

July 2010 Summer Walking Tour
Josephine B. Jones House & Park, 2631 52nd Ave Ct

Excerpted information from the walking tour

Please contact the Greeley Historic Preservation Office at 970.350.9222 for questions, more information or if you would like to duplicate or use these tour notes.

Edward and Daisy Briggs

- owned this property from approximately 1915 – 1940. They owned a large farm including this property.

Daisy E. Briggs (Daisy Baird)

- b. Nov. 8, 1874 at Central City, Neb.; died in Greeley – in March 1962
- went to Illinois as a small child then came to Greeley
- married Edward T. Briggs in Greeley March 21, 1892
- member of Trinity Episcopal Church
- had 6 children – 3 died before Daisy (daughter Ida, son Paul, maybe another)

Edward T. Briggs – died 10/8/1940 – age 68

- Born in Hollowell, Michigan, May 12, 1872
- came to Greeley w/ parents at age of 2
- attended Greeley schools and bought a farm near Greeley
- married Daisy Baird
- retired in 1938 and moved to Denver

House Construction

In 1958, Josephine B. Jones purchased Lot 4, Block 2, Highland Park w/ the understanding she could build a multi-family dwelling; in May 1963, the house with an apartment was completed.

- built by Phelps Construction Company – permit issued in October 1962, completed by May 1963
- EH Horton did the plumbing
- Herdman Electric did the electrical work

Highland Park platted in August 1955

- encompasses blocks including both sides of 52nd Ave Court to both sides of 50th Ave and includes the portion of 52nd Ave Ct that wraps around to the south.
- original boundaries:
 - 26th Street – Highland Road
 - 52nd Ave Ct. – Broadview Dr.
 - 52nd Ave. – Crestmoore Dr.
 - 51st Ave. – Dartmouth Dr.
 - 50th Ave. – Elwood Dr.

Josephine B. Jones

- Born October 1, 1900, died April 16, 1991
 - Obituary published April 18, 1991
- Education
 - Educated at CU-Boulder, Northwestern University, and received her Master's from Columbia University. She also attended Madam Daykarhanova's School for the Stage in New York.
 - Member of Delta Kappa Gamma at CU-Boulder
 - Was invited by the Brooklyn Museum of Archeology to accompany them to Egypt
- Family history
 - Grandfather Albert Wrenn Jones and grandmother & father James Hall Jones came to Greeley 1884
 - Spent winters in Greeley and summers in log cabin on ranch near Casper, Wyoming
 - In a magazine interview, Josephine said, "The Indians were drawn to the door by the smell of my grandmother's bread in the oven."
 - In Greeley, lived in a house on 8th Street near downtown.
- Life and work
 - Loved theater – began b/c mother took her to shows at Greeley Opera House
 - Took piano lessons, dancing, water color painting
 - Played a "violet" (flower) in a production at South Ward School
 - Took an oral reading class at Colorado Teacher's College (now UNC) when 14 yrs old
 - Got scholarship to University of Colorado – speech and drama
 - As a child, showed her independence and traveling spirit
 - With another infant friend, traveled down 6th Street to hunt an imaginary rabbit
 - At a young age, set off for the circus by herself. Made it three blocks before getting hauled off home
 - Went fishing regularly with her father at Cheyenne's lakes
 - Taught speech and drama
 - Taught speech, drama and debate for a single year at Greeley Central High School while at home to care for her ailing mother (1927)
 - Worked for twenty years in Ossining, New York schools.
 - Taught English to Russians in New York
 - Library works included presentations and storytelling
 - Presented "The Three Frontiers of Colorado" to the Friends of the Library at UNC, an original work detailing the past, present, and future of Colorado in 1976
 - Visited 31 countries as of 1970, ranging from North America and Europe to Africa and South America
 - When came back to Greeley, supported Greeley Philharmonic, Civic Theatre and Meadowlark Puppet Theatre
 - Was a continual presence in local politics

- 90th birthday featured a celebration with over 150 friends
- Failing eyesight when older – learned Braille
- Never married or had children; property, including house at 2631 52nd Avenue Court and the 10 adjoining acres of land destined to become part of Josephine Jones Park, were donated to the city of Greeley.
 - This was after Josephine Jones attempted to donate it to the Audubon Society, who said that they could not afford the land (probably due to upkeep costs).
 - The house’s contemporary design drew praise, as did its 19th century furnishings
- Membership and clubs
 - Served on the 1970 Greeley Centennial Program Committee
 - Co-chair of the Greeley Centennial-Bicentennial Commission
 - Founder of the Heritage Association of Northern Colorado
 - Member of the Greeley Women’s Club
 - Member of the Nature Conservancy
 - Member of the Friends of the Library
 - Member of Questors
 - Member and chairman of the Want-To-Know (WTK) Club, Greeley’s oldest literary club, founded in 1890
 - Former president of the American Association of University Women (Local chapter) from 1934-1935.
- Awards and Recognition
 - In 1963, Jones was honored by the CU Alumni Association for Community Service as a retired teacher, for her community service and her time as co-chairman of the Greeley Centennial-Bicentennial Commission
 - One of the first proponents of Xeriscaping in Greeley, which is reflected in the natural status of her park and housing landscape.
- Legacy includes:
 - The Josephine Jones Lecture Series hosted by the Communications Department at the University of Colorado at Boulder
 - Her house is now the home for the Greeley Forestry Department
 - The Josephine Jones Park in Greeley, which was donated to the city upon her death
 - The park was named as Greeley’s best place to run by *Tribute* writer Dan England.
 - A statue of Josephine Jones by J. Tom Carrillo exists in the park.
 - One of the engravings on the outside of the Greeley city Museum features Josephine Jones.
 - The Josephine Jones Fund, which was “endowed to promote high-quality public discourse needed for effective democratic deliberation.”
 - Her gardening cultivated hundreds of thousands of tulip bulbs, many of which were given to family and friends and still grow around Greeley.
- Diary Entries

- 1909: Simple, single sentence entries. Largely concerned with going down-town, seeing her father leave or getting a present. Few details on her birthday or Christmas. Mentions taking tulips to her teacher on May 24.
- 1910: Lived on 1118 8th Street, rode a Shapleigh Jr. bicycle, weighed 57 pounds and stood 4'2". Entries appear even more simple and forced, with entries such as January 11th's: "It is the same as ever."
 - In fact, her most elaborate occurs around the months of June, when she outlines where they have arrived in a family trip (without further details) and in December, where she states on the 25th that she "got many pretty things at Christmas".
- 1911: Now 4'4", Jones tends toward greater detail, such as recording the high temperature of the day. However, every day appears to be "clear" with few storms or even rain.
 - Throughout the summer, Jones outlines her many automobile rides for the first time.
 - There are a few longer stories at the end of the journal in the memorandum section.
 - On Christmas, she received calling cards, an easel, books, 'sweet-smelling things', and a griddle. This shows her early nature as an artist, a cook, and a socialite.
- 1912: Like the 1911 journal, this one has perpetual clear days and temperatures, but includes more serious and humorous matters.
 - For instance, her grandpa died on February 28, eleven days shy of turning 76. He died of "frights, phlebitis, heart trouble, and a large stone in the bladder."
 - The funeral, two days later, has details about the flower arrangement and the casket, but very little about her feelings. In fact, she has written in small lettering, "I did not go to school."
 - On her birthday, Jones received a new coat, a lace collar, "The Little Colonel's House Party", and started dance and gymnastics lessons.
 - She also noted the fact that she happened to "squawk out loud in school accidentally."
- 1913: The latter half of the diary is empty.
 - The first half is nothing extraordinary, until May 25, where she developed the whooping cough and maintained this illness until the end of the journal on July 28.
 - Not only did Jones have the whooping cough, but her mother and father both developed symptoms. This explains the repeated entries about Dr. Templeton giving them a treatment.
 - She was bored enough to record, in detail, the city whooping cough quarantine announcement posted nearby.
- 1925-29 (?): This diary is less concerned with the day-to-day happenings of Josephine Jones and more interested in the various phrases, newspaper clippings, songs and poems that Jones found during this time.

- Most are interested in God, women, and friendship.
 - Some focus on the power of women’s organizations, while others look to faith and its power.
 - 1939: This final journal was recorded on Jones’ trip to Europe in June-August of 1939.
 - She made her way from Paris and Italy to Germany and Austria. Interestingly, Jones’ focus on the social and the architectural is plain, as she dances or socializes many nights and looks to the flowers and the buildings, rather than the people.
 - The tensions in Europe seem to go largely unrecorded, though Jones could not have missed them.
 - Jones’ handwriting is far worse than as a child, which makes some records illegible.
 - In Munich, for instance, she records (without disdain, and possibly with some motivation) the graves of the fallen Nazis of the Beer Hall Putsch and the marching youths.
 - Her records also show how “Everyone in Munich is happy and busy” and how the German guide said that the city could use another half-million workers (even with rampant unemployment in the United States).
 - The final entry, of August 3-6, records her passage back to the United States and how the large ship made it harder for her to reach her dogs ten decks below easily.
- First Congregational Sunday School
 - 1909: Assorted Prayers and Bible Study materials, ranging from Bible verses and lessons to songs and poems. Also has a nice illustration by Jones of birds and flowers on the last page.
 - 1910: composed of coloring cards with Bible lessons on them, with holes punched to allow drawstrings to compile them into a single book.
- House donation to City of Greeley
 - Home and 10 acres donated to City in 1990 to develop into park for citywide use
 - Also donated \$25,000 for park development
 - City purchased additional 26.5 acres – plans for walking and biking
 - Forestry moved into the home in fall of 1992

Xeriscaping

- The act of using more drought-resistant or native plants to decrease water consumption, fertilizer use, workload, and pesticides.
 - Is not “hardscaping” or “zero-scaping” which refer to the widespread use of concrete and stone to replace plants.
 - Low-maintenance plantings chosen to blend with native growth.
- Is often linked with low-rainfall areas such as the American Southwest, but can be used in any place with limited water reserves or increased human demand

- Can cut water costs by up to 60% by reducing or eliminating lawn water use.
- Also often eliminates mowing requirements.
- Does not mean the sole use of low-water plants; while high-demand plants (like roses) are less desirable, they are viable especially when grouped together in high-water sections.
- Requires deep tilling, lots of planning and plant selection, and weed maintenance similar to a garden.

Architecture of House

- Ranch style
- Side-gabled roof, wide-overhanging eaves, brick with brick sills
- Long narrow windows, wood shingle siding b/n windows
- 1 story with finished walkout basement
- Semi-attached garage – front gabled roof
- South and west sides are mostly windows
- House design reflects that she originally built it with an apartment and for the purposes of donating to an organization (such as Audobon Society and City of Greeley) – large room, lots of windows – meeting room.

The National Institute for Urban Wildlife designated it has an Urban Wildlife Sanctuary in April 1995.