

## AIREDALE BUILDING – OPHELIA’S ELECTRIC SOAPBOX AND HOSTEL FISH: QUEEN ANNE SALOON AND HOTEL RETURNS TO ORIGINAL USE

**Queen Anne was an architectural style generally used in residential buildings. Why do you think the architect chose the style for this building?**

The Koppers Airedale Building, a Queen Anne style saloon and hotel built by Albert Koppers and his wife in 1889, has been in almost continuous use since its construction. Koppers Saloon and Hotel was a working class establishment in a warehouse and industrial part of downtown Denver, just north of the Downtown City Center. The building underscores the impact of German immigration to the growth and development of Denver as German-speaking citizens found saloon establishments to be important locations to gather, socialize and interact (Norgren, 1985). The building, now restored and refurbished, houses the Hostel Fish on the second and third floors and Ophelia’s Electric Soapbox Restaurant and Bar on the first floor.

### **Structure**

Queen Anne was a popular design style for residential properties during the 1880s and 1930s, and there are a few commercial buildings that adopted this vernacular, as well. This style was used here perhaps to distinguish this particular building in the neighborhood, or maybe to declare its status with buildings in other parts of downtown Denver. The building’s Queen Anne style is identifiable by strong symmetry and formal arrangements of windows, bay projections, doorways and storefronts. The street façade is very organized in its strict arrangement, organization and use of materials. The style is reflected in the projected stacked window bays on the second and third floors with square returns, as well as the double hung windows and fixed picture windows facing the street. The bay projections have classical ornamentation and surrounds, which are highlighted by horizontally paneled plinths, fluted pilasters and mullions with stylized capitals (Norgren).

Albert Koppers and his wife moved to Denver in 1882, and in 1889 the Koppers built the Koppers Saloon and Hotel, which functioned as a three-story saloon and hotel at the corner of 20th and Lawrence Streets. The property was sold in 1918 to Interior Realty and Investment Company. Shortly after, in 1919, it was again sold to Elmer Sommers, who renamed the building the Airedale. He modified the roof pediment on the 20th Street facade to reflect the new name. In 1940, the building was sold to Jacob Burkhardt. The first floor was converted to a restaurant and bar, and the upper floors continued to be a hotel. In the 1960s and 1970s, the upper floors were converted to a rooming house. During the 1990s, Paul Tamburello Generator Real Estate acquired the building and began restoring it, adding numerous upgrades. By 2013, the building was renovated to accommodate the current hostel on the second and third floors, as well as the restaurant on the first floor and crawl space (Historic Airedale Building).

### **Architect**

Frederick Carl Eberly practiced in Denver from 1880 through 1914. He was responsible for designing many public and residential structures, including the Union Warehouse, now Barth Hotel, in 1882, the original Arapahoe County Courthouse in 1883 and Zang Mansion in 1904. Other projects are the Blatz

Brewery, the Tivoli Union Brewery, the Gertrude Apartments, the Colorado Bakery and Saloon and Groussman Grocery.

### **Neighborhood**

Lower Downtown Historic District is a warehouse neighborhood that was developed around the railroads. Many of the buildings are “boxes,” and almost all are made of brick, though each has its own features, which distinguish them from their neighbors. Some of the warehouses are primarily brick construction, while others have heavy timber interior construction, and even later buildings boast steel or concrete construction. The later construction materials came only after the advent of the railroads in 1870 (Paglia, Wheaton and Wray, 1999).

### **References**

Norgren, B. 1985. Historic Airedale Building National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form.

Generator Development. Historic Airedale Building. Retrieved from <https://development.thinkgenerator.com/>.

Paglia, M, Wheaton, R and Wray, D. 1999. *Denver: The Modern City*. Denver: Historic Denver, Inc.