

PH 0661201

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

J.C. & P.S.

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RECEIVED JAN 27 1978

DATE ENTERED JUN 9 1978

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

## 1 NAME

HISTORIC

Curry-Chucovich House

AND/OR COMMON

## 2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

1439 Court Place

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Denver

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

1

STATE

Colorado

VICINITY OF

CODE

03

COUNTY

Denver

CODE

031

## 3 CLASSIFICATION

### CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

### OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

### STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

### PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

## 4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

William E. Myrich and Horton Fickey

STREET & NUMBER

1439 Court Place

CITY, TOWN

Denver

VICINITY OF

STATE

Colorado

## 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Office of the Clerk and Recorder

STREET & NUMBER

City and County Building 13th and Bannock Streets

CITY, TOWN

Denver

STATE

Colorado

## 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Denver Inventory

DATE

1973

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Denver Planning Office

CITY, TOWN

Denver

STATE

Colorado

# 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

1439 Court Place, Denver's oldest known remaining domestic dwelling in the downtown area, was erected in 1888. It sits on a 25 foot lot, which was the standard size for residential lots in the 19th century in Denver. It is mid-block with commercial buildings occupying the rest of the area. The house faces southeast across Court Place from a half block parking lot that is behind the annex to the City and County Building.

The facade of this two and one half story, sidehall townhouse is sandstone with rhyolite foundation. The pitch-faced sandstone facade features random ashlar coursing, the original red beaded mortar joints, and a water table with tooled edge.

The late-nineteenth century vernacular dwelling is architecturally significant because of the unusual combination of architectural details which are repeated in both stone and wood compositions. The first floor double-hung bay sashes are trimmed with unusual sandstone details such as lug sills, billet banding, and lintels with tooled crossets. The second floor arched windows are trimmed with keystones and voussoirs. Below the center and north windows of the facade's bay is a symmetrically carved sandstone ornamentation.

The center section of the two-story bay with hexagonal roof is surmounted by a diapered gable end, once topped by an apexstone, and flanked by brooch towers.

An unusual sandstone belt course with recessed circles is located at the second floor level below the lintel springers.

The original wooden cornice with recessed panelled frieze features billet banding reminiscent of the details reproduced in stone above the first floor bay windows.

The slate roof is topped by an unusual turned balustrade with a band of recessed circles, like the second-story belt course, at the base.

The side stepped-parapet walls are stuccoed and the brick rear of the residence is laid in a common bond pattern with arched lintels above the fenestration.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1887

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Fred A. Hale

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Curry-Chucovich house is significant because it is the oldest known example of 1880's domestic architecture remaining in downtown Denver, and because it possesses a unique combination of architectural details. It is also significant because two of its owners, James M. Curry, the proprietor of the Douglas County Lava Quarries, and Vasco L. Chucovich, a renowned gambler and associate of Denver's Mayor Speer, were important figures in the history of the city.

In 1887 Mr. James M. Curry purchased the land at 1439 Court Place from Samuel Morgan and hired architect Fred A. Hale to design his new home. Mr. Curry, a well-known Denver citizen, was the proprietor of the Douglas County Lava Quarries. These quarries made a significant contribution to the architectural heritage of Denver because the stone was used in many well-known buildings such as the Old Union Railroad Depot, Saint Elizabeth's Church in Auraria (National Register and Denver Landmark - 1969), Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church (National Register - 1970 and Denver Landmark - 1968), the Kittredge Building (National Register nomination pending), the Ghost Building (National Register nomination pending), the Tabor Grand Opera House trim (demolished), Wolfe Hall (demolished), South Broadway Christian Church, and many residences of prominent Denver citizens which include those of Charles B. Kountz, Otto Mears and Joseph Creswell; it was also used in the foundation and trim for the Charles Boettcher residence and the foundation and coping and front steps of Mr. Curry's own house and seven large mansions in Capitol Hill on Pennsylvania Street between 8th and 13th Avenues where the stone was used extensively for foundations, window sills, door arches, and garden walls.

Mr. Hale, the architect, was born in Rochester, New York, on Christmas of 1855 and moved with his parents to the Central City - Blackhawk mining area in Colorado in 1860. In 1875 he returned to Rochester to school and received a scholarship to Cornell University where he studied architecture. He returned to Colorado in 1880 and started his own practice in 1883. In the early 1890's he moved to Salt Lake City to design and superintend the construction of a modern commercial building. To date there is no record that he ever returned to Denver.

Mr. Curry's house was completed late in 1888. An account in the Western Architect and Building News briefly describes the house as "a genuine two story brownstone front" with the interior finished in richly carved wood and windows screened with Venetian blinds of oak. The walls and ceilings were treated in "a chaste and happy style, fresco and lincrusta-walton relief work. The staircase was approached through an archway of intricate arabesque fretwork in oak". To have received such an account indicated that the house was of architectural importance at the time it was constructed.

In 1892 Mr. Curry died and left the house to his widow Alice who lost it through debts to Miss Sarah Hunt who in turn died in 1902 and willed it to Vasco L. Chucovich.

Mr. Chucovich moved to the house on Court Place from the Oxford Hotel, where he was living at the time. He was born in Risan, Yugoslavia, in 1858 and at the age of 19,

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Corbett and Ballinger. The Denver City Directory. Denver. 1883 - 1902.  
 Dorsett, Lyle. A History of Denver. Boulder: Prewett Publishing Co. 1977.  
 Hall, Frank. History of the State of Colorado. The Blakely Printing Co. Chicago. 1895. v. III, p. 471.  
The Rocky Mountain News. Denver. 6/5/1949, 3/17/1946, 12/21/1933.  
 The State Historical Society of Colorado. The Colorado Magazine. n.d. pp. 126-128.  
The Western Architect and Building News. Denver. v. I, #4, Je. 1889, p.55.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY under one acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,3	500 501850	4,3	9,8	8,3,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING			ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C						D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

L 26, blk 207, East Denver Addition

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Description Section - Madeline Hite. Significance Sect. - Diane Bond & B. Norgren

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Historic Denver

October 13, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

770 Pennsylvania

337-1358

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Denver

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

TITLE

Colo SHPO

DATE

1/14/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

ATTEST:

Walter H. Cole

DATE

6/9

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

6-5-78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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in 1877, he immigrated to the United States and traveled to the gold fields of California, Nevada and Colorado, accumulating wealth and gambling skills as he went. Chucovich arrived in Denver in 1895 and quickly became an associate of Edward Chase, czar of Denver's saloons and gambling halls and close friend of Robert Speer, who later became Mayor of Denver.

One of Chase's chief holdings and finest gambling halls in Denver was the Arcade Restaurant at 1611-13 Larimer Street which was ultimately owned by Vasco Chucovich. It had a 30 foot solid mahogany bar, French plate glass mirrors, 600 chandeliers, and was reputedly frequented by Bat Masterson and Dead-Eye Dick, according to one newspaper account.

Vasco Chucovich invested in real estate and became involved in local politics. He was supportive of Robert Speer in the 1904 and 1916 campaigns for mayor. Because of his connections in the political and social element of Denver's society, he was able to foretell all administrative policies and decisions where gambling was concerned. Among his intimate friends were Mayor Speer, Henry L. Hoherty, Michael Pupin (Nobel Prize winner and scientist and boyhood friend), David H. Moffat, and William G. Evans. He was considered one of Denver's most powerful behind-the-scenes political figures.

Periodically Mayor Speer prevailed upon Chase and Chucovich to donate substantial sums to his programs for the needy and to Judge Ben Lindsey's Juvenile Improvement Association. In return Chase and Chucovich's violations of the liquor and gambling ordinances were overlooked. However, in 1907 a new state law required the closing of all gambling establishments, so Chucovich closed the gambling hall of the Arcade Restaurant, but continued to operate the saloon and restaurant. Chucovich also gave financial support to Benjamin J. Stapelton in his 1923 campaign for Mayor.

Through his real estate holdings Chucovich became a wealthy man, and when he died in 1933 he left an estate of over one million dollars. One hundred thousand of this was to be used for a memorial to Mayor Speer; but instead the money was used to build the children's wing at Denver General Hospital. There was also a substantial sum left over to build a hospital in Chucovich's home town in Yugoslavia.

Today the house at 1439 Court Place is used for law offices by William E. Myrich and Norton Fickey. It will remain as offices as well as a delightful and charming reminder of the residential neighborhood that was once in the downtown section of Denver.

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

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
COUNTY	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	APR 1 1979

(Number all entries)

Item 2: Location

The description of the outlying boundaries of the area within which is located the primary district:

Arapahoe Street on the northwest, 30th Street on the northeast, the alley between California and Welton Streets on the southeast, and 23rd Street on the southwest.

The district proper is described as being bounded by: beginning at the intersection of 25th Street and Arapahoe Street, then along Arapahoe Street to 26th Street, then along 26th Street to the alley between Arapahoe and Curtis Streets, then along the alley to 30th Street, then along 30th Street to Curtis Street, then along Curtis Street to 29th Street, then along 29th St. to the alley between Curtis and Champa Streets, then along the alley to 30th Street, then along 30th Street to Stout Street, then along Stout Street to 28th Street, then along 28th Street to the alley between Stout and California Streets, then along the alley to 27th Street, then along 27th Street to California Street, then along California Street to 26th Street, then along 26th Street to the alley between California and Welton Streets, then along the alley to 25th Street, then along 25th Street to California Street, then along California Street to 24th Street, then along 24th Street to Stout Street, then along Stout Street to 23rd Street, then along 23rd Street to the alley between Champa and Stout Streets, then along the alley to 25th Street, then along 25th Street to the alley between Curtis and Champa Streets, then along the alley to 26th Street, then along 26th Street to Curtis Street, then along Curtis Street to 25th Street, then along 25th Street to Arapahoe Street, the point of beginning.

