

Holiday Home Tour  
Louisville, Colorado  
December 2, 2006

## 708 Garfield Avenue

The house at 708 Garfield was originally built in 1940 by Frank Nortnik, who acquired the property on which it sits in 1923. While much of the house has been changed, part of the original house was retained in the course of major remodeling that was done starting in the late 1990s.

### **The Bryan Family**

Many Louisville residents may remember the original house's longtime homeowners as being Darald Bryan and Lorraine Scran Bryan, who purchased the house in 1959. Lorraine sold the house in 1997.

### **The Nortnik Family**

Frank Nortnik, who built the house in 1940, emigrated by himself in the mid 1890s at the age of 15 from what was then Austria, later Yugoslavia, and is now Slovenia. Frank married Mary Miller, who came from a Slovenian neighborhood in Globeville in north Denver. They then came to Louisville where Frank worked in several coal mines. He was known to be a track layer in the mines and also put up beams and worked with mules in the mines.

Frank's family believes that since Frank came from the village of Planina which is located near the Alps, he may have felt that Louisville with its view of the mountains was a reminder of home.

The history of the home at 708 Garfield is interconnected with the home just to the south at 401 Pine. Frank Nortnik purchased both parcels from separate owners in 1923 and lived in the house at 401 Pine, that house having been built in 1910, according to County records. That is where Frank and Mary raised their children, Frank and Frances. The land at 708 Garfield continued to lay vacant and was part of the family's yard.

In 1940, Frank constructed a house on the parcel of land that is 708 Garfield. It was only about half of the size of the family home at 401 Pine. In fact, in 1948 it consisted of 752 square feet.

Eventually, the bigger house became too much for Frank and Mary to take care of, and they moved into the home at 708 Garfield. At around this time, 401 Pine was sold. Frank and Mary lived at 708 Garfield until Frank passed away in 1956.

According to Frank and Mary's grandson, who used to visit them every other Sunday when he was growing up in the 1940s and 1950s, the Slovenians in Louisville were a close group who helped one another with writing in the Slovene language to family members who had been left

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back in Slovenia. He remembers visiting his grandparents in both houses. He also recalls trips to the Blue Parrot Restaurant to get spaghetti to bring back to his grandparents' to eat.

Frances Nortnik, Frank and Mary's daughter, graduated from Louisville High School in 1940 and she currently lives in the Denver area.

### **Renovations and Current Homeowners**

Previous homeowners acquired the house in 1997 and for the next four to five years made significant changes and renovations while living in the home.

The house is much altered from the outside view. However, part of the original house does remain, including the basement with its dirt floor and the area encompassing the downstairs bathroom, laundry room, and the door to the basement. The walls and windows in that part of the house reveal that they are remnants of the original 1940 home.

The current homeowners, Ally and Dylan Frusciano, purchased the house in 2002.

For more information, contact Bridget Bacon, Louisville Historical Museum, 303.665.9048.