

TIMNATH WALKING TOUR

Ladies and Gentlemen, Welcome to Timnath! Before we start, let me give you a little background.

The first non-Native American to settle in the Timnath area was Ebenezer Davis in 1859. He had come to Colorado to look for gold but, like many others, he was not successful. He traveled north and settled in this area. Because he got along well with the Arapahoe Indians living here at the time, he was allowed to build a log cabin about 1 1/2 miles south of the present town site. It is interesting to note that Chief Friday, the local chief of the band of Arapahoe Indians living along the river could speak English.

1882 is considered the year that Timnath became established. It was the year that the Greeley, Salt Lake and Pacific Railroad built a line between Greeley and Fort Collins that included a switch and open platform here. In addition, in 1882, the Fairview School was built and shortly thereafter the Presbyterian Church was organized.

Timnath was officially incorporated in 1920.

Street scenes pages 45, 53, 59, 60, 73, 96, 106, 110

NOTE: Pages refer to page numbers in the Book "Timnath" which, although currently out of print, is available from the Poudre River Public Library.

I. GRAIN ELEVATOR (pg. 280)

- a) First listed in the Larimer County directories in 1929. Operated until mid-1960s.
- b) Truck scale still in the ground (possibly an arrow head in the Concrete bed)

This Moody/Warren Grain Elevator was erected near the RR tracks and had a rail spur next to the building. You can still see the spur tracks. It was first listed in the Larimer County Directories in 1929. People associated with this grain elevator were familiar names of the day: Robert Strang, Carl Neergard, Pete Day and Joe Mefford. It was later known as the Strang Grain Elevator and was in operation until mid-1960s. The Strang elevator became a floor-covering store for a short time, then a restaurant. The Colorado Feed & Grain closed in 2005.

There was another grain elevator; the Longmont Farmers Milling & Elevator Co. that was located west of the Alpine Cabinet Shop and according to the Larimer County Directories was in operation from 1917 until 1927.

Both elevators had storage bins, augers, grinders and other machinery to mix regular and customized feed formulas for area farmers. In the late 1960s chickens running loose in town got free food eating kernels of Corn spilled on the ground as it was moved to & from the elevator.

The truck scale used to weigh trucks loaded with grain is still in the ground. An arrowhead is reportedly in the concrete top that came from the gravel used in making the concrete.

II. BEET DUMP (pg. 58, 286, 287, 289,

- a) Built in 1905
- b) School let out during beet harvest time for "beet vacation".
- c) Loaded beet trucks had the right of way on highways during beet harvest time.

Sugar beets grown in Northern Colorado were of high quality so growing sugar beets became a major dependable crop for area farmers. 'Beet dumps' were built at intervals along RR tracks so harvested sugar beets could be loaded into train cars and taken to the processing plants. In 1905, to accommodate the many beet growers in the Timnath area, a beet dumping station was build south of and adjacent to the RR Tracks where the metal building now stands. It was an elevated dump that allowed wagons and later trucks to drive up the incline and dump their loads into waiting train cars. (The trucks were side dumping.) In 1936, the beet acreage under cultivation in the Timnath area was 709 acres.

In farm communities, it was not unusual for the schools to close for about 2-3 weeks every fall so the Students could help with the beet harvest. In Timnath this was known as "beet vacation" and is referred to in the minutes of the Timnath School Board.

During the beet harvest it sounded like thunder all day long as the trucks dumped their loads into the train cars. Loaded beet trucks had the right of way on the highways during beet harvest time

III. TIMNATH HOTEL (pg. 54, 55)

- a) Dining Room now a family museum.

The hotel was built in 1905. Mrs. Herman Strauss financed the construction cost of \$2,200.00 at 6% interest. She later owned the hotel. The guest rooms were upstairs and the downstairs served as kitchen, dining room & lobby.

Frequently small businesses were located in the downstairs part of the hotel. Dr. Partridge had his office And drugstore/gift shop there. And there was a soda fountain as well. Other businesses were Mr. Joyce's barbershop, a livery & transfer co. and meat markets. Salesmen (drummers) came to town and stayed at the hotel while they sold their wares to town businesses. The hotel was a center of business and community activity. Organization banquets were sometimes held in the hotel dining room.

It operated as a hotel until 1930. Abram Elliott, Sr. purchased the hotel in 1934 and David Elliott, his son, purchased it from his mother in 1955. It has been the home of the Elliott family until it was sold in about 2013.

IV. THE STRAUSS HOUSE / Severs House

Herman Strauss came to the Timnath area in 1878 and built this house. Herman was the brother of Robert Strauss an early settler who operated a prosperous farm in the area. It later was the home of Mamie Severs, long time Columbine Club member who lived to be 104 years old. She was known for her knitting and the wonderful quilts she made.

According to a historical survey, this house represents popular architectural features of Timnath. (Note the wrought iron fence)

V. Worthington House

- a) Former home of Belle Starr's granddaughter.

VI. TIMNATH STOCKYARDS (pg. 284)

- a) Timnath was one of the main sheep feeding centers of the country.
- b) 110 railcars of livestock shipped from Timnath annually.
- c) Local farmers fed between 2000-3500 head of sheep at a time.
- d) Old Tom (pg. 340) helped herd sheep from stockyards to the farm destination.

Timnath was one of the main sheep feeding centers in the country. Area farmers would feed between 2000 to 3500 head of sheep at a time. According to the Express Courier, an early Fort Collins newspaper, "the approximate number of cars of livestock shipped annually from this station being about 110". The sheep would eat the sugar beet tops and grain stubble. There was a Mexican man known as 'Old Tom' who lived along the RR tracks (pg. 340) and he would help herd the sheep from the stockyards to their final farm destination. According to local residents, all he needed was his dog and a burlap sack.

VII. TIMNATH TRAIN STATION (pg. 60, 71, 118)

- a) Greeley, Salt Lake & Pacific built a rail line between Greeley and Fort Collins in 1882. Switch & open platform here. Became part of the Colorado & Southern railroad.
- b) Station later enclosed to provide a passenger waiting room and Living quarters for the station master.
- c) Passenger service 4 times a day. Fare 15¢ one-way & 25¢ round trip.
- d) "Doodle Bug" combination of engine and passenger car.
- e) Closed in 1940.

The Greeley, Salt Lake & Pacific RR built a rail line between Greeley and Fort Collins. A switch and Open platform was erected here so farmers could ship their crops and livestock. The first train rolled over the route on October 9, 1882. Regular service on the 65-minute trip between Greeley & Fort Collins began December 1882. In 1908, the first refrigerated car filled with honey was shipped to St. Louis by Abe Elliott, Sr. This line later became part of the Colorado & Southern RR. The Station was later enclosed to provide a passenger waiting room and living quarters for the station master. There was passenger service four times a day. Fare was 15¢ one-way and 25¢ round-trip. The passenger train service was discontinued in the late 1930s and was replaced by the "doodlebug", a combination passenger car and engine. Service was discontinued in the 1940s. No one remembers what happened to the station.

VIII. SALT STORAGE BUILDING (pg. 291)

- a) Part of the pickle collecting & sorting station of Libbey-McNeil canning Co.
- b) Salt for the brine stored in this building.
- c) Closed in 1940.

As you look down the RR tracks you will see a small red building. This building was part of the pickle Collecting & sorting station of the Libbey-McNeil Canning Co. Cucumbers were called pickles and they were a good cash crop for area farmers. The manager lived in Timnath and hired local youths to sort and grade the pickles. Salt for the brine was stored in this building and cement foundations remain from the other buildings. It was closed in the 1940s and pickles were then taken to Fort Collins. The Fort Collins pickle station was located at Riverside and Mulberry.

IX. Cabinet Factory.

- a) 1995 fire (pg. 138)
- b) Site of blacksmith shop
- c) Site of beet puller mfg. shop. (pg. 43, 44, 58, 74, 120, 121)

CABINET FACTORY & OFFICE

On this site was located one of Timnath's first blacksmith shops. However, as more land was used to Grow sugar beets, a major enterprise in Timnath became the manufacture of sugar beet harvesting equipment. Beginning in 1911, S. R Giddings invented, patented and manufactured a horse drawn beet puller. Itsoldfor\$65 and was sold locally and in other western states. During WWI a local resident serving in the army saw one in Germany. The Giddings pullers were made until the late 1920s and a total of 2500 were sold.

In 1924 the building was converted to a garage to accommodate the horseless carriage. It had the first gasoline pump in Timnath. It was a one-gallon hand pump that was later replaced by a five-gallon hand pump. Gasoline sold for 13¢ a gallon. The gas station was located in the office part of Alpine Cabinet shop and was owned and operated by different people at different times.

In 1995 the cabinet shop was severely damaged by a three-alarm fire. One person died as she tried to fight the fire. The cabinets hop was rebuilt and it no longer resembles the original buildings.

X. Cabinet Factory Office (pg. 46, 105)

- a) Site of gas station owned at different times by local residents. (pg 121)

XI. GIDDINGS HOUSE (pg. 42, 51)

- a) Beet puller patent 1911. 2500sold.
- b) In 1898 S. R. Giddings purchased all land from ditch to RR Tracks for \$600.

In 1898, S. R. Giddings, inventor of the horse drawn beet puller, bought all the land from the ditch to the RR tracks for \$600. The Giddings family was very active in community and church affairs.

XII. THE OLDEST HOUSE (pg. 47, 50)

According to Ansel Watrous' History of Larimer County, this is the oldest house in Timnath. William Groff built this house in 1865. William Groff became the first postmaster in Timnath. Thomas Wilkins Later owned the house and was granted a "tree claim" in 1895. After his death his widow and daughters operated the home as a boarding house. One daughter, Emma Wilkins became Superintendent of Larimer County Schools in 1913. A position she held for 10 years. The siding you see was put on recently.

XIII. TIMNATH SCHOOL (pg. 201, 214, 215, 243)

The cornerstone for this "new" consolidated school was laid on a cold blustery January 23, 1919. When it was completed it was considered to be one of the finest educational facilities in the state. First classes were held in the 1919-1920 school year with 240 students enrolled in the 12 grades. It was one of the first schools to offer bus transportation for the students. This was due to the strong influence of Emma Wilkins the school superintendent mentioned earlier.

In 1929 during the depression, members of the Columbine Club of Timnath decided to build a "handsome" Brick gateway at the entrance to the school ground (pg. 253). "Club members raised the money from benefit card parties, fifteen-cent teas, a play performance, plus \$30 won in a Home Improvement Contest.

On March 21, 1935 the building caught fire (pg. 228, 229). The fire alarm bell rang and more than 200 students and teachers exited the building in approximately 3 minutes. Every Friday night, linseed oil was used to oil down the floors causing the fire to spread so fast it was impossible to save anything. School resumed the following Monday in various buildings around town with donated supplies and equipment from surrounding school districts and CAC now CSU. Classes were held in the church building, the store building and even on the back porch of the brick building you will see in a moment. The school was re-built on the same building plan except there were now cement floors. For those attending Timnath School, everything is dated BF or AF (Before the Fire & After the Fire). Each person can tell you exactly what he or she lost in the fire. The school reopened 1 year after the fire.

The U. S. Navy Yard in Washington D. C. stores ship parts & equipment. A request was sent there for a bell for the new bell tower and it was supplied free of charge. The new school bell was cast in 1883 (pg. 246). It hung in a lighthouse on the northern tip of Staten Island from 1883 to 1968. Everyone traveling across the Atlantic Ocean to Ellis Island or New York Harbor sailed past this bell & the statue of Liberty. It rings to mark the beginning & end of the school day.

XIV. BRICK SCHOOL (pg. 210)

Built in 1909, it served students through the 8th grade. It was used as a cafeteria is being used for the art classes. It is believed that the bell that used to be in the bell tower was donated to the scrap metal drive during WWII.

XV. FAIRVIEW SCHOOL SITE (pg. 207, 208)

The school was built in 1881 / 1882 and these trees stand just west of the original school site. The building was used for religious services as well. It was torn down in late 1960s or early 1970s. The developer retained the trees which remained on the site.

XVI. ORIGINAL CHURCH MANSE (pg. 143)

In 1883, a five-acre plot was purchased from the Union Pacific Rail road for \$40.00. A parsonage was built on the North West corner of the lot in 1884 for \$800. The building still stands.

XVII. TIMNATH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (pg. 141)

The Timnath Presbyterian Church was organized in 1883 and is the first and only house of worship built in Timnath. It is one of the oldest Presbyterian churches in continuous existence in Colorado and this year it is celebrating its 125 anniversary (pg145). The original building sanctuary measured 28X52ft. with a 20X26 lecture room.

The church has become well known for its memorial stained glass windows started in 1976 by Pastor Moyer. (pg. 167, 168).

During the 1976 centennial/bicentennial celebration a time capsule was buried in the churchyard (pg. 110). It contains a condensed history of Timnath and the surrounding area as well as local, state, and national newspapers in addition to the memorabilia. It is to be opened in 2076 and everyone is invited.

In 2009, a gas leak caused an explosion and fire which damaged the church. Although the meeting rooms and kitchen had to be rebuilt, the sanctuary remained intact and none of the stained glass windows were damaged.

XVIII. WATER STATION (pg. 129)

There was a town water well and tank filling station in the middle of the street. Water wagons (pg. 9) and later water trucks (pg. 131) were filled there and delivered to cisterns in town and on local farms. The town received revenue from this water until the 1970s. It was dismantled when the street was paved.

XIX. BRICK BANK BUILDING (pg. 8, 60, 131)

It opened as the Liberty State Bank in 1922 and closed in 1927. Since then the building has served as a grocery store, garage/gas station, a water company, and a private residence and the town hall. It was used as the Timnath town hall until the new offices on Goodman St. were built.

XX. FIRE STATION (pg. 135, 136)

A family by the name of Springer built this building in 1904 as a grocery store. In the 1920s & 1930s, E. A. Russell operated a grocery store here (pg. 46). A local branch of the county library was located inside where the county library kept approximately 100 books. The Columbine Club purchased an additional 50 books for circulation.

The building later became Timnath Frozen Food Lockers (pg. 103) that rented individual family freezer lockers. It also had a meat market with a small restaurant section where hamburger meals were served. At that time the freezer portion of the building was lined with cork to help keep the cold in. During the freezer locker era the building was lined with cork to help maintain cool temperatures.

In 1969 the building was remodeled into the fire station.

TOWN SQUARE

This is known as the town square and the statue is a creation of Bill Swets, creator of the Swetsville Zoo. It was dedicated to Swets in a surprise ceremony in recognition of his family's contribution to

the community.

XXI. LUND/WEITZEL HOUSE (pg. 5, 50)

This is one of the three oldest houses in Timnath and closely associated with the brick building. While owning and operating the store, the Lund/Weitzel family lived here. Columbine Club member Esther Weitzel lived in the house since 1917 except for 3-4 years from 1917 until just recently when it was sold.

XXII. LUNDS STORE (pg. 3, 75, 76, 96, 307)

This building was built in 1902. In 1911 the Sherred family operated a grocery store here that later became the Lund Store. Esther Lund Weitzel who recently died and her family owned & operated the store for 52 years.

The post office was located just inside the door and to the right until 1969 when the new post office was built.

The stairs outside lead to a second floor room where classes were held while the new school was being built and again when the school was being re-built after the school fire. In addition, dances, socials, church dinners and bazaars as well as other activities were held upstairs. Odd Fellows also met there. For the dinners, socials and bazaars, everything had to be carried up these stairs and down again.

The proximity of the stairs to the bank encouraged burglars to go halfway up the stairs over a period of several nights and remove some bricks then replacing them until they could remove enough bricks to get into the bank. They were apparently discovered before they were successful.

XXIII. BANK BUILDING (pg. 9, 63, 96)

This yellow building was the home of the Farmers State Bank. It was organized in June 1906 and was in operation for approximately 14 years. The bank ran into financial difficulties and operations were suspended in 1920. It is believed that the bank reopened for a short period before closing for the last time in 1922.

BRICK GARAGE

In this garage or the one across the RR tracks, is where RR men found a brown & white collie that later become known as known as 'Annie' the RR dog. While making their daily stop, the RR men found her cold and hungry in this Timnath blacksmith shop and persuaded her to board the train. They took her to Fort Collins and gave her shelter, food, and love. 'Annie' the RR dog spent the rest of her life around the Fort Collins train station greeting passengers on every train. When she died she was buried near the tracks with a nice grave stone made by the RR men. Her marker still stands today and a statue of 'Annie' is in front of the main library. In addition, there is an annual 'Annie' dog run/walk that is a fundraiser for the children's library.

DR. CAREY'S OFFICE.

Early pictures of Main Street show another building here. It was the office of local physician, Dr. Carey who began his practice in Timnath in 1907. The building was torn down in 1969 when the

post office was built and the parking lot paved. During the flu epidemic of 1918, Dr. Carey hired a driver to drive him to see his patients on the area farms so he could sleep between visits. Dr. Carey later moved his practice to Fort Collins.

COMMUNITY GARDENS

This is the third year for the Timnath Community Gardens and it has been quite a success. It has raised over 1500 pounds of organic produce for the Larimer County Food Bank. It has also helped educate Gardeners about organic gardening through the use of the Master Gardeners Program provided by the Extension Service. The Garden was the recipient of the Larimer County 2006 Environmental Stewardship Award.

The white shed was moved to the Community Gardens this past summer. This shed is typical of beet dump weigh stations used by the Great Western Sugar Company throughout Northern Colorado during the era when growing sugar beets was a major farming operation in Northern Colorado. It is an historic beet dump shed and was part of the old Kluver beet dump. The ladies who worked in these sheds weighing beet trucks were known as 'scale ladies'. One scale lady who worked in this very shed said that there was an old oil burning stove inside that was lit every morning before work so the scale ladies wouldn't freeze to death. It has the large window through which the beet receipts were to be handed to the truck or wagon drivers. Still part of the shed is the original stove pipes and a shelf used for a telephone. The shed sits on a rammed earth foundation and was donated by Debbie & Rick Myers

WATER STATION

The Timnath Water Company built a tank filling water station across from this red brick school house in approximately 1906. It was kept locked but area residents could buy a tank of water for their cistern for 25 cents. They could also rent a horse drawn water wagon as well.

ANOTHER INTERESTING FACT

Timnath was bombed by the Japanese during WWII. Towards the end of the war, the Japanese launched a series of incendiary and explosive balloon bombs. These bombs caught the jetstream and traveled across the Pacific Ocean. Some landed on the West coast and a few traveled inland. One landed just on the outskirts of Timnath and exploded on the Swet's farm now the Swetsville Zoo.

PUMPHOUSE

Here is the location of the water pump house that contained the equipment that pumped water from the Greeley line to the homes in Timnath. It is mentioned frequently in the town minutes because it often required maintenance and repair. When women complained about low water pressure, the 'town fathers' would come up and try to fix the problem.

BRICK HOUSE

This house was the home of a teacher who was teaching at the school at the time of the fire. The back porch of her house became the classroom for her pupils following the fire.

Google Maps interface showing a street map of Timnath, Colorado. The browser address bar displays <https://www.google.com/maps>. The search bar contains the email address `ott.in.timnath@gmail.com`.

Map labels include:

- Watts St
- Dixon St
- Outlook Ave
- S Co Rd 5
- ATM Cardtronics ATM
- XIV. Red Brick School
- Timnath Elementary School
- XIII. School
- 5th Ave
- Timnath Presbyterian Church

Map controls and information:

- Map style: Satellite
- Location: Larimer County, CO
- Coordinates: 40.534011, -104.979338
- Map data ©2015 Google
- Scale: 200 ft





