

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUL 1 1980  
DATE ENTERED SEP 17 1980

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Thomas B. Townsend House

AND/OR COMMON

**LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

222 South Fifth Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Montrose

VICINITY OF

3

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Colorado

08

Montrose

085

**CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

**OWNERSHIP**

**STATUS**

**PRESENT USE**

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENC

SITE

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

**ACCESSIBLE**

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Dr. and Mrs. Robert Van Gemert

STREET & NUMBER

222 So. Fifth Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Montrose

VICINITY OF

Colorado

**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Montrose County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

300 South First Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Montrose

Colorado

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Colorado Inventory of Historic Sites

43/02/0016

DATE

Ongoing

FEDERAL  STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Colorado Historical Society, 1300 Broadway

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Denver

Colorado 80203

# 7 DESCRIPTION

| CONDITION                                     |                                       | CHECK ONE                                   | CHECK ONE   |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT | <input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED | <input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD                 | <input type="checkbox"/> RUINS        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED | <input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FAIR                 | <input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED    |   |   |

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Located at 222 South Fifth Street in Montrose, the Thomas B. Townsend House is a single detached structure two and one-half stories in height, rectangular in shape, and built of pinkish-brown brick laid in courses of stretcher-bond. The architectural style is Victorian. The main or southeast facade has four bays, the northeast facade six bays, the southwest facade five bays, and the rear of the structure two bays. The house also has three porches, all made of wood with hand-turned posts and gingerbread trim; one is on the left front of the house, a second--a Juliet Porch--is located above, and a third comes off the kitchen on the northeast facade. The foundation is made of cut native stone. Stone labels and lugsills outline most of the windows, all of which are two-sashed and double hung. The roof is hipped and gabled and covered with the original copper and zinc, still in excellent condition. The cornices are boxed; there is a very elaborate gingerbread trim around the roofline, in the gables, and on the porches; and there is a row of metal "hogback" trim along the peak of the roof parallel to the front facade. On each side of the structure there is a single brick chimney.

The house was built on a center hall plan. The main entry occurs through a double wooden front door. Window lights made of rectangular pieces of stained glass surround the doors and make a window in each. The central staircase runs from the front hall, and the servants' staircase from the kitchen. Upstairs there are four bedrooms. Originally, there was a sleeping porch above the old kitchen, but it has since been torn down.

All the paneling and flooring in the house is fir. The front staircase is entirely paneled, and the bannister and railing are walnut. Of the five original fireplaces, only two remain, one in the dining room and one in the back parlor. The back parlor fireplace is brown and white Italian tile. The pieces across the top of the fireplace are designed with apple blossoms in relief; the side tiles show tall asters growing out of fish bowls. The fireplace frame is oak with carved brackets and shelves. Sunbursts and panels are set with mirrors. The cherrywood fireplace in the original dining room has wine-colored tiles decorated with geometric designs. In the upper outside corners of the tiled area are two tiles, one of a man, the other of a woman, in Shakespearean garb.

Original light fixtures still remain on the front porch and in the two parlors. Like the front door, the back door of the house has a window made up of pieces of stained glass.

There are two outbuildings located behind the house. One is a wooden one-story garage. The other is a one-story brick outhouse.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

| PERIOD        | AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW  |   |   |  |  |
|---------------|---|---|---|--|--|
| __PREHISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> __ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> __COMMUNITY PLANNING     | <input type="checkbox"/> __LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> __RELIGION            |  |
| __1400-1499   | <input type="checkbox"/> __ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC    | <input type="checkbox"/> __CONSERVATION           | <input type="checkbox"/> __LAW                    | <input type="checkbox"/> __SCIENCE             |  |
| __1500-1599   | <input type="checkbox"/> __AGRICULTURE            | <input type="checkbox"/> __ECONOMICS              | <input type="checkbox"/> __LITERATURE             | <input type="checkbox"/> __SCULPTURE           |  |
| __1600-1699   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> XARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> __EDUCATION              | <input type="checkbox"/> __MILITARY               | <input type="checkbox"/> __SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN |  |
| __1700-1799   | <input type="checkbox"/> __ART                    | <input type="checkbox"/> __ENGINEERING            | <input type="checkbox"/> __MUSIC                  | <input type="checkbox"/> __THEATER             |  |
| __1800-1899   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> XCOMMERCE     | <input type="checkbox"/> __EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> __PHILOSOPHY             | <input type="checkbox"/> __TRANSPORTATION      |  |
| __1900-       | <input type="checkbox"/> __COMMUNICATIONS         | <input type="checkbox"/> __INDUSTRY               | <input type="checkbox"/> __POLITICS/GOVERNMENT    | <input type="checkbox"/> __OTHER (SPECIFY)     |  |
|               |   | <input type="checkbox"/> __INVENTION              |   |  |  |

SPECIFIC DATES ca 1888

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Thomas B. Townsend house is significant for its historical associations with the development of Montrose, Colorado and its banking industry. This town landmark is also an excellent example of the American Victorian style of architecture which was common to this area, and is significant for its craftsmanship and detailing.

Montrose was platted in 1882 as a railroad town near the San Juan Mountain mining area. Among its early settlers were mining investors, many from Europe. One of these men was Thomas B. Townsend, an Englishman who moved to the Montrose area in the 1880s to invest in various mines near Silverton. He was also the co-founder of the Montrose County Bank, now the First National Bank of Montrose. Townsend built his home on the corner of Fifth and Townsend Streets about 1888. However, he and his wife did not enjoy living in the United States, and after living in their new home only six months, they returned to England. Nonetheless, they maintained their American interests, and even today their descendants are associated with the First National Bank.

The house remained vacant until 1899, when it was bought by E. L. Osborn, Vice President of the bank, for \$8000.00. Three generations of Osborns lived in the house, and it remained in the family until sold to Mr. and Mrs. Richard Childs in 1971. It is presently owned by Dr. and Mrs. Robert Van Gemert, who bought it in 1978.

When the house was first built, it was not within the city limits of Montrose. In 1904, the town was extended to include the house so it could hook up to the water and sewer mains. This addition is known as the Osborn Addition.

Besides being one of the oldest permanent residences in the valley, the Townsend House is an excellent example of the American Victorian style of architecture. It is made of pinkish-brown brick, with stone foundations, and has numerous porches, gables, bay windows, hand-turned wooden posts, hogback roof, and intricate gingerbread trim. The house also had the first "running water" in the area. As rain ran off the zinc and copper roof, it was carried in eave troughs down to a cistern near the rear of the house. The water was pumped back into the attic, and was carried by gravity throughout the house.

Townsend also had the house wired for electricity although there was no electricity in the town. Kerosene lamps were used for lighting until it arrived. The house has always been heated by coal.

The bricks used on the exterior were made in Townsend's own brick plant, built on the Uncompahgre River near town. The factory closed soon after the house was finished, which leads to the conclusion that its sole purpose was to make bricks for the house.

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Dallas, Sandra Gaslights and Gingerbread, Denver: Sage Books, 1965

Ptarmigan, 1 (Fall 1976) "One Hundred Years of History at Fifth and Townsend"

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1

**ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED**

QUADRANGLE NAME Montrose East

QUADRANGLE SCALE L:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 1,3 2,4,9 3,6,0 4,2,6,2 1,7,0  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B                    
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C                  

D                  

E                  

F                  

G                  

H                  

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, Block 1, Osborn Addition to the City of Montrose, Montrose, Colorado

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|-------|------|--------|------|
|       |      |        |      |
|       |      |        |      |

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Mary Dorsey Wanless

ORGANIZATION

DATE

November 5, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

1701 Dover

(303) 249-3768

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Montrose

Colorado

**12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL   

STATE   

LOCAL ✓

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Lithum C. Truesdell* June 26, 1980

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*John W. Ray* *Luce*  
 ATTEST: *Paula Stoner Reed*  
 CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE

9/17/80

DATE

9/15/80