



Edward Hawkins, Developer/Designer

Developer, builder and designer Edward B. Hawkins was born in 1902 in Denver, Colorado. Edward grew up in Denver, graduating from East High School, and went on to study civil engineering for two years at Colorado State Agricultural College, now Colorado State University in Fort Collins.

In 1924, Hawkins moved to Chicago where he was hired as a building superintendent by Home Builders of America. Charlotte, Hawkins' future wife, worked at the same firm as a secretary.

During this period, Hawkins began to undertake small general contracting projects. His increasing interest in residential design led him to study first-hand the Chicago area work of architect Frank Lloyd Wright.

When the Depression stalled home building, Hawkins joined the Civilian Conservation Corps. In December of 1941, after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States entered World War II. In 1942, now married, Edward and Charlotte returned to Denver. For the duration of the war, Hawkins served in a civilian capacity at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal, a federal chemical weapons plant.

Hawkins also began to establish himself as a home designer and builder in Denver. He constructed his first house at 14th and Niagara next to his family home, continuing with homes in the 2500 to 3000 blocks of Race, Albion, Ash, Forest and Glencoe. Between 1942 and 1949, Hawkins built thirty-five modern homes in northeast Denver ranging in price from \$10,000 to \$23,000. He designed them himself, incorporating ideas about modern living and design from his work and studies in Chicago.

In August of 1949, Hawkins conceived of developing an entire subdivision, signing an option to purchase a thirty acre parcel in Englewood, a small community in Arapahoe County just south of the Denver city and county line. In November of 1949, he completed the purchase of the property.

Construction Manager Clyde Mannon

Clyde Mannon, who had previously worked as Hawkins' shop foreman, joined the operation at Arapahoe Acres. Mannon, a native of Golden, Colorado, became Hawkins' partner in General Investments Company and Hawkins Associates, both corporations formed to finance and build Arapahoe Acres. He was to assist Hawkins with construction and to direct and supervise prefabrication at the carpentry shop at 2901 Lafayette.

Charlotte Hawkins served as the business manager of Arapahoe Acres.

The Hawkins' lives revolved around the design and construction of Arapahoe Acres. Their total involvement with Arapahoe Acres was reflected by their long-term residency in the neighborhood, where Hawkins and Charlotte won the lifelong friendship of many home buyers. The Hawkins lived at 2910 Marion, 2909 Lafayette, 1420 Bates, 2921 Franklin, and 2960 Lafayette, which served as their home, design studio and business office during the height of subdivision construction. Altogether, Hawkins was sole designer of approximately seventy homes in Arapahoe Acres.

Clyde Mannon directed a loyal crew including carpenters, bricklayers, hod carriers and laborers. The other trades were performed by a carefully selected and dedicated group of subcontractors.

Cabinetmaker Bill Norlin, who had joined Hawkins as a journeyman carpenter in 1951, assumed Mannon's shop duties in the shop.





Architect/Planner Eugene Sternberg

Eugene Sternberg was born in 1915 in Bratislava, Czechoslovakia. He earned an architectural engineering degree from the Technion, just outside of Prague. Sternberg was pursuing his graduate degree in architecture at Cambridge University in England when World War II broke out. He remained in London through the war, teaching part-time at Cambridge, then joining the firm of Sir Patrick Abercrombie, where he was involved in the rebuilding of housing destroyed by the bombing of London.

In 1945, like many European architects displaced by the war, Sternberg emigrated to the United States. He had accepted a teaching invitation at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, but quickly became dissatisfied with Cornell's restrictions on combining an architectural practice with teaching. At the urging of his friend Lewis Mumford, Sternberg accepted a teaching offer from Carl Feiss, Director of the School of Architecture and Planning at the University of Denver.

Feiss had come to Denver in 1942, hired by the city of Denver as Planning Director. He had previously served with distinction as head of the Planning & Housing Division of Columbia University's School of Architecture in New York City.

After the war, Feiss was hired as Planning Director by the University of Denver, where the student population had leaped from 3,000 to 10,000 as young soldiers returned from the war to the classroom. In 1946, Feiss' interest in architectural education drew him to spearhead the creation of the new School of Architecture and Planning, of which he was appointed director. It was the first school of architecture in the Rocky Mountain region.

In 1949, *Architectural Record* discussed his innovative program combining architecture and planning in their article "Architectural Education in the West." It was a model curriculum at a time when many architectural schools were being transformed from programs based on the traditional, Old World model of the Ecole des Beaux Arts, focused on classical and historical models, to a syllabus based on modern materials, techniques, styles, planning and social concerns.



Gerry Dion, Architect

In 1951, young architect Joseph Gerard (Gerry) Dion was hired by Hawkins to assist him in the evenings and on weekends. The two men had been introduced by Sternberg, with whom Dion had studied architecture at the University of Denver. Though Dion was employed full-time at the prestigious Denver architectural firm of Fisher and Fisher, he took the job with Hawkins in order to earn a down payment for his own home in Arapahoe Acres.

Dion, born in 1921 in Lowell, Massachusetts, had become familiar with the Denver area while training with the 87th Mountain Infantry Regiment at Camp Hale, Colorado. After completing World War II service with a Combat Engineers Battalion in the Philippines, he entered the University of Tulsa, Oklahoma, majoring in liberal arts. He transferred to the new University of Denver School of Architecture and Planning in 1947 and received his degree in 1951. Dion, like Hawkins, was heavily influenced by Wright's work. At the University of Denver, he had helped organize and serve as a student host for Frank Lloyd Wright's 1948 visit to the school.

Altogether, Dion was involved in the design of approximately thirty-five homes, including his own 1956 residence at 3059 Cornell Circle.



Stanley Yoshimura, Landscape Designer

The primary landscape planning of Arapahoe Acres is believed to have been the work of Hawkins. Along the streets, sweeping lawns were punctuated by specimen trees and shrubs, planted to retain vistas of the mountains. A small landscaped island appears at the foot of South Lafayette Drive. Local landscape contractor Roy Woodman is known to have worked with Hawkins on design, as well as supplying planting material.

Hawkins designed landscaping for individual homes as well, as evidenced by his drawings for plantings at 2949 Lafayette. Other homeowners contracted directly with independent landscape firms; drawings by designer Max Capron with Marshall Nurseries survive for 1421 Cornell Avenue.

In the early 1960s, some individual original homeowners also commissioned remarkable Japanese gardens by Stanley K. Yoshimura. Yoshimura was born in Japan in 1904. He immigrated at the age of fifteen to California where he worked with his gardener father as a laborer, researching rock gardens in his spare time. His landscaping projects came to an abrupt end when the war with Japan broke out and he was incarcerated in an Arizona war relocation camp.

After his release, Yoshimura opened a restaurant in Denver. In 1960, he began to create gardens again, assisted by his son, Mich. The two formed SKY Landscaping. Yoshimura designed the gardens at 2960 Lafayette and 1431 Cornell Avenue.