

# THE Capitol Hill Neighborhood Council BULLETIN

## Capitol Hill Neighborhood Council Meeting

There will be no meeting in December. enjoy the holiday season with family, friends and neighbors.



Join us for the annual community carol service on Christmas Eve, 5:00-5:45 pm in the Rock Chapel (west of the Capitol).

**NEXT MEETING**  
JANUARY 18, 2006, 6:30 p.m.

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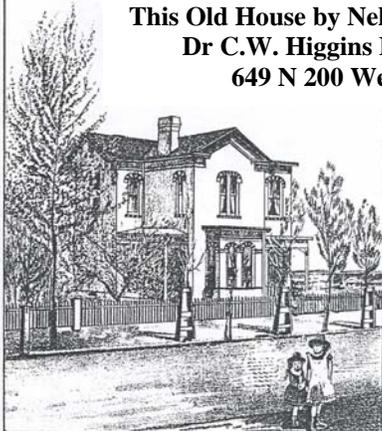
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## This Old House by Nelson Knight Dr C.W. Higgins House, 649 N 200 West



RESIDENCE OF DR. C. W. HIGGINS.

You may have noticed the work that has been recently going on at this house – the new owners are working hard to finish the bulk of the work in time for the New Year.

The house was the longtime home of one of early Capitol Hill's most colorful figures: Dr. Charles W. Higgins. Evidence from a title search, city directories, and Sanborn Maps indicates that Dr. Higgins had the home built

around 1884, probably hiring mason D.P. Thomas to do the work. The house is one of the few full two-story houses in this part of Capitol Hill, and although modest in size and ostentation by today's standards, it was sizeable and fashionably stylish for the time. The adobe house has many Italianate details, such as the tall, narrow windows, hoods above each window and door, and classical cornice.

*(Continued on page 2)*

### Comment: Christmastime on Capitol Hill

by Harries Lloyd, Neighborhood Council Trustee for the Ensign Peak Area

*(Editors' note: This month the Bulletin asked Harries Lloyd, our Council's trustee for the Ensign Peak area, to share some memories of growing up in the Capitol Hill neighborhood, especially in the winters and at Christmas.)*

Ice-skating was something we really liked to do in the winters, but of course, you would never think of going to a commercial rink and paying. There were several other possibilities. Dad and we boys would tamp down the snow in our back yard on DeSoto Street and then fill the area with water — the location was good but the ice was quite rough. My friend, Bill Beesley, and I would clean off the ice on the pond in Memory Grove sometimes; that was a smoother sheet of ice. The best, though, was Decker Lake when it got cold enough to freeze over. I remember big bonfires with piles of old tires at the edge of the e and playing tag with the other skaters. The only drawback was that you had to be careful of thin ice if you got out into the reeds.

There were four boys and three girls in our family. Those were safer days for trick-or-treaters, and Mom was well-known for homemade doughnuts and caramel apples at Halloween. We lived on DeSoto Street in a house our Grandfather Ashton built.

A more risky winter activity was sledding on the steep streets on Capitol Hill. We used to sleigh-ride down Wall Street and Zane Avenue, crazy as that now sounds. The city road people would cooperate in those days by blocking off some steep roads and not putting ashes on them, which made for good sledding, especially at night. Lee Capel almost got killed once sledding down Zane Avenue B he stopped under a car. After a big snowfall we would take a big coal shovel, sit on it, and ride it down Wall Street. It's really a wonder no one got seriously hurt. If it was cold enough and the street was good and icy, you could start at the top of Wall Street and get the rust off your runners all the way down to Wasatch Springs at the bottom of the hill. A shorter but equally exciting run was on East Girard to DeSoto.

The north end of the Capitol Grounds, before the State Office Building and upper parking lot were there, had a fine slope where Bill Beesley and I first learned to ski. It was fun, too, to ski off of Little Ensign in the foothills north of DeSoto Street when enough snow accumulated. Standing hidden behind the bushes on the Capitol grounds and pegging snowballs at the cars on Columbus Street was also a favored but hazardous pastime. It's almost a cliché to say that the winters were colder and the snow heavier in those days, but it really seems that way to me.

I have a lot of happy Christmas memories of Capitol Hill, gathering at my grandparents' home on DeSoto Street — lots of aunts, uncles, and cousins with caroling and smells of good cooking and the Christmas tree. When Audrey and I began our own family we took work in California where we lived for the next 30 years. Since retiring we've returned to Capitol Hill and have built up a new set of happy Christmas and winter memories — skiing free at Park City (until they revoked it) but definitely not sledding down Wall Street or Zane Avenue.

(Continued from page 1)

Higgins was adept at self-promotion, and ran daily newspaper advertisements for his services. He specialized in “diseases of men,” but also was apparently adept at tapeworm removal, and guaranteed their removal “with head or no pay.” Another of his ads noted that he was “the only doctor in Utah who used a microscope in making a medical diagnosis,” though a later source asserted that the microscope was purely for show, and sat in his reception room gathering dust.

The good doctor also dressed to attract attention, with flamboyant clothes made to order (“in cloth that spoke for itself”, one source noted) and a long beard that he parted down the middle of his chin and flowed down his shoulders. Oddly, he grew one fingernail until it extended a full inch and a half, and wore a shield on his hand to protect it, according to the Daughters of Utah Pioneers’ Tales of a Triumphant People. Higgins was also one of the most noted horsemen in the city,

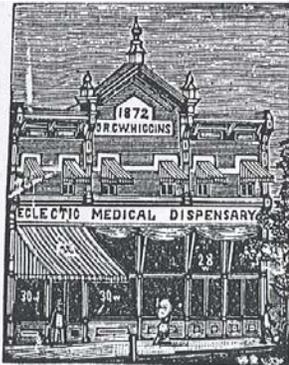
and collected a range of elaborate, showy carriages and harnesses. Higgins toiled around town in his tally-ho or spider phaeton, pulled by one of his eight horses (thoroughbreds Captain Jenks, John S., Bennie, and Cloud; saddle horses Dan and Lady Sikey; or Shetland ponies Bob and Dick). He loved to race, and in 1915 lent his money and influence to an effort to construct an extension of Main Street from 900 South to 2100 South meant purely for use by carriages – sort of the Legacy Highway of its day. In honor of his efforts, the city dubbed the road “Higgins Drive.”

The book *Of Medicine, Hospitals, and Doctors* relates an additional story about Dr. Higgins: In April 1895, Dr. William H. Groves had a heart attack, and called his physician, Dr. Joseph S. Richards, to take him to St. Mark’s Hospital. On the way, the doctors ran into Dr. Higgins, who was out for one of his carriage rides. Dr. Higgins was dressed to the nines and driving a beautiful matched pair of



carriage horses. The doctors acknowledged each other as they passed, but Dr. Groves, a wealthy but modestly living man, sank despondently against the buggy seat. Dr. Richards turned to his patient and said, “Bill, if you had any sense you would be driving fine horses and enjoying yourself on the road as Higgins is doing.” Dr. Groves responded that he had thought of that, but he was saving his money to do something good in the world. After

some thought (and a pleasant recuperative stay at St. Marks) Dr. Groves chose to endow the institution that became LDS Hospital. Since LDS Hospital is generous enough to pay for the printing of this newsletter, you can thank Dr. Higgins and his horses for being able to read this.



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Our sincere thanks to LDS Hospital for printing this bulletin.



**CHRISTMAS EVE ANNUAL  
 COMMUNITY CAROL  
 SERVICE**

December 24, 5:00-5:45 p.m.  
 in the Rock Chapel, just west  
 of the Capitol (Capitol Hill  
 LDS chapel)

ALL ARE WELCOME

**SERVICE PROFILE**

*(Editors' note: This is one in an occasional series of articles on those in the Capitol Hill neighborhood who give extraordinary service to others.)*

When elementary school groups tour Fire Station No. 2, as they frequently do, what would you guess the younger students find most memorable? "They're always most impressed with how big the tires on the trucks are," notes Dave Sadzewicz, a firefighter/engineer who works there.



The tires aren't the only impressive thing about the station. Tucked away on 300 North across the street from the West High tennis courts, the building houses both a truck company (one of three in the city, providing basic life-support EMT services and aerial ladder capability) and an engine company (one of the city's thirteen such crews, with paramedics giving advanced life support for more serious medical calls.) In addition to fire-fighting and emergency medical capabilities, the station dispatches hazardous materials technicians, an airport rescue crew — just about any emergency response need ever likely to arise in the northern end of Salt Lake City. On any given day, usually between two and seventeen calls will come in "anything from a cat in a tree to a multiple-car accident to a major fire," Sadzewicz says. "We do what we can to help in any emergency situation."

It may not come as a surprise, then, that Station No. 2 is literally the busiest station in the state. So at noon or midnight and all hours in between, 365 days a year, an eight-member crew will be on duty at the station. Having survived a terribly competitive selection process, basic training, and a three-year apprenticeship, they serve in 24-hour shifts (beginning and ending at 8:30 a.m.) and put in 56-hour work weeks. Each day's routine will include a complete functionality check of all equipment, large or small; training or

**FIRE STATION NO. 2**

drills; meticulous upkeep of the building and grounds; and buying and preparing food. "It's like an extended family — we're here a third of the time," and that includes the practical necessities of meal preparation (cooking duties are determined for each shift on a pragmatic basis, depending on individual firefighters' culinary talent and inclination.)

You would think that providing that level of round-the-clock protection and security for the neighborhood would be service enough, but the Station 2 crews do more. They support the Muscular Dystrophy Association with their "Fill the Boot" drive, collecting thousands in funds each year; provide tours and public education; and raise the level of community awareness of safety needs. And one of the service projects that began here has now spread to stations city-wide and beyond.

Seven or eight years ago, Captain Tom Roberson of Station 2 began to collect blankets during the holiday season for homeless families. Each Christmastime the station would donate the blankets to the Family Shelter at 210 West Rio Grande Avenue where they filled a pressing need. Sadzewicz has no idea how many thousands of blankets have now been contributed from Station 2 and its counterparts across the city, but pointed to a pile of about 30 new blankets donated that day as a typical day's contribution during the holiday season.



The firefighters at Station 2 are happy to arrange for tours. Stop by sometime and see the big tires and the big hearts.

**FREE COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES**

Through December 22:

- Christmas on Temple Square: Free concerts. All ages welcome. No tickets required. Concerts through December . Venues include: Assembly Hall, South Visitors' Center, Joseph Smith Memorial building, Church Office Building Lobby.

Christmas Eve:

- Capitol Hill Community Christmas Devotional, 5:00-5:45 p.m. in the Rock Chapel, just west of the Capitol (Capitol Hill LDS chapel), All are welcome—bring your family, friends & neighbors!
- Christmas Midnight Mass, Cathedral of the Madaleine

December 31:

- First Night on Temple Square: Assembly Hall and Joseph Smith Memorial Building, 6:00 pm - 11:55 pm.

In your celebrating, please take extra time and care when traveling to your destinations.

