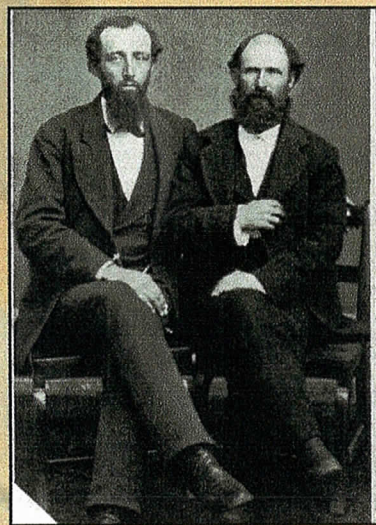
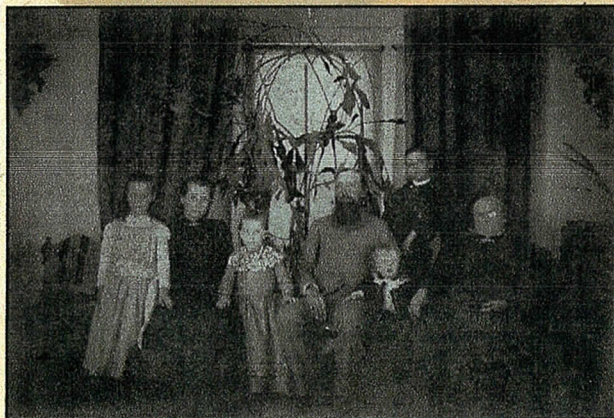


1881

The H. B. Ailman house, built in 1881 at the height of the Silver mining boom, is home to the Silver City Museum as well as its largest artifact. Constructed in Mansard-Italianate style with local brick and lumber, this Silver City landmark reflected the optimism of its era, but its early owners also experienced the downside of a mining economy. Prospectors Harry Ailman and H. M. Meredith struck it rich in silver mining, opened a bank in Silver City, and built twin homes for their families on block 67, Broadway Street. The original house consisted of the wood floor areas and what is now the kitchen. The house ended with the room just past the stairs, and the pine flooring on the second floor is original. The partners prospered until their bank failed in 1887 and all of their property was sold to satisfy debts.



Harry Ailman and H. M. Meredith



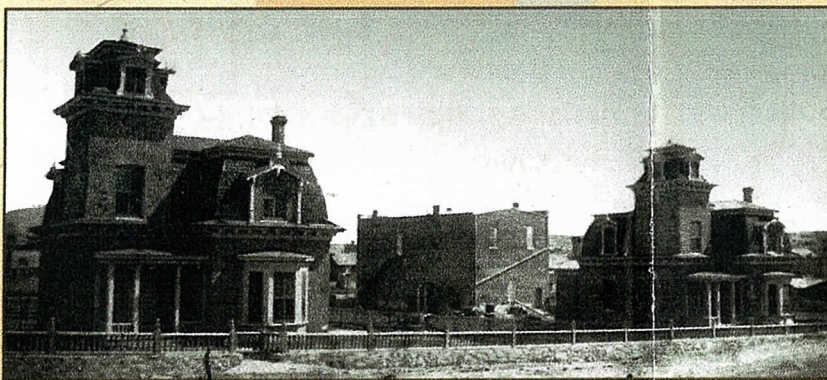
Ailman Family, 1892



Harry Ailman



Theora Ailman



Ailman and Meredith Houses, 1881

The twin houses were built by Robert Black, a building contractor. A sawmill in the Burro Mountains owned by Meredith and Ailman was traded as partial payment for the construction of the houses. It took Black over one year to build the houses.

Preserving historic neighborhoods protects not only the investment of all the owners but also the rights of citizens and visitors, present and future, to enjoy and learn from the architectural legacy of past generations.

Silver City has four registered historic districts, and standards were established for rehabilitating existing buildings and designing new ones within the zone. The standards were designed to maintain and enhance the small scale and distinctive characteristics of the districts' homes and commercial buildings. Owners of properties in Silver City's historic districts are eligible for tax credits for approved rehabilitation projects.

This project is partially funded by the Historic Preservation Division, State of New Mexico, 407 Galisteo Street, Suite 236, Santa Fe, NM 87501 with federal funds from the National Park Service, U. S. Department of the Interior.

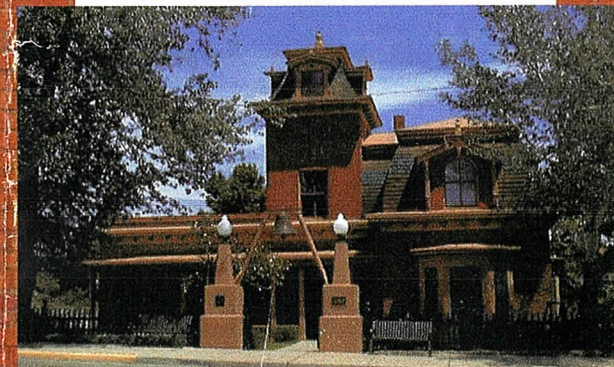
For more information visit:
www.nmhistoricpreservation.org

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SILVER CITY
MUSEUM
312 W. Broadway

THE HISTORIC H. B. AILMAN HOUSE



Silver City Museum, Present Day

The Silver City Museum has led historic preservation efforts in the Silver City region, including historic rehabilitation of the Ailman House. The H. B. Ailman House, a Second Empire style house, is listed on both the State Register of Cultural Properties (SR 186) and the National Register of Historic Places. The house has been somewhat altered, particularly on the interior, but it retains significant historic integrity.

1893



Ailman House with Ailman Family

With the end of the silver boom in 1893, Silver City reinvented itself as a health resort for tuberculosis patients. The Ailman House became a boarding house in the early twentieth century, hosting many young health-seekers.

CUPOLA The cupola was used for ventilation, reading, sewing and children's bedroom during the boarding house era. But it was primarily an exterior architectural feature.

The original house consisted of the wood floor areas and what is now the kitchen. The house ended with the room just past the stairs. The oak floors on the first floor were installed in the 1930's, but the pine flooring on the second floor is original.

1900

Hotel owners D. C. and Theora Hobart bought the house from the Meredith and Ailman Bank estate, and lived there for sixteen years. Additional rooms on the west side of the house were added in 1900. The new rooms are the one story brick addition and porch on the west side of the original house. Other changes made were the addition of transom lights over the interior doorways, and perhaps most significantly, reconstruction of the stairway which resulted in an enlarged entry hall. Legal business of the bank settlement continued in the courts, however, and the Hobarts lost their home in a 1908 judgment.

1905

The twin Meredith house had been located over a spring, and in 1905, due to the continued sinking of the structure, it was dismantled and reassembled at a site on Cooper Street. It has been remodeled beyond recognition.

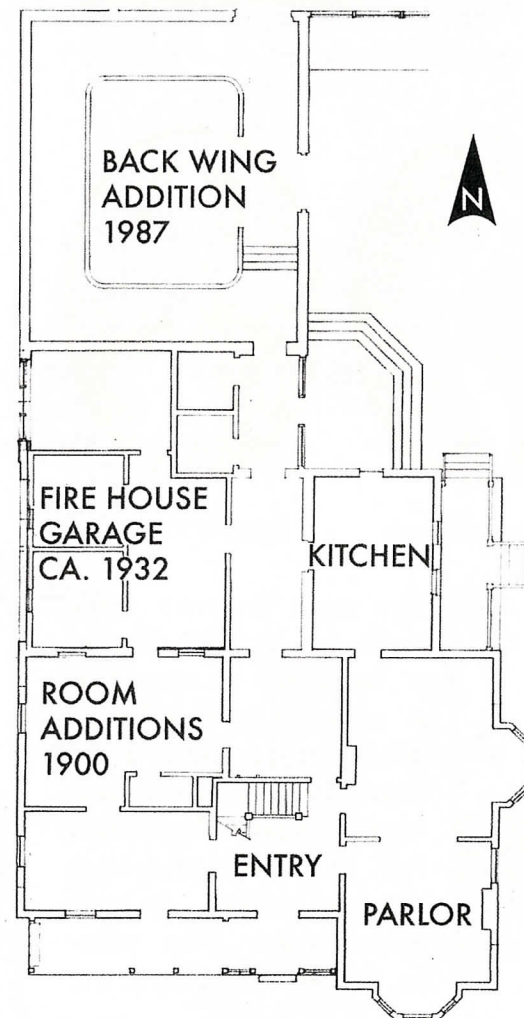


Fire engine driven by Buddy Gwyn, 1937

1926

In 1926 the building began a short stint as City Hall, and then in 1931 the local fire department moved into the Ailman House, and three fire engine garages were eventually added to the back of the 1900 addition. Oak floors were installed downstairs in the 1930s, and a fire bell was hung above the two pylons at the front entrance.

H. B. AILMAN HOUSE FIRST FLOOR



1931



*Ailman House as City Hall, 1926-31
The masonry pylons that frame the front entry also date from this time.*

Up until the 1950s, living quarters for the fire chief and his family were provided in the house by the Town, with other rooms occupied by volunteer firemen in exchange for their services. Gradually the fire department became professionalized, but continued to occupy at least a portion of the Ailman House until 1970.

1967

In 1967, the Ailman house became the home of the Silver City Museum.

The back wing was added in 1987-88 as a collections and curatorial space.

Images courtesy of the Silver City Museum