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Cranford Walking Tour

2.6 MILES

1. Meet at the site of UNC's first building, Cranford Hall, located just behind the Horace Mann Gate bordering 10th Avenue's east side across from 18th Street. You are standing on hallowed ground for anyone who cares about education in Colorado. Dating back to 1890 when its cornerstone was laid, massive Cranford served as Normal School Central until it was condemned and demolished in 1973. It took its name from John P. and Jane Sarah Cranford who donated 21.3 acres of land for the original Normal School. In all, they had bought 190 acres of prairie land now occupied by twenty-four blocks of the Cranford neighborhood.

A. *Look around.* Note the words "Rowing Not Drifting" on one of the pillars.

B. *Look to your south.* That's Gunter Hall. Dedicated in 1928, its tower houses the Westminster chimes that toll the quarter hour for neighbors, students and faculty. Hang around and listen!

C. *Now look to the east.* That's Carter Hall where the UNC President works. Back in 1907 when it was first constructed, it housed the Carter Library, named for librarian Albert F. Carter and considered one of the finest normal school libraries in the land.

D. *Next turn north.* There's Frasier Hall which took its name from the college's fourth president George Willard Frasier (1924-48). Dedicated in 1954, it is home to the College of Visual and Performing Arts and Helen Langworthy Theatre.

E. *Finally, turn northwest.* Look at those big sorority houses across the street to the north. They were once family-owned homes built extra large to offer rooms for rent to female college students who did not get their first on-campus dormitories until 1921.

2. Time to stroll two blocks south past Gunter and the original college ball field to the corner of 10th Avenue and 19th Street. Between 1928 and 1998, the lovely Tudor Revival style house on the corner served as home for seven presidents and their families. To its east, past the Cancer Rehabilitation Institute, you will see the Tudor Revival style faculty apartments, now converted to dormitories. Directly south you will find the college's first dormitories, all in Dutch Colonial Revival style and three of them dating back to 1921. Finally, look across the street to Cassidy Hall, UNC's Health Center named for Hope Cassidy, local disability rights champion. That's where the Yellow Lantern Tea Room once stood, a favorite hangout for students and college faculty like James Michener.

3. Walk directly west two blocks along 19th Street. On the northwest corner of 19th Street and 12th Avenue is Greeley's finest example of Art Moderne architecture. Designed by Greeley architect Sidney Frazier, this home at 1203 19th Street shows how pleasing it can be to mix many different architectural styles in a neighborhood like Cranford. Make your way two blocks north to 1215 18th Street. This is a Sears & Roebuck kit home built in 1921 for \$1,988. Sold as "The Wellington" model, it came "already cut and fitted."
4. Walk along 18th Street to 13th Avenue and turn south. Walk south to the 1800 block of 13th, where you will find many attractive homes. Note the Tudor Revival home at 1862 13th Avenue. Just to its north at 1854 stands a beautiful example of Colonial Revival architecture. Directly across the street at 1863 is a Dutch Cottage, and the home at 1869 is Queen Anne style.
5. Now look south and notice all the well-maintained houses with lovely trees overarching the wide street. As you walk west along 19th Street, take a peek down the alley between 19th and 20th streets. Alleys represent an important feature of Cranford, not only for their convenience but also as informal playgrounds for kids. On this alley, W. D. Farr once built a basketball court for neighborhood youths.
6. Continue west to 14th Avenue. At 1914 you will find the Tudor Revival style home of W. D. Farr, Greeley's water guru and visionary. South is the entrance to UNC West Campus.
7. Make your way north for one and a half blocks along 14th Avenue and turn east onto Cranford. At 1315 you will see the Apple House, a charming example of a Craftsman home built in 1928.
8. Turn north on 13th Avenue and walk another block and a half. At 1721 stands the Bungalow-style home of Richard and Sylvia Perchlik. Dick, who taught Political Science at UNC, served as Greeley's mayor in 1969-71. He and Sylvia owned and managed the Sharktooth Ski Area, a favorite recreation spot for Greeleyites.
9. Continue north and over to Greeley Central High School at 1415 14th Avenue, noting how common it was for big homes (1629 13th Avenue; 1703 12th Avenue) to be built on corner lots before smaller homes filled spaces in between. You can see why Central is called "the castle." Constructed in 1927, it was known as Greeley High until 1965 when Greeley West High, one of the town's round schools, opened.
10. Turn right onto 15th Street. On the corner of 13th Avenue you will find Cameron Elementary School, built in 1920 and named for General Robert A. Cameron, a Greeley founder. Until its closing in 2011, it acted as an anchor for the Cranford neighborhood. Across the street stands Christ Community Church which brings together many UNC students and local residents in serving downtown Greeley.
11. Now stroll along 13th Avenue between 15th and 16th streets. This is a lovely block with its big maple and ash trees and mix of well-maintained modest homes of many styles. Note the huge American Elm that shades the Bungalow home at 1515 13th Avenue, one of many Cranford kit homes constructed from a pattern book. Also notice how the lawns rise above street level, possibly because fill dirt had to be added to cover what had once been the town dump.
12. Turn east on 16th Street and walk two blocks to the corner of 16th Street and 11th Avenue. In front of you stands what was once the Greeley Hospital, built in 1904.
13. Time for a little detour. Turn south on 11th Avenue and notice all the big houses on both sides of the street. Take a minute to stop in front of 1631. This home, built in 1906, represents a classic example of Foursquare architecture.
14. A little farther south at 1703 11th Avenue is another Foursquare home, this one designed by Greeley resident and (probably) Colorado's first female architect, Bessie Smith. Once a grand home, it has been converted into rental apartments.
15. Now turn east onto 17th Street and walk over to 10th Avenue. On the corner to your right (now a parking lot), Angell's Tea Room was once filled with faculty and students enjoying each others company. Turn north on 10th, noting the Skinner Music Library named for Dr. Howard Skinner, UNC's President from 1996-98 and maestro of the Greeley Philharmonic Orchestra from 1970 to 2007.
16. Your tour ends at Margie's Java Joint on the corner of 10th Avenue and 16th Street. In this building that once housed the Campus Pharmacy, reward yourself for your two-mile-long trek with a delicious cup of java, and perhaps strike up a conversation with another customer or two. Chances are that you will have lots to talk about after your tour through the beautiful Cranford neighborhood.