The American Greeter

Greeters' National Home Opened May 1
With Splendid Omens for the Future

PRESIDENT DEXFENBAEHER AND OTHER PROMINENT OFFICERS PARTICIPATE IN PROGRAM—TELEGRAMS OF CONGRATULATION ATTEST THE GOOD WILL OF HOTEL FRATERNITY TOWARD THE PROJECT—MORE THAN $1,000 IN NEW DONATIONS RECEIVED—FIRST APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION COMES FROM ST. LOUIS.

CEREMONIES impressive in their simplicity commemorated the opening of the Greeters' National Home in Denver, Colo., Thursday evening, May 1, 1924. In the presence of more than a hundred Greeters and Auxiliary members, many of whom had traveled great distances in order to join in this momentous event, the Home opening was commemorated with heartfelt expressions of pride and gratitude in the passing of this great milestone of Greeterism.

It is pleasant to believe—in fact, we must believe—that from every part of this great land the deep feeling that actuated those actually present at the Home opening was echoed in the hearts of the thousands who compose the unified membership of the Greeters of America. If "thoughts are things," as students of spiritual philosophy assure us they are, then a great wave of joy and good-will must surely have poured in upon the cheerful scene at Seventeenth and Market streets—the good wishes and prayers of the absent ones mingling with the aspirations of the representative membership who were present in the flesh.

It is safe to say that there were few wearers of the G. of A. emblem, wherever located, who did not pause on the evening of May 1, in whatever occupation may have engaged them at the time, to reflect that this night commemorated the opening of the institution they had helped to found and are helping to maintain.

Even before 8 o'clock, the evening hour designated for the opening program, the hotel men and women began to gather in the big, cheerful home on the five-acre tract that represents the tangible property of the Greeters' Home Association. Their automobiles were parked in the spacious yard that is reached via a shaded driveway opening from the inviting gateway address of the Home. For many this was their first opportunity to inspect the building, and many expressions of surprise and pleasure were heard, as new realization was gained by these visitors of the fact that the Greeters have, in reality, a cheerful and commodious refuge for their unfortunate brethren.

The great photograph sent by the Greeters of San Francisco of the immense gathering at the 1923 convention and which adorns one of the living room walls, was studied with interest by many who saw it for the first time.

When the gathering was complete all assembled in the large sun parlor and J. A. Gallaher, chairman of the Home Board, as master of ceremonies, opened the formal program with a brief but heartfelt address.

MR. GALLAHER told of his pride at having been identified with a movement which had brought such a project to fruition, and predicted a great destiny for it. "With one of the largest industries in America today behind us, I am convinced that it is only necessary for the attention of hotel men to be directed out here in the West, to insure their support for this venture," he said. "We have begun in a modest way. There will be many problems which we will have to face, but, with the co-operation of the membership, these will dwindle away. I would rather have it said of me that I had a part in this service for humanity than that I had built the most magnificent hotel this country has ever seen. It is my belief that others feel as I do—that this feeling is universal.

"While there has been opposition to this project, and will continue to be, I am not troubled by not the least shadow of doubt that the great majority of this great organization will carry it on and successfully complete what we have modestly begun."

Mr. Gallaher then introduced Mayor Benjamin F. Stapleton of Denver. Mayor Stapleton introduced his remarks by expressing the thought that, while he wished the association unbounded success in its work of caring for unfortunate, he could make only one greater wish, and that would be that there should be no more unfortunate.

He thanked the organization for selecting Denver as the site of its national institution, and commended the judgment of the members in so doing, because of his conviction that no better spot for a home of this character could be found. "You will find that the people of Denver will view with each other in trying to do things for this Home and the soldiers who are quartered at the Fitzmonas General Hospital, the Agnes Memorial Sanitarium for tuberculosis patients and the many other institutions of like character that have been erected here for fortunes. The same helping hand will be extended to those who seek refuge in this Home, and the Greeters' organization will thus find that it selected wisely in founding its home in Denver."

COMMENTING upon the welcoming remarks of Mayor Stapleton, Chairman Gallaher thanked him for his graceful hope that there might be no more unfortunate in the ranks of the organization, but added: "While I, too, hope there may not be many of these, the poor we have always, and I know of no work with which I would rather be associated than that of helping to maintain this home for those who need it."

Mr. Gallaher then read a few communications from Greeters both present and absent. He headed his list by acknowledging the gift to the Home fund of a check for $200 from Mrs. Rose L. Cook, proprietor of the Sears Hotel, Denver. Mrs. Cook is a member of the Colorado Ladies' Auxiliary, and decided to make this generous donation after reading the April issue of The American Greeter and after listening to a five-minute address which Mr. Gallaher made to the Auxiliary at its last meeting.

He further announced a gift of $25 from the Colorado Ladies' Auxiliary.

A telegram from George Wolf, member of the national board of governors at Chicago, was read and followed by an ovation of applause. The telegram was accompanied by a check for $50 and contained a promise of $50 a year from Mr. Wolf as long as he lived.

Miss Marjorie Gallaher, daughter of the chairman of the meeting, then rendered two vocal selections accompanied by De Vivo, famous Western harpist. The songs were "In the Garden of My Heart" and "I'll Forget You," and her rendering of them proved Miss Gallaher the possessor of a delightful voice and a charming manner.
Board Selects Site.

The personnel of this board remained the same until after the 1923 convention at San Francisco, when Mr. Dutton resigned, J. B. Farber of Denver being appointed in his place. Mr. Farber, who is now president of the Greeters of Colorado, resigned, hoping that Mr. Dutton would reconsider his action. Upon Mr. Dutton's remaining firm in his decision, President Deffenbacher appointed Martin E. Rowley, member of the finance committee, to fill the vacancy on the board.

After many weeks spent by the original members of the Home Board in looking over various sites, the selection was made of a five-acre tract located at Seventeenth Avenue and Ulster Street, Denver, in the suburb known as Montclair, on which, amid fruit trees and garden plots, was located a comfortable residence and outbuildings. This property was purchased from the owner, Mrs. Adelaide R. Rankin on Lincoln's birthday, February 12, 1922, for $12,500. Immediately afterward a large sun parlor addition was added to the residence.

Dedication in June, 1922.

Four months later, on June 21, an enthusiastic gathering of Greeters from all over the West, including Louis Lucas, the national president, met in Denver to participate in the dedication of the Home. The dedication was set for a time that would make it possible for delegates en route for the Pittsburgh convention to stop off and attend the ceremonies.

On this occasion, J. A. Gallaher, chairman of the board of trustees of the Home, presided and presented the deed to the property to President Lucas. Lieutenant Governor Earl Cooley represented the state of Colorado at the dedication and predicted a wonderful destiny for an association which had proved by its action in establishing such a refuge that it was founded upon right principles.

President Lucas responded for the national association and accepted the deed in its behalf.

Until such a time as it should be possible to open it for the purpose that had led to its founding, the Home Board placed the national secretary, then Leigh A. Fuller, in the home as custodian. Mr. Fuller was succeeded by Harry Schoefeld, when the latter became national secretary.

Per Capita Maintenance Tax.

At the Pittsburgh convention a per capital assessment of $1 a year was voted into effect for the maintenance of the home, this to be included in the national dues. It was this assessment, in the last analysis, which made possible the realization of the association's dreams for opening the home.

At the San Francisco convention in June, 1923, President Deffenbacher, in his opening address, stated that in his opinion the time for opening the home would be ripe when the treasurer should have $10,000 on hand, insuring sufficient backing for the venture.

He has kept in close touch with the home board. When, early in March, it became evident that the goal had been reached—at a much earlier date than any one directly connected for the venture had hoped for or expected—Mr. Deffenbacher jumped on a train and came to Denver, pausing en route at St. Louis and Kansas City, and taking in Omaha on his return trip.

Decision to Open Home.

Mr. Deffenbacher arrived in Denver Saturday morning, March 8, and was closeted the greater part of the day with Messrs. Gallaher, Bennett and Rowley of the Home Board. He had a conference with Secretary Schoefeld the following day and completed arrangements for the home opening. The date for this opening was set by Mr. Deffenbacher and the members of the board as May 1, 1924.

The opening of the home will be marked by fitting ceremonies, which will be attended by President Deffenbacher and other national officers. It is hoped that a large gathering of Greeters, representing as many as possible of the charters composing this great organization, will come to Denver to attend the opening. An invitation is extended to them by the hotel men of Denver, through President E. C. Bennett and Secretary Martin E. Rowley of the Rocky Mountain Hotel Association, to come to Denver at that time and be the guests of the Denver hotels. The more who come, the better will be the entertaining hotel men and national officers be pleased.

The Home Board is now working out a program which will fittingly open the doors of the institution which means so much to every true Greeter, and this will be announced later, through the hotel press and letters to the charter officers.

So much for the past history of the Greeters’ Home. It is a past of which the association may well be proud. The future, of course, is a matter of conjecture, but if the Greeters of America as an association is properly safeguarded, there need be no misgivings as to what is to come out of this auspicious beginning.

Another View of the National Greeters' Home, showing the sun parlor addition erected after its purchase by the Greeters' Home Association.
The Greeters' National Home

Located at 1702 Ulster Street
Denver, Colorado

The Greeters' Home was authorized at the annual convention of the Greeters held at New Orleans in May, 1921, and was established to provide a haven for its aged and infirm members without home ties and who are unable to care for themselves, and for the further purpose of affording a refuge in the dry climate of Colorado for their younger members suffering with incipient tuberculosis.

From the beginning of the organization such a home had been the dream of its founders. The purchase of the property and the formal opening of the first unit of the Home in May, 1924, was, in part, a realization of that dream. Subsequently, in August, 1926, a new addition was dedicated.

The property upon which stand the two units mentioned comprises five acres, surrounded by stately shade and many bearing fruit trees. Intensive truck gardening and poultry raising is carried on and in that work guests who are physically able find healthful exercise. The Home is conveniently located about five miles from the business center of Denver and is easily accessible by automobile, street car and bus. It is situated on high ground and commands an inspiring view of the Rocky Mountain range. The property, representing a cash investment of $54,197.63, is entirely paid for and free from all incumbrance.

The revenue for its maintenance is procured from the following sources: An apportionment of $1.50 from the yearly dues of each member; 25 cents per year per member from the Women's Auxiliary; 50 per cent of the revenue derived from annual convention editions of The American Greeter, and 5 per cent yearly of the aggregate money received by The American Greeter under its contract with the Hotel Greeters of America for the publication of the official magazine; yearly subscriptions from hotels, hotel associations, Greeters and Greeter charters, and the earnings from its endowment trust.

On January 1, 1929, there was created an Endowment Trust Fund with The International Trust Company of Denver, the largest and most substantial trust company in Colorado, as Trustee. There was deposited at that time approximately $30,000.00, which now has grown to about $76,000.00. Under the terms of this Trust Agreement, the income only is to be used for maintenance of the Home, while the principal thereof, with additions thereto, is to remain undisturbed. Every possible legal safeguard surrounds said trust fund and the supervision of the trust and its handling is under the direction of the Board of Trustees of the Home Association.

The operation of the Home is under the personal supervision of the Board of Trustees of the Home Association, residents of Denver, of which J. A. Gallaher, former hotel operator, is chairman; J. P. Karsh, Windsor Hotel, vice chairman; E. C. Bennett, manager Shirley-Savoy Hotel, treasurer, and M. E. Rowley, international secretary-treasurer. The international president of the Hotel Greeters of America, Crawford M. Noble, Noble Hotel, Jonesboro, Ark., by virtue of his office, is also a member of the Board of Trustees. Weekly visits are made by each trustee; monthly meetings are held and all purchases of supplies, receipts and expenditures of funds are closely scrutinized. There are but four paid employees, including a physician, who visit the Home daily, and the pay-roll expense of the four employees is less than $400.00 per month.

There are sixteen guests in the Home at present from various sections of the country, one of whom is suffering with incipient tuberculosis, with splendid chances of regaining his health. Six young men have left the Home completely cured and are now back in the hotel business holding responsible positions. Several other guests have returned to their homes or to positions. Twenty-nine guests have passed to the Great Beyond, the majority of whom were buried in the Greeters' plot in beautiful Fairmount Cemetery.

The rules and regulations governing the guests are exceptionally liberal and the Home to those who enjoy its privileges is all that the name "home" implies.

J. A. Gallaher, Chairman Board of Trustees
May 8, 1990

MEMORANDUM

TO: Denver Landmark Preservation Commission

FROM: Robert A. Damerau, Principal City Planner

SUBJECT: Proposed Structures for Preservation, Greeters of America National Home, 1740 & 1760 Ulster Street

The Denver Landmark Preservation Commission has scheduled a public hearing for May 14, 1990 to consider recommending to City Council the designation of the Greeters of America National Home, as a Denver landmark. The hearing will be held at 2:00 p.m. at the Planning and Community Development Office, 200 W. 14th Avenue, Room 280, Denver, CO.

For your information, below is a synopsis of the structures. More extensive background research is available at the Planning and Community Development Office.

Greeters of America National Home

In 1922 Greeters of America, a national organization of hotel employees, established a "National Home" for use of its members who were indigent because of sickness or misfortunes. They first purchased an existing house, built in 1899 by Denver home builder Peter Marder, at 1740 Ulster Street. In the late twenties a large brick residence appearing structure (1760 Ulster Street) was constructed and connected to the original structure by a breezeway. The "Home" was dissolved in the early 1950's and the structures separated. A large amount of recorded historical data concerning the "Home", including monthly newsletters, is in archives at the University of Denver. This was one of the earliest (1899) and few residential developments in this part of the East Colfax Neighborhood until after World War II. The Lt. Governor of the State of Colorado and Mayor Stapleton of Denver participated in the "Home's" dedication ceremonies.

The buildings are presently owner occupied single family residences located in an R-1 zoned area. They are not listed in the Denver Inventory and are not on The National Register of Historic Places.

The Planning Board reviewed this proposed designation at its meeting on May 2, 1990, with respect to: 1) its relationship to the Comprehensive Plan; 2) the effect on the surrounding neighborhood; and 3) such other planning considerations as may be relevant. The Board voted unanimously to recommend approval of designation.