

Denver Streets

by Harry Zirkelbach August 20, 2019
Stars and Sun date e 35237

I arrived in Denver late summer 1948 after a year residence in Washington D.C. where the Streets were always immaculately maintained. Imagine my surprise, Denver's were as well maintained.

And further, in the first days here I was driven around to get acquainted with the city and its high lights. What a surprise; most of the stress I was introduced to in the area outside downtown, were divided Boulevards. Such a collection of wonderful homes I had not seen, even in Washington or New York.

Of course later I learned that this was a mirage; selectively chosen routes to emphasize this Denver delight.

Washington D.C. had modernized their Streetcars following the war. They were spirited, zooming to 30 MPH quickly on tracks made smoother by an improved suspension. Weekly passes were available for a modest sum and we rode these vehicles daily, to school, work, play, partying, anything.

Here in contrast Denver's trolleys had the appearance of being modernized after the Civil War. But again, without an automobile, we rode these

swaybacks where possible. I still have a Token or two used as payment wayback then.

Our social group met members of the Denver Symphony then directed by Saul Castro. Primary to this group was Bob and Dick, the former cellist, he later the primary oboist Both were Julliard graduates as were all but one who played the bass fiddle. Naturally we bought tickets and listened to many evenings performances.

Some nights a special treat was to join a half dozen of these musicians at Bob's home at 3504 Adams, near the end of the E 34th Ave troll line. That handfull Jof players and an equal number of friends would catch that trolley near 14th and Champa.
Ride to near "the end of the line".

Was this interesting! Each musician brought their instruments, so they might continue playing at Bob's home into the early hours. Imagine. Lugging cells onto a Streetcar. That operator waited until the crew was seated before moving as projection for the wooden box with a post, strings attached.

Bob's mother would have bcth cookies and a snack for her guests; she delighted in everything her son did with his friends, as she was a widow.

The only caveat , stop playing in time to catch the final
ride back into Denver proper.

But in those few hours, the musicians played pieces of
symphonies and music they loved, most often at a
tempo that Saul Castro seldom implored. It was joy to
see and hear musicians laugh aloud as they tried to
surpass the expectations of their fellow musicians and
we peasants who come along for the ride,
at our utter delight.

It was in those moments that I realized I had found a
permanent home, in Denver,
began logging memories of my new anchorage.