Mt. Prospect Hill, Denver’s first cemetery was founded in 1859
The first office was in the caretaker’s cottage.

The second office and some time chapel was the “old stone house”.

- Unknown who designed/built it
- Exactly when
- How much it cost to build
- It also served as a holding tomb.

H.C. Lowrie was a civil engineer, hired by the Riverside Cemetery Association in 1876, to survey the cemetery laying out the blocks, lots, and plots. He also designed and oversaw construction of the intricately patterned roads still used today. He was elected Denver City Engineer and designed the city’s sewer system.

SOURCE: http://files.usgwarchives.org/co/denver/directories/den76ab.txt
“There is no more difficult work or enterprise, in such a country as that surrounding Denver than the selection and creation of an attractive and desirable cemetery. The naked prairie, treeless and almost verdureless, with but slight inequalities of surface, and total absence of rocks or ridges, would seem to present about as hopeless a basis for an attractive cemetery as one could well imagine.”

-Rocky Mountain News March 29, 1879
The list of those buried at Riverside reads like a Who’s Who of Colorado history and reflects the ethnic diversity of the early pioneers—

- Aunt Clara Brown
- Capt. Silas Soule
- Matsudaira Tadaatsu
- Miguel Antonio Otero
- Three territorial governors
  - John Evans
  - Samuel H. Elbert
  - John L. Routt
- Over 1,200 Civil War Veteran’s, including three Medal of Honor recipients.

Riverside is home to a collection of rare and unique monuments including—

- The Baker Horse
- Lester Drake Cabin
- Wise Monument
- Largest collection of zinc monuments in the U.S.
Riverside Cemetery

In 1890, another cemetery is founded on the plains east of Denver by the Fairmount Cemetery Association.

Riverside and Fairmount collaborated to build Colorado’s first crematory, known as the Denver Crematory. Architect Frank Edbrooke, was commissioned to design the office, chapel and crematorium. Construction on the mission prairie style building began in 1903. The site was chosen to be near the existing greenhouse, built about 1883, because it had a well. The building did not have electricity, heat or plumbing.
But water has not been the only cause for landscape change at Riverside:

- In early cemeteries without endowments, such as Riverside, the families landscaped their own plots. Families of means hired gardeners; others did it themselves. If the family died out or moved on, that care stopped leaving the plantings to fend for themselves and eventually dying out.
- Plant disease—Dutch elm 1960’s.

Most recently:
- Denver flood of 1965
- Drought early last decade

The changing landscape at Riverside, is as much a part of its history as the stories of the people buried there. Water has always been an issue at Riverside; too much due to flooding or not enough due to drought.
In recent years, most of the talk about water at Riverside has focused on the effects that the LACK of water has had on the landscape. BUT the impact irrigation water has had on the rare, irreplaceable monuments has never been discussed, so let’s take a look...

This DAMAGE cannot be reversed; these monuments are gone forever.
Riverside Cemetery was designated a National Historic District in 1994.

One vision for this National Historic District; BUT not ours.

What would happen to these gravesites?
Development of a low impact, accessible, education center in the wetlands area would include:
- Pathways
- Interpretative Signage
- Education Center (the old pump house)
- An outdoor science lab
Riverside Cemetery

Riverside Partners

• Riverside Family Members
• Colorado Assoc. for Lawn Care Professionals
• Hardy Boy Plants
• Front Range Community College
• Denver Botanic Gardens
• Colorado Green Growers Association
• Colorado State University
• Colorado State Forest Service
• Colorado State University Master Gardeners
• Colorado State University Plant Select
• Metro State College
• Iris Colorado
• Denver Rose Society
• Denver Boy Scouts
• Colorado Preservation Inc.
• History Colorado
• Just to name a few...

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Fairmount Heritage Foundation seeks additional partnership opportunities to realize Riverside’s full potential for future generations.
A Brief History- The Site

- 1881: Denver Union Stock Yard Company founded
- 1886: The stockyards officially opened in current location
- 1900: Stockyards cover 105 acres
- 1906: Denver Livestock Exchange incorporated as nonprofit to promote and regulate sales in the yards

Photo Credit: Denver Public Library
A Brief History- The Show

• 1859: Elephant Corral in LoDo used for livestock shows and auctions
• 1898: National Stock Growers Convention- creation of National Livestock Association (riot)
• 1906: First official show opened under a circus big top
• 1906: Formation of the Western Stock Show Association and beginning of longtime relationship with Denver Union Stockyard Company (landowner)
• 1907 & 1908: shows held under “monster” 150 x 175 tent
The Building Chronology

• 1898: First portion of Denver Union Stock Yard Exchange built

Photo Credit: Denver Public Library
The Building Chronology

- 1909: National Amphitheater (Arena) completed

Photo Credit: Denver Public Library
The Building Chronology

- 1917 & 1919: Additions to Union Stock Yard Exchange completed

Courtesy of Thomas J. Noel from his book *Riding High: Colorado Ranchers & 100 Years of the National Western Show.*
The Building Chronology

• 1952: Denver Coliseum dedicated

Courtesy of Thomas J. Noel from his book Riding High: Colorado Ranchers & 100 Years of the National Western Show.
The Building Chronology

• 1973: Construction of the Hall of Education, Beef Palace, Horse Center & National Western Club on north side of Arena
• 1989 voters approve $30 million Stock Show expansion
• 1991 Expo Hall and Stadium Hall Open
• 1995: National Western Events Center, Paddock & Horse Barn open
Why talk about historic resources?

• Creating/maintaining a unique sense of place and identity
• Reuse as a sustainable model for older structures
• Coordination with the neighborhood plan and the community’s desire to retain heritage
• Economic incentives and tools
How do you decide what’s historic?

2007 CDOT Analysis- Federal agencies and projects using federal funds must take into account effects of actions on historic properties

• Section 106 of National Historic Preservation Act
• National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
• Section 4(f)
National Register Historic Districts

Historic Districts recognize a set of buildings, or ensemble, that together meet the criteria, even though each individual structure in the district may not.

Historic Districts are a good way to recognize cultural landscapes.

Cultural Landscapes are “a geographic area, including both cultural and natural resources and the wildlife or domestic animals therein, associated with a historic event, activity or person or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values.”
National Register of Historic Places

- Provides honorary distinction
- Does not prohibit demolition or modification
- Qualifies a structures for tax incentives and grant programs
- Property owners, historical societies, preservation organizations, governmental agencies, and other individuals or groups can begin the process but designation requires owner consent
- Factors into decision-making if a federal agency is involved
Benefits of National Register Designation

20% federal preservation tax credit for qualified rehabilitation (no cap)

20% state tax credit for qualified rehabilitation ($50,000 cap)

Qualification for federal grant programs such as Save America’s Treasures

Qualification for state grant programs, namely those of the State Historical Fund
Determined Eligible: Individually

Livestock Exchange/Denver Union Stock Yard Building 1917
Owner: Livestock Exchange Building
Determined Eligible: Contributing to a District

Denver Coliseum, 1951
Owner: City & County of Denver

National Western Stadium Arena, 1909
Owner: National Western Stock Show Association

McConnell Welders, 1930
Owner: McConnell Denver Properties

Western Stock Show Association Bldg., 1917
Owner: Tom Anthony
Other Structures Eligible as Part of District

National Western Coffee Shop, 4699 Marion Street 1917
Owner: 4699 Marion Street, Inc.

Artist Studio, 4701 National Western Drive 1918
Owner: Neorama LLC

Le Mouton Noir (Historic Sheep Market), 4877 National Western 1922/1929
Owner: Le Mouton Noir

King Energy, 5012 National Western Drive 1900/1920
Owner: Western Stock Show Association

Livestock Bridge & Flyover 1951
Owned by Denver
Cattle Pens/Catwalks- No determination
How Can this be Done?

Example: Lowry
Successful Example: Fort Worth Stock Yards
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Sources:


Denver's
"Salute to the Soil"

DEDICATION
of the
DENVER COLISEUM

January 10, 1952 . 8:00 p.m.