

# HERITAGE

THE UTAH HERITAGE FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

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## Sustaining a Utah Skiing Relic

BY ROBERT MYERS, PRESIDENT, WASATCH MOUNTAIN CLUB FOUNDATION

**Above the Brighton Inn**, at the far south end of the ski area parking lot, stands the Wasatch Mountain Club Lodge. It is a large building, yet few outside of the Mountain Club are aware of its existence, for dense forest hides it from view. Fewer still know of its historical importance as a relic of the dawning of Utah skiing. Historians attribute two groups with the founding of recreational skiing in this state, the Wasatch Mountain Club, and an assortment of Scandinavian immigrants with a love of ski jumping. The latter have long gone to their eternal rest, but the Wasatch Mountain Club goes on, and its historic lodge at Brighton still stands.



*Wasatch Mountain Club members gathered on the porch of the lodge, 1934.*

In the early days of Utah skiing, the 1920's let's say, the Brighton Bowl, with its scenic beauty and broad gentle slopes, was a favored venue for Mountain Club skiers. But while the skiing at Brighton was great, getting there was a

very big problem. The canyon road was primitive and not cleared of snow, so Brighton in winter was cut off from the rest of the world. Skiers, nevertheless, did manage to get to Brighton, but the trip was a two-day affair consisting

of a train ride to Park City, a hike on skis to a high mining camp, an overnight stay there, and then a day long ski trek over a pass and on down to Brighton. In summer, getting to Brighton for outdoor recreation was easier, but even then the trip was a rib-jarring, dusty, day-long affair. Consequently, in winter or summer, enjoy-

ing the splendors of the Brighton Bowl required at least one overnight stay. With this reality in mind, the Wasatch Mountain Club resolved to build a lodge at Brighton where members could gather, prepare meals, socialize and stay overnight.

*(continued on page 4)*

Preserving, protecting and promoting Utah's historic built environment through education, advocacy and active preservation.

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# An Open Letter to our Members

Dear Supporters,

**As you know**, the Ladies' Literary Club building is a tremendous place esteemed for its architecture and rich history. Since receiving this gift of real estate from the Ladies' Literary Club in January 2013, Utah Heritage Foundation has been able to forge a bright future for the building. Through fundraising, restoration, marketing, programming, and operations we've been able to host thousands of people that had previously never been in the building or heard about the Ladies' Literary Club.

Prior to receiving the property, our trustees and steering committee formulated and discussed a business plan for operating the property as a second event center while performing restoration and repairs to the building. One strong caveat of this plan was that Utah Heritage Foundation would faithfully execute the plan to its best ability as long as it would not create a financial burden to the organization.

After eighteen months of ownership and operation, the Utah Heritage Foundation Board of Trustees authorized me to explore all options for transitioning the building to a responsible new steward. The assumptions and financial projections in the business plan have not proven to be positive enough for the organization to hold the property long-term. While this was a difficult decision for the organization to make, we are very pleased with the progress we have made toward restoration and raising awareness about this architectural landmark, its history, and the important historic role of this esteemed club. And the community has discovered a previously-hidden gem of a space that performing arts groups, nonprofit boards, families, and clients all cherish now.

Rest assured that we will meet our obligations to the Ladies' Literary Club through the transition. Those include placing a preservation easement on the property (exterior and interior) in order to protect the building long term, and offering space to the club at Memorial House at no cost for meetings. While the building is in better working condition than when we received it, there is certainly more to do so we're looking for a unique owner who appreciates the history and architecture of the building and will be dedicated to its stewardship. We are also working to place all of the precious collections of the club with new stewards that will properly care for and/or exhibit them.

We are still hosting events at the building and will continue to do so as long as we can. Please check the schedule online and make plans to attend one of the wonderful cultural events coming up. If you know of an event looking for beautiful, unique space encourage them to take a look at the Ladies' Literary Club building. If you know of someone interested in leasing or purchasing the property, have them contact Michael Ferro or Vasilios Priskos at InterNet Properties, (801) 355-0600.

Sincerely,



Kirk Huffaker  
Executive Director



Homes pictured may or may not be included on the tour.

## 45th Annual Historic Homes Tour

Harvard/Princeton Neighborhood

Saturday, April 25, 2015

10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Discounted pre-sale tickets available NOW!

[www.utahheritagefoundation.org](http://www.utahheritagefoundation.org)

**This area is considered** one of Salt Lake City's most prestigious neighborhoods because of its exceptional architecture, large lot sizes and the natural landscape including Red Butte Creek. The tour encompasses two districts, Normandie Heights and Uinta Heights.

Normandie Heights is bordered on the west by 1300 East, the east by 1500 East and includes Harvard Avenue, Princeton Avenue, parts of Laird Avenue, as well as Normandie Circle. Uinta Heights includes the eastern portion of Laird Avenue, Laird Circle, and Uintah Circle.

The homes in this area were built largely between 1926 and 1935 and include Period Revival Cottages, English Tudor, and French Norman style homes. Edward M. Ashton and Edward M. Jenkins were the developers of this area and were important in the growth and development of Salt Lake City's entire east side.

We are certain that you will enjoy our walking tour along the tree-lined, winding streets of this park-like neighborhood.

## Save the Date for 2015 Events

### Historic Pub Crawl

First Thursdays starting in April

### Salt Lake Modern Spring Event

Saturday, May 16, 2015

(See back cover)

### Memory Grove Discovery Day

Wednesday, August 5

Saturday, November 14

### Fall Fundraiser

Friday, September 18, 2015

### Salt Lake Modern Tour

Saturday, October 10, 2015

### Donut Dash 5K

Saturday, November 14, 2015

### Summer Tours

Kearns' (Utah Governor's) Mansion

Meditation Chapel and Memorial House

Salt Lake City & County Building

Summer Tour - TBA

\*Times and dates vary - Check our website for additional information.

# sustaining a utah skiing relic - continued

*(continued from cover)*

Construction of the two-story log structure began in 1929, but it took eight years until the lodge was finally completed later in 1937, because it was built mostly through the labor of club members. The finished structure featured a large common room on the first floor, a dormitory on the second, and an attached kitchen set off to the side. After years of planning and building, club members at last had a base for



*Above - Three members of the Wasatch Mountain Club help to maintain the building by whitewashing the front facade of the lodge. Photo taken in 1933.*

*Right - Wasatch Mountain Club members gathered inside the lodge around the fireplace in 1935. The formal attire of the people pictured suggest that this might have been a board meeting.*



enjoying their favorite skiing and hiking laird. Notably, in 1938, they added something of even greater historic importance than the lodge, the first “ski lift” (actually a rope tow) in Big Cottonwood Canyon.

Over the years, with improvements to the canyon road and better automobiles, overnighting at Brighton became more of an option than a necessity. Owing to this change, use of the lodge gradually diminished, yet the Mountain Club continued to maintain the structure and hold special events there. In 1980, recognizing its historic importance, the club registered the lodge with the National Register of Historic Places. Prior to that in 1979, the club funded a complete remodel of a new kitchen. In 2001, a major addition was added to accommodate modern bathroom facilities and a new water system all made necessary by the installation of sewer systems in Big Cottonwood Canyon. In spite of such actions by the club, however, the ongoing imbalance between lodge usage and expense could not be ignored. A mechanism clearly was needed to preserve the lodge other than through the club member’s dues.

To this end, ownership of the lodge was transferred, in December of 2010, to a newly formed 501(c)(3) charitable non-profit entity called the Wasatch Mountain Club Foundation. The sole purpose of the foundation is to sustain the lodge, in perpetuity, with income from event hosting,

overnight group lodging, donations, and grants. Since its inception, this new lodge funding mechanism has been met with notable success. First, and most importantly, many more people now can use and appreciate this historic building than when it was in its prior status as a private lodge. Second, because of its 501(c)(3) status, the foundation was able to secure a \$31,000 grant from Utah Division of Drinking Water, install a water purification & treatment system and provide potable water, necessary for ongoing lodge rental. Finally, the foundation has succeeded in sustaining the lodge through rental bookings, which are increasing, as well as donations.

While these achievements are laudable, the ultimate success of this private-to-public transition is far from assured. Extensive interior refurbishment is needed to enhance the profitability of the lodge, and even with such improvements, it is likely that ongoing funding through donations will be required for long term preservation of the building. In meeting immediate and future funding needs, the Lodge Foundation has received advice and support from Utah Heritage Foundation, the Salt Lake County Historic Preservation Committee, and the Salt Lake County government. This invaluable assistance is greatly appreciated.

Additional information about the lodge, foundation, and booking availability at [www.wasatchmountainlodge.org](http://www.wasatchmountainlodge.org).

*Robert Myers is President of the Wasatch Mountain Club Foundation, lifetime member of the Wasatch Mountain Club, and a retired contractor experienced in residential construction and remodeling. Robert has been active with numerous construction jobs on the lodge and was pivotal in the creation of the non-profit foundation which now owns the lodge.*



*Above - Members of the Wasatch Mountain Club spent time working on the building. They took a break from their work to pose for this picture in 1932.*



*Left - This photo from 1935 was taken at one of the many events that were hosted at the Wasatch Mountain Club.*

*All photos for the "Sustaining a Utah Skiing Relic" article were published with permission by Special Collections at the J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah.*

# Preservation Issues



*The Draper Park School (left), located at 12441 South 900 East in Draper, Utah, is a Classical Revival style building that was built in 1912 with a later addition. This photo is ca. 1915 before the addition. Photo Courtesy of the Utah State Historical Society.*

*The Yalecrest neighborhood (below) is one of Salt Lake City's best historic neighborhoods that boasts mature tree lined streets and an amazing continuity of architecture. A portion of Princeton Avenue is pictured below.*

## Park School -Draper

After almost 20 years in limbo, there is finally good news for the Park School. At the December 16, 2014 meeting of the Draper City Council, they voted to sell the property to Godfrey Properties to rehabilitate for their growing business. As the building has been listed in the National Register of Historic Places since 1980 and Godfrey Properties is a private entity, they could take advantage of the federal rehabilitation tax credits as a major financial incentive for an income-producing use such as office, retail, or multi-family rental housing. Major credit for this victory goes to Mayor Todd Walker, the Draper City Council, and the Friends of the Park School, a group of local residents working to find an appropriate use for the building and raise funds for its preservation.



## Yalecrest - Salt Lake City

In February 2015, six new local historic district applications came before the Salt Lake City Council for consideration. Five of these were subdivisions within the Yalecrest neighborhood and one was for the City Creek Historic District covering Memory Grove Park. Throughout the process, Utah Heritage Foundation provided information and technical assistance to K.E.E.P. Yalecrest, a neighborhood non-profit organization dedicated to preservation. Utah Heritage Foundation provided public testimony to the Salt Lake City Council advocating to designate the five Yalecrest Historic Districts and the City Creek Historic District. A day before the city council vote, two Yalecrest applications were withdrawn by the applicants. These two districts had an unfavorable ballot return so withdrawing the applications avoided any potential contentiousness that could have arisen from a vote. The remaining three Yalecrest districts, which all had favorable ballot returns, were designated. The City Creek historic district was also designated.

# Utah's Preservation Heroes

Through generous contributions from our donors and sponsors Utah Heritage Foundation is able to fulfill our mission and bring historic preservation to the public. The Board of Trustees, volunteers and staff sincerely thank these Preservation Heroes.

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### Leaving a Legacy Gift

**Utah Heritage Foundation** welcomes your deferred or planned gifts to protect the places that matter for future generations. These gifts may take the form of a general bequest, life insurance, IRA/pension/retirement funds, and life-income gifts (such as a charitable gift annuity, charitable remainder trust, or charitable lead trust).

Estate planning should be undertaken with the assistance of a legal or financial advisor who can help in determining the optimal planned gift for your personal situation, as well as the tax benefits for you and your family. If you have already included Utah Heritage Foundation in your estate, please let us know! We would love to express our gratitude, keep you informed of our achievements and, with your permission, publicly recognize your foresight and generosity.

Learn more about planned giving to Utah Heritage Foundation on our website: [www.utahheritagefoundation.org/supportus](http://www.utahheritagefoundation.org/supportus). Or contact Kirk Huffaker, Executive Director, at (801) 533-0858 ext. 105 or [kirk@utahheritagefoundation.org](mailto:kirk@utahheritagefoundation.org) and he would be happy to meet with you.

**Utah Heritage Foundation**

Memorial House in Memory Grove Park  
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# Salt Lake Modern Spring Event



**Keepin' it Glassy: Sugden's Legacy Lives On**  
**May 16, 2015 from 5:00 until 7:00 p.m.**  
**\$50 - Limited Availability**

Spend the evening at one of John Sugden's first projects after returning to Utah from Chicago. Sugden studied architecture under Mies van der Rohe and took what he learned to build this home for his mother, Roberta Sugden.

Tickets are on sale now at [www.utahheritagefoundation.org](http://www.utahheritagefoundation.org)

Salt Lake  
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