall Issue

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## BUILDING PLAN

26 X 24 X 15	936
16 X 3 X 15	72
12 X 7 X 15	126
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	1134

## Inside the issue

From the President

15,000 Cards: Digitizing the Boulder County Assessor  
Card Collection at the Carnegie Library

# From the President

Hello! I'm writing this on the heels of what I believe was a successful Fall Conference, which took place last Friday at the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley. We all shared and learned a lot about the world of born digital content management, and since (as most of you know) this is in my wheelhouse, so I was thrilled at the turnout and the discussions we had. Our next rocky mountain region meeting won't be until next fall when Megan Friedel will be at the helm since our spring meeting will be at the Western Archivists Meeting (WAM) in San Francisco. We do hope to put on at least one workshop in the meantime, so I hope I will see some of you there or at WAM! More details about all of this below...

## Highlights from our Fall Conference

In my possibly not-so-humble opinion, we just wrapped up a great Fall Conference! We had a total of 65 people register and were able to hold it in the beautiful new commons space on the University of Northern Colorado campus in Greeley. Many thanks to Laura Uglean Jackson for securing us this space, and thanks to Helen Reed, Dean of the Libraries for giving us such a warm welcome. Also, many thanks to Jay Trask and the rest of the UNC Archives & Special Collections for the wonderful tour of their spaces – such fun!!

I loved being able to present with Walker Sampson, CU Boulder's Digital Archivist, on how we approach born digital collection processing. I also really enjoyed hearing Rachel Gattermeyer share how they use MPLP in the digital archives processes at the American Heritage Center. I was especially excited to learn about the various Carpentry workshops Helen Baer, Katie Fletcher, and Amber D'Ambrosio attended and what skills they picked up that could be useful to our profession, especially in processing the increasing volume of born digital content. I heard from a number of you that hosting of these or a similar workshop would be useful, so we are exploring options around this idea – more details below! We all bullied through the sleepy post-lunch hour with a Q&A panel I hosted with Aaron Davis, Helen Baer, and Walker Sampson. We then brought everyone out of the lunch coma with lighting talks by Rachel Vagts, David Fasman, Stevie Gunter, Amber D'Ambrosio, Medellee Antonioli, and Sara Davis.

I want to give extra thanks to Emily Schwartz who did the lion's share of the work coordinating and organizing the conference. Everything went so smoothly and that is thanks to her dedicated and competent work. Thanks also go to Erin McElroy for designing the program and assisting Emily, Sean Babbs for managing the web registration, Patty Rettig for managing the accounts and money transfers, David Fasman for handling memberships, and Aaron Ramirez for bringing and displaying our Preservation Kits.

## **Spring Meeting – The NEW ‘Western Roundup’**

This is just a reminder that WAM will be taking place in **San Francisco, CA** from **April 21-25, 2020** and is being hosted by the Society of California Archivist. More information is online here: <https://calarchivists.org/WAM2020> Thank you to everyone who responded to the survey I sent out a few weeks ago to get a quick head count of who is planning to attend. We recognize that while San Francisco is a lovely place to hold a conference, it is also exorbitantly, if not prohibitively expensive. Everyone on the planning committee is doing what we can to keep the costs as low as possible. We are, however, very pleased that a number of you are still planning to attend and we will be reaching out to let you know when and where our SRMA-specific will take place. We will have a great time for sure!

## **Continuing Education Coordinator and a Library Carpentry (or similar) Workshop**

As I mentioned, I heard from a number of you that you would like to see SRMA host a Library Carpentry or similar type workshop. I believe that this is definitely a possibility and I and the SRMA Board will be discussing this soon. To that end, I am very pleased to share that Craig Haggitt has been approved by the board to be our new Continuing Education Coordinator. I know that we haven't been able to do much in the way of continuing education recently, and we hope to turn that around soon, especially with Craig's help. Please join me in welcoming Craig and keep a lookout for more information about possible continuing education programming.

With warmest regards (especially as winter is descending on us all),  
Heather

# Cover Story

## **15,000 Cards: Digitizing the Boulder County Assessor Card Collection at the Carnegie Library**

by Nicole K. Docimo

Working in the reading room at the Carnegie Library for Local History, not often does a day go by without being asked a version of the question, “Do you have information about the house at this address?” When asked this question, the first thing we do is head to a wall of archival boxes in the southeast corner of our reading room. Here lives the Boulder County Assessor Real Estate Appraisal Card Collection, a set of over 30,000 cards that Boulder County created to assess real estate values.

Each double-sided card measures about 9 x 11 inches and has a photograph of the structure on the property in the top right corner. In addition to real estate appraisal information, the card includes a legal description of the property, address, owner at the time the card was created, a footprint drawing of the house, and an inventory of the structure by category (for example 3 toilets counted in the plumbing section, and a carport in the “private garage” section). The bulk of the cards span from 1929 to about the mid-1960s, with some cards or entries on cards reaching into the 1970s and 80s. Each card assesses the value of a structure at one address, although many addresses have multiple cards spanning several dates depending on the age of the house.

When someone walks in the door looking for information or photographs of a property, their eyes light up when we slide the assessor card out of the box, and they are able to see what their house looked like when it was just built and had no landscaping, or how a set of back windows looked originally. They’re charmed to see that in 1960 there was only one bathroom and Charles L. and Gladys Love lived there. Or as I discovered with a patron last month whose house had been moved from one property to another, the assessor card confirmed that the house had been moved by 1961.

After pulling these cards out day after day for decades, the staff decided to begin the process of digitizing. It was decided that the roughly 15,000 cards that encompass just the city of Boulder (at least according to 1960s maps) would be tackled first as they receive the highest patron use, especially as our library has become more and more utilized for local real estate and architectural information.

Over some months of planning and figuring out how the project could be feasible, the process was decided: we would create a cataloging record for each address (confirming the address with current Boulder County assessor information online), scan the photograph on each card, and then scan the entire card. Our cataloging records would provide us with a database searchable by address, block and subdivision; and the high-resolution scans of the photographs and whole cards would provide us with



Appraised 19 29  
**BOULDER COUNTY REAL ESTATE APPRAISAL**  
 OWNER Mary ~~Robert~~ & Joanne Brines  
 HOUSE No. 636 STREET Spruce CITY \_\_\_\_\_  
 LOTS E 33 1/2 ft. of 8 BLOCK 100 ADDITION J. A. Smith  
 Year Constructed \_\_\_\_\_ Est. Life in Years \_\_\_\_\_

ESTIMATE OF VALUATION  
 BLDG. PART A BLDG. PART B GARAGE  
 No. Cubic Feet. 15392 15392  
 Cost per cu. ft. 32 32  
 Total Cost. \$ 3078 \$ 3326  
 Porches 187 187  
 Garage 184 184  
 Extras \_\_\_\_\_  
 TOTAL \$ 3451 \$ 3750  
 % Obsolescence \_\_\_\_\_  
 35% Physical Dep. 1201 1500  
 Net After Deducting Depreciation \$ 2250 \$ 2250  
 30% Utility Dep. 650  
 PRESENT VALUE \$ 1600

BUILDING PLAN  
 14 10 7  
 12 11 36  
 5 5 11 8  
 7 x 14 x 16 = 1568  
 24 x 36 x 16 = 13824  
 15392 cu. ft.  
 5 x 11 x 10 = 550 cu. ft.  
 7 x 10 x 10 = 700 " "

DESCRIPTION  
 Class of Bldg. 2-Bdy Basement Full  
 Construction Brick Roof Shingles  
 Char. of Const. Med. Heating Steam  
 Exterior Brick Plumbing Hot. Hd.  
 Interior Finish Plaster Light Electric  
 Floors Spl. Priv. Garage Yes  
 Stories 1 1/2 Barns or Sheds No  
 Fire Resist. No State of Reps. Fair  
 Foundation Stone Local Imps. all

ADDITIONS AND BETTERMENTS  
 YEAR AMOUNT YEAR AMOUNT  
 \$ \$ \$ \$

SUMMARY  
 DESCRIPTION AMOUNT  
 Building Permit \$  
 Original Cost, Improvements Only \$  
 Additions and Betterments \$  
 Owner's Estimate of Present Value \$  
 Private Appraisal \$  
 Insurance \$  
 Mortgage \$  
 Monthly Rental \$  
 Advertised for Sale \$  
 Transferred in 19 \$

ANNUAL ASSESSMENT  
 YEAR LAND IMPROVEMENTS TOTAL  
 1938 \$ 280 \$ 1040 \$  
 1939 \$  
 1940 \$  
 1941 \$  
 1942 \$ 320 \$ 1040  
 1943 \$  
 1944 \$  
 1945 \$  
 1946 \$  
 1947 \$

Height of Building 16  
 1961 420 2250



preservation-quality digital copies of these materials, including what is often the only photograph we have of a property. When all the cards are digitized in this way, we will have a digital historical record of properties within the city of Boulder during a period of major housing growth that patrons can access from anywhere!

We began slowly with just one staff member cataloging the cards and a few volunteers scanning photographs and cards. After working out some kinks and tweaks, including streamlining cataloging records to decrease the amount of staff time spent on research, and training an additional substitute and volunteer cataloger for the project, we now have over 3,000 cards cataloged on our website, soon to be complete records with photo and card scans uploaded.

Most recently we are in the final stages of finishing a mini-project within this larger project: digitizing all of the assessor cards for one of Boulder's historic housing districts: the Mapleton Hill Historic District. Previously we had been working through the cards in alphabetical order, going box by box, but for this project we went by a map and list of houses in the Mapleton Hill



Historic District. All of the over 400 addresses within this district have been cataloged, and we are just finishing up the scanning and uploading. You can see the Mapleton Historic District assessor cards here: <https://bit.ly/3634SLZ>

As a new archivist who just recently transitioned from being the primary cataloger on this project to overseeing the project, figuring out the best way to get such a large volume of materials cataloged without sacrificing accuracy has been a big learning experience. We continue to learn as we go, building in more ways to check our work and also accepting that there will be a margin of error but that the benefit of having such a large and useful collection digitized is worth that small margin of error. Developing a larger team of dedicated staff and volunteers who care deeply about creating an accurate database is key, and also having multiple eyes interact with the same card and record through the digital creation process (cataloger, photo scanner, card scanner, uploader) helps to cross-check information.

As we continue to plug away at this multi-year digitization project, we are excited to be able to share it with other area archivists. Have you been working on a similar project or want to get started? I would love to hear about it! Email me at [Docimon@boulderlibrary.org](mailto:Docimon@boulderlibrary.org).

Check out the 3,000+ cards we have digitized so far at this link: <https://bit.ly/2MHq9Dq>

Appraised 19 42


### BOULDER COUNTY REAL ESTATE APPRAISAL

OWNER Marion A. Siderlist

HOUSE No. 304 STREET Mapl. CITY Co.

LOTS 14-15 BLOCK 1 ADDITION Mapl. Park

Year Constructed 1941 Est. Life in Years



**ESTIMATE OF VALUATION**

	BLDG PART A	BLDG PART B	GARAGE
No. Cubic Feet	11340	4800	4200
Cost per cu. ft.	24	10	64
Total Cost	\$2608	\$4800	\$2512
Porch			
Garage			
Extras			
TOTAL	\$	\$	\$
% Obsolescence			
10% Physical Dep.			
Net After Deducting Depreciation	\$2608	\$4800	\$2512
4.0% Utility Dep.	\$1528	\$1920	\$1000
PRESENT VALUE	\$1570	\$3880	\$1512

**BUILDING PLAN**

Handwritten notes on the building plan:   
26 x 24 x 15 = 9360   
16 x 3 x 15 = 720   
12 x 7 x 15 = 1260   
11340   
21 x 20 x 10 = 4200   
2600   
480   
250   
3330   
330   
3060   
15 ft   
10 ft   
7 ft   
12 ft   
7 ft   
10 ft   
6 ft   
20 ft   
Height of Building 15 ft

**DESCRIPTION**

Class of Bldg.	Basement	Roof	Heating	Plumbing	Light	Priv. Garage	Barns or Sheds	State of Reps.	Local Imps.
C+	Full	W	Hot Water	W	W	W	W	W	W

**ADDITIONS AND BETTERMENTS**

YEAR	AMOUNT	YEAR	AMOUNT

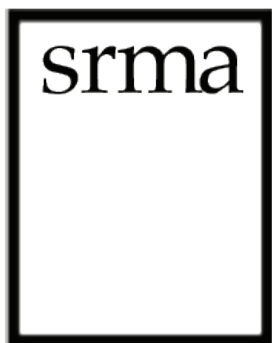
**SUMMARY**

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	YEAR
Building Permit	\$2500	1938
Original Cost, Improvements Only		1939
Additions and Betterments		1940
Owner's Estimate of Present Value		1941
Private Appraisal		1942
Insurance		1943
Mortgage		1944
Monthly Rental		1945
Advertised for Sale		1946
Transferred in 19		1947

**ANNUAL ASSESSMENT**

YEAR	LAND	IMPROVEMENTS	TOTAL
1938			
1939			
1940			
1941			
1942			
1943	270	1720	
1944	270	2030	
1945			
1946			
1947			

1956 400 3000



# Governance

**President: Heather Bowden**

Director of Special Collections, Archives, and Preservation  
University of Colorado Boulder Libraries

**Vice President: Megan Friedel**

Head of of Special Collections, Archives,  
and Preservation  
University of Colorado Boulder Libraries

**Past President: Kate Crowe**

Curator of Special Collections and Archives  
University of Denver

**Secretary: Laura Hoff**

**Treasurer: Patty Rettig**

Head Archivist  
Water Resources Archive, Colorado State  
University

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Archivist and Librarian  
Iliff School of Theology

**Program Director: Emily Schwartz**

Communications and Student  
Services Specialist  
University of Denver

**Preservation Member-at-Large:**

**Aaron Ramirez**

**Membership Coordinator:**

**David Fasman**

MLIS Candidate  
University of Denver

**Society Archivist: Kalyani Fernando**

**Newsletter Editor: Nathalie Proulx**

Reference Archivist  
The Dance Archive; University of Denver

**Continuing Education Coordinator:**

**Amanda Stow**

**Electronic Resources/Website**

**Coordinator: Sean Babbs**

**Need to renew your  
membership?**

Contact David Fasman  
david.fasman@du.edu

**Do you have any interesting projects  
or collections to feature in the next  
issue of *Rocky Mountain Archivist*?**

Contact Nathalie Proulx at  
nathalie.proulx@du.edu