

How Did Windsor Gardens Get Its Name?

By Irv Sternberg

On October 27, 2022, a few weeks before Americans vote for our 46th president, Windsor Gardens will celebrate its 60th birthday. How did this venerable adult community get its name and what is memorable about its history?

First the name. Thanks to a young post-graduate student at the University of Colorado/Denver by the name of Leslie Krupa, who wrote a definitive history of the development of Windsor Gardens, we know the origin goes back to the mid-1880s. Back then, farmers worked the land in areas called Leetsdale and Glendale. Another piece of adjoining property was coveted by Charles L. Hall and the infamous Horace A. Tabor, owners of the well-known Windsor Hotel at 18th Avenue and Larimer Street. Hall and Tabor bought the land to provide fresh produce for guests at their hotel. They named it Windsor Gardens.

Over the years Windsor Gardens also became known as the premier dairy farm in the region, providing milk “to most babies in my time,” wrote *Rocky Mountain News* journalist Pasquale Marranzino. In 1960 owner Walter Anderson sold his farm of 143 acres for \$350,000 to developers Werner Livingston, a German immigrant, and Howard Farkas, a University of Denver accounting graduate. They had an ambitious idea.

Inspired by Del Webb’s “Sun City,” a senior housing community in Arizona, Livingston and Farkas envisioned a similar development on Anderson’s farm, only larger and with many more innovations for a growing population of over-55 citizens who preferred an active life-style. They hired the community planning firm of Harman, O’Donnell and Henninger to design a unique condominium community just south of the Air Force base at Lowry. The firm had won *Life Magazine’s* award for the “Most Perfectly Planned Community in America.” That community was Northglenn, Colorado.

The developers started promoting their vision, luring buyers with trading stamps and free refrigerators, ranges and carpeting to their uniquely-designed apartments. Residents began moving in around November 1962. The first resident, Gertie Thompson, recalled that there were no sidewalks, no paved streets and open ditches. Amenities such as a golf course, swimming pool, on-site restaurant and a variety of classes attracted others. It was also a year known for Windsor Gardens’ first controversy.

The builders commissioned an artist to create a statute that would welcome everyone at the front entrance on Alameda Ave. The 12-foot tall alabaster statue called “Eternal Youth” depicted a young nude couple embracing each other. Because actors Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor were currently engaged in an ongoing romance, people started calling the statue “Dick and Liz.” To some, the artwork appeared offensive, and it was ultimately covered with a shroud. It remained modestly hidden from view for years but changing times and sensibilities allowed the statue to be revealed again.

During those years, Windsor Gardens grew to a population of as many as 3,500 people of diverse nationalities, religions and races. It gained prominence as one of America’s most

attractive, safe, vibrant and engaging adult communities.

What's in a name? At Windsor Gardens, the 2,152 owner-occupants and 538 renters call it *home*.