

# *A Tour of Lowry 1 AFB*



# *Brief History of Lowry*

- *The first Lowry field was at 38<sup>th</sup> and Dahlia Street and was a Colorado National Guard training field opened in 1924.*
- *In 1934 the Army decided it needed a new technical training base to support a modern air force. 86 sites were visited.*
- *In 1935 Denver was selected because of the favorable weather for aerial photography training and abundant space for a bombing range.*
- *In 1936 Denver voters passed a bond issue for acquiring the land and buildings of the Agnes Phipps Memorial Sanatorium to be turned over to the Army for armament and photography training.*



# Beginnings



Lowry Field 1926  
38th and Dahlia  
"This Field Is Short  
Use It All"

# *Brief History of Lowry*

- *On October 1, 1937 the flag was raised at the Denver Branch making it an active army post and this date became the official anniversary date of the base. Almost immediately conversion of the sanatorium buildings began, the WPA (Works Progress Administration) supplying the labor.*
- *In December 1937 the War Dept. announced that the Denver Branch, Air Corps Technical Training School would be named Lowry Field after Lt. Francis Brown Lowry, the first Denver aviator (actually aerial observer) killed in action during World War I over France. This change, however, did not take place until March 1938 after the Colorado Air National Guard Field with the same name had been deactivated.*



*Lowry Field and later Lowry Air Force Base was  
named in honor of  
Lt. Francis Brown Lowry, from Denver,  
the first Aviator (Observer) killed in WWI.*



# *Lt. Francis Brown Lowry*

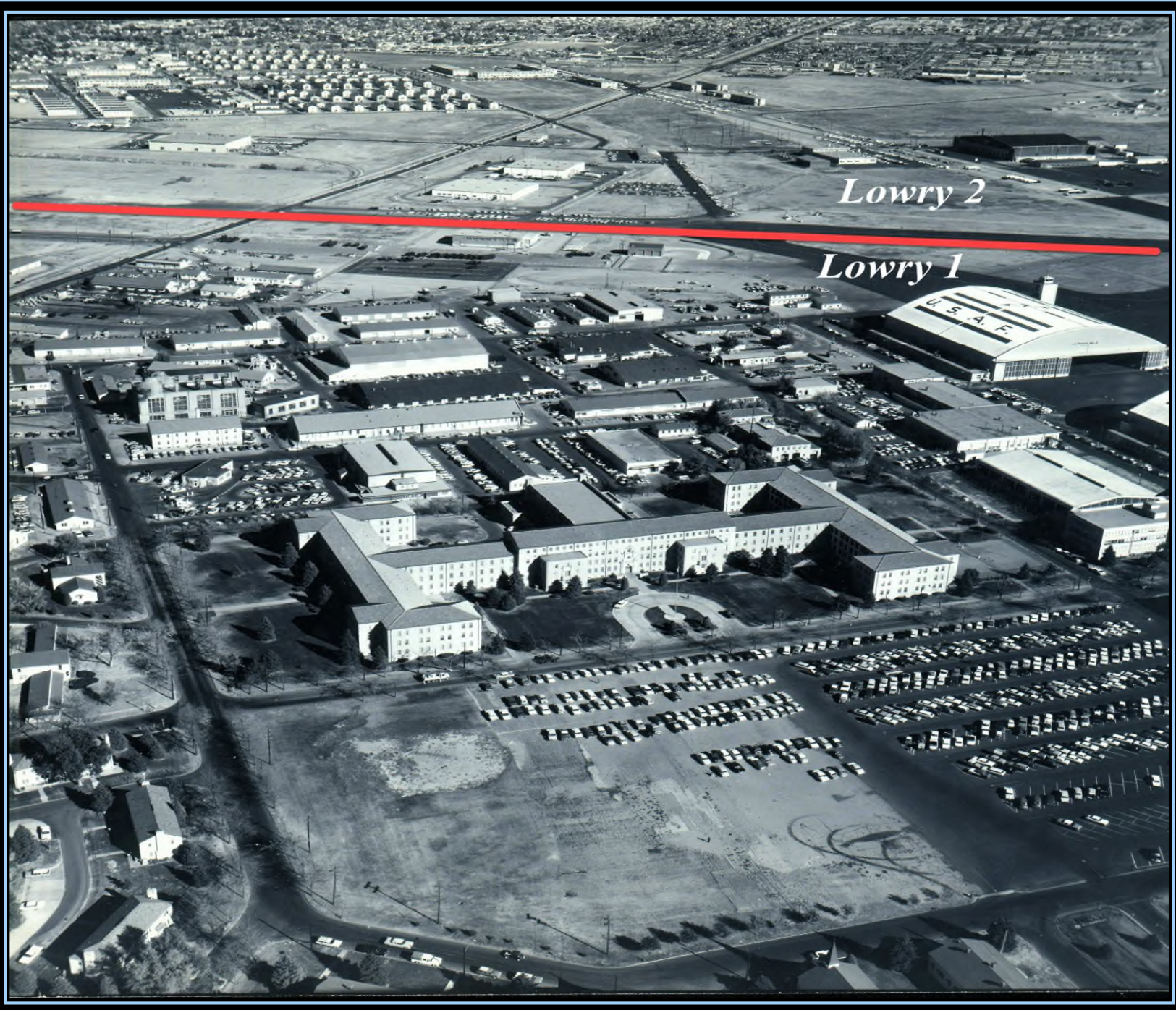
## *1895-1918*



# *Brief History of Lowry*

- *On February 26, 1938 the U.S. Army activates the Denver Branch, Air Corps Technical Training School.*
- *On February 28, 1938 the Photo and Armament instructions begin and the first bombing and airborne machine gun practice begins on the newly acquired bombing range which is now the area around the Aurora Reservoir.*
- *In July of 1942, needing more room for training, Lowry 2 was opened on the East side of the North/South runway which is now Uinta Boulevard. From 1955 until 1958 Lowry 2 was also the home of the new U.S. Air Force Academy.*





*Lowry 2*

*Lowry 1*



# *Lowry 1 Tour Map*





*Map Item #1 - Building 401, hangar #2, was completed on 17 Apr 1941. In 1966 when flying stopped its designation was changed to hangar #1. It was the second hangar built and had a control tower on right-front side. In 1985 a classroom extension was added on to the hangar and completed in 1986. With the closure of Lowry AFB in 1994 this hangar was re-purposed and became the "Wings Over the Rockies Museum."*

*Building 401, hangar #2 in 1955.*

*Wings Over the Rockies Museum 2017.*





*In 1953 part of the Glenn Miller story was filmed in what is now hangar 1. Frances Langford signs autographs.*



*Glenn Miller Story filmed at Lowry AFB, Building 401, 1953.*



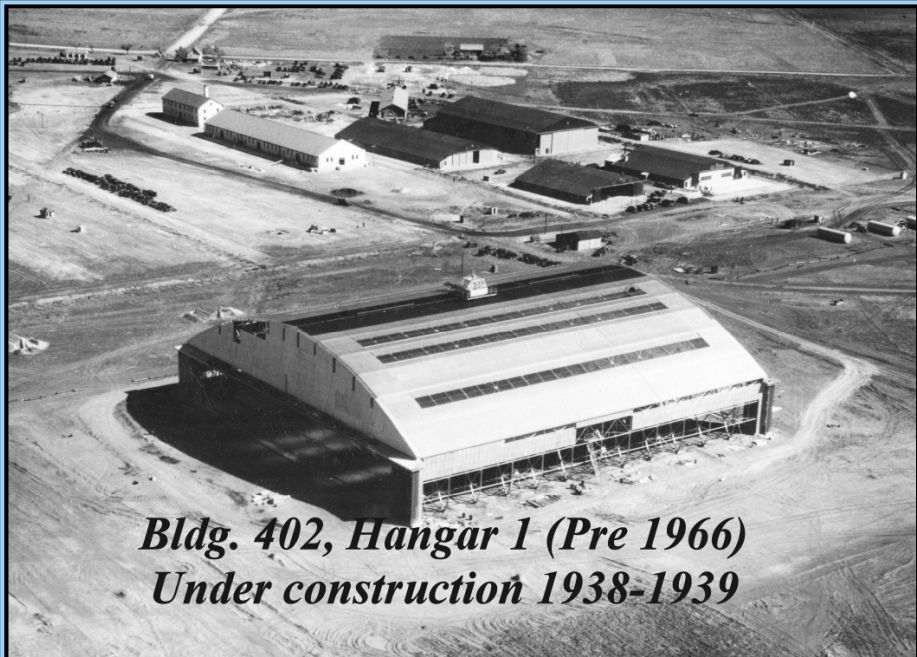
*Francis Langford signs autographs*



*Jimmy Stewart as Glenn Miller directing the  
marching band in front of building 401*



*Map Item #2 - Building 402, hangar #1, was the first hangar built and had control tower and weather observation in middle of roof. Started Aug 1938, completed Aug 1939. Hangar #1, later changed to hangar #2, was re-purposed to become Lowry retail, offices, restaurants, and storage facilities.*



*Bldg. 402, Hangar 1 (Pre 1966)  
Under construction 1938-1939*

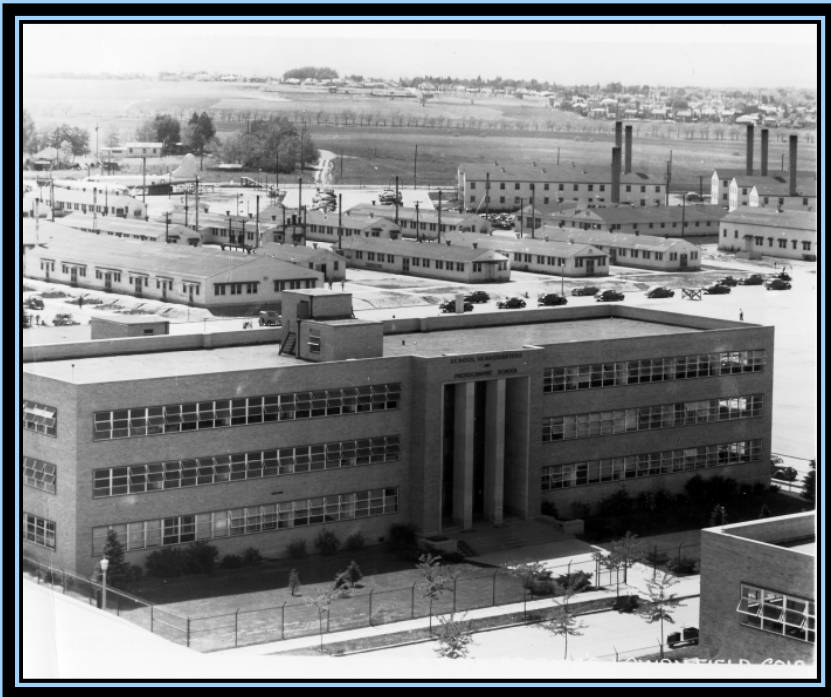




*Map Item #3 - Building 379 was the Armament School and was built in 1942. It now houses the Colorado Kidney Care center and other offices in the medical field, located at 130 Rampart Way.*



*Map Item #4 - Building 380 was the Photo and Intelligence School and was built in 1942. It now houses the Colorado Allergy and Asthma Centers, P.C., located at 125 Rampart Way. In 2002, along with building 379, they were placed on the National Registry of Historic Places.*





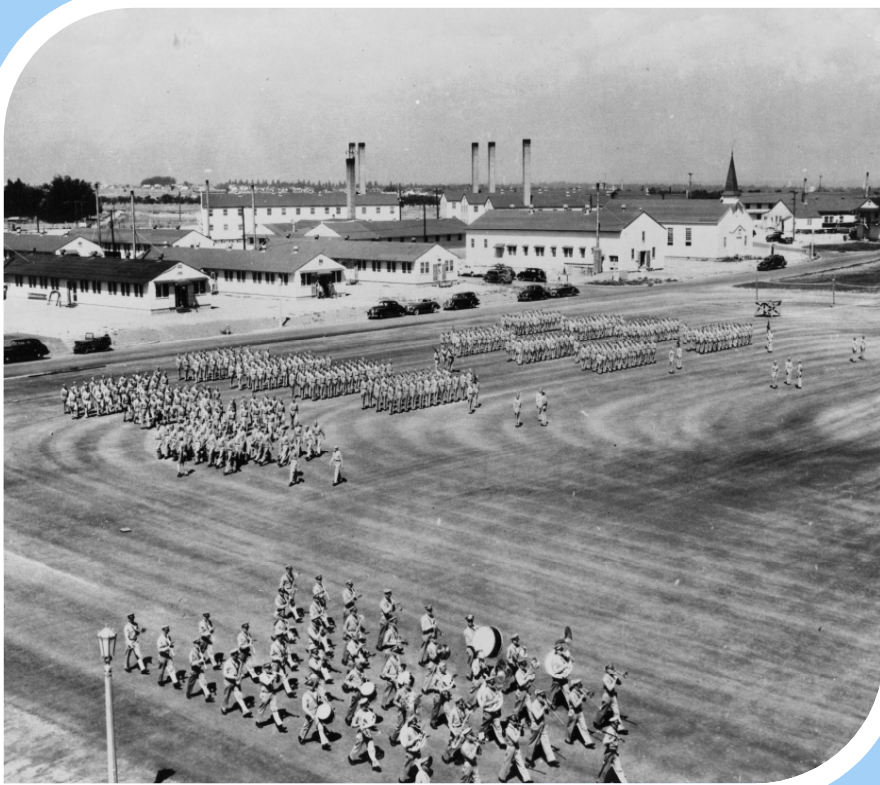
*Map Item #5 - Bldg. 349, built in 1939-1940, opened in 1940 and was the largest military barracks in U.S. In 1961 it became Lowry HQ. Today it is the Grand Lowry Lofts with parking in the basement. In 1998 it was placed on the National Registry of Historic Places.*





*Map Item #6 - Where Officer's Row Condominiums are now, in the past it has been a parade ground, football field and a parking lot.*

*Parade field 1943.*



*Officer's Row Condominiums*





*Lowry Air Force Base 1947  
and  
Lowry Community 1995.*

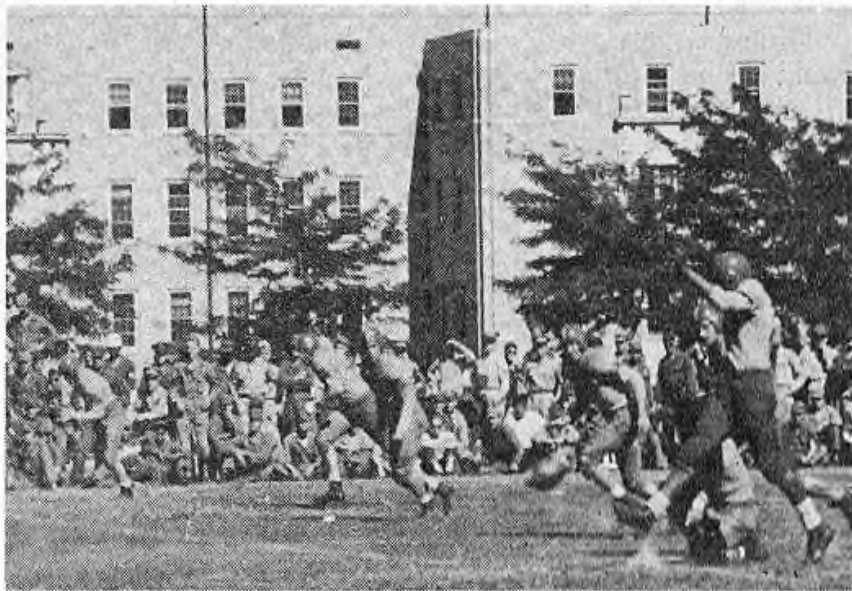
*1947*



*1995*



*Football being played on the West side of bldg. 349 where the Officer's Row Condominiums are now. These pictures are from a 1949 Lowry Airman newspaper.*



**THE PIGSKIN SEASON OPENED** with the Fort Bliss center stalwart Anderson booting the ball into the Flyers' territory. Note players eyeing the ball to avoid off-side penalties. Over 2,000 turned out for the season opener, and the temperature soared to a sweating 90 degrees. The groundlings from Texas said that the altitude kept them winded.

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LOWRY AIRMEN — October 7, 1949



#### Why Play Football?

It was just too good to miss! As the Flyers were going through their gridiron paces one afternoon last week, the PIO appeared with two prospects for the first string lineup.

So, Coach Benham (reportedly said: "What next?")

put Bobby Nickelson at center position and chic Maurine Howard at the quarterback position. As one might expect, those stalwarts on the Flyers' line rolled over their opposing teammates and Maurine was off to the races. One guy (McQuinn, no less) got in the way of Maurine's touchdown trot and promptly got stiff-armed. Then with him out of the way the team quickly gathered up interference—or were they just chasing her?



*Map Item #7 - Chapel 1, Eisenhower Chapel, construction started July 8, 1941, dedicated November 23, 1941. First chapel on Lowry. President and Mamie Eisenhower attended services. Placed on National Registry of Historic Places in 1982. It is now the offices of The Lowry Foundation.*



*Mr. and Mrs. Tyler were married in Chapel 1 in 1950. In 2015 they visited the Chapel to celebrate their 65th wedding anniversary.*





*Map Item #8 - Building 26 is the only remaining wood barracks left on Lowry. It was used as a Bachelor Officers quarters and housed 40 officers. Today it houses some offices and apartments.*



***Map Item #9 - Lowry Officers club, built in 1942, which President Eisenhower used as part of his summer White House from 1953-1955. It is now the Stanley British Primary School.***





*Map Item #10 - Buildings 1-5, the first 3 can be seen here, were residences for senior ranking officers and their families. Built sometime around 1938 to 1940. These buildings are now classrooms for the Stanley British Primary School.*





*Map Item #11 - This is the site of the Agnes Phipps Memorial Sanatorium. Ground was broken in May 1903 and the building was opened in July 1904, closed in 1932. It was used for open air treatment of tuberculosis patients. 150 beds, later expanded to 300, 18 structures and designed to to make the most of Colorado's sunshine and then clean mountain air. The Sanatorium is no longer there.*





# *Agnes Phipps Memorial Sanatorium in 1945*



*Buildings 201-210 were family housing duplexes for NCO's early then assigned to Officers. Now are private residences and no longer duplexes. Built around 1940. You can see some of these homes as you drive North on Quebec to 6<sup>th</sup> Ave.*





*Building 251, built in 1904 for the superintendent of the sanatorium later became the home of Lowry's commanding officers.*

*Commander's home in early  
1940.*

*2017 Commander's home, private  
residence today.*

*You can see this home from 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. as  
you start east from Quebec.*



*Map Item #12 - Red Cross building 259 built in 1942.  
This building is no longer there.*





*Map Item #13 - Bldg. 361, the Steam Plant which was opened in 1940. It was built to heat 35 of Lowry's buildings by providing steam heat through a series of underground tunnels and pipes. Its four large boilers were fueled with coal that was delivered on railroad tracks along 6th Avenue. In 1973 it was converted to gas.*

*The Steam Plant in 1941.*



*The Steam Plant Lofts (2017) offering 12 custom-designed loft-style condominiums on three floors, plus two rooftop penthouses.*



*Lowry's railroad was constructed by the WPA in 1940 and was connected to Fitzsimons Army Hospital and Buckley Field. The tracks ran along the North side of 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue from Dayton St. west to the Steam Plant. Left picture is looking west with bldgs. 960 and 961 on the left side of the tracks and bldg. 905 on the right side. Right picture shows track going to warehouses and the steam plant. The tracks are gone now.*





*Map Item #13A - Building 358, built in 1938, was a commissary, Security Police station and training. It is now part of the International School of Denver.*



*Map Item #13B - Building 359, built in 1938 for base warehouse storage, Comptroller Training and later Special Instruments Training. It is now part of the International School of Denver.*





*Map Item #13C - Service (Gas) Station, bldg. 352, on Lowry Field in 1941. This building is no longer there.*



*Map Item #14 - Theater 1 built around 1941, seated 850 people, also used for squadron Commander's call. Is now a gym for the International School of Denver.*



*Bldg. 353, Theater 1, built 1941.*



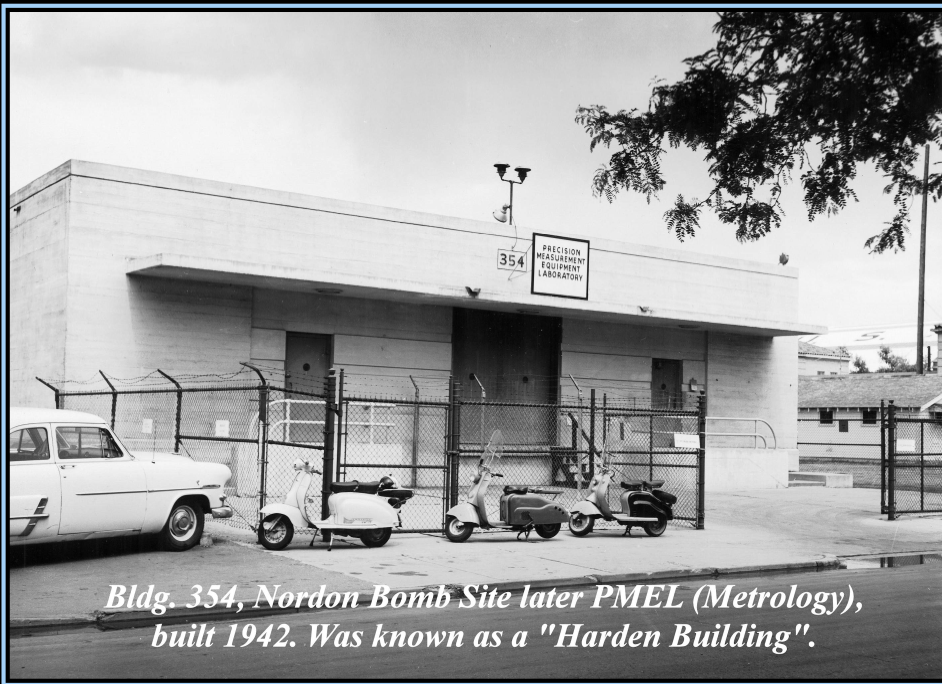




### *Original Seats in Theater 1*

*From the August 15, 1941 Rev-Meter:  
“Soldiers Recommend Lowry Theater, But  
Claim Seats Are Hard, Price High”*

***Map Item #15 - Building 256 was the Nordon bomb sight repair and storage, this is what was called a hardened building. Later Precision Measurement Equipment Laboratory (PMEL) used it as a calibration lab. Then a 2<sup>nd</sup> story was added and now it is the Denver International Middle School.***



*Bldg. 354, Nordon Bomb Site later PMEL (Metrology), built 1942. Was known as a "Harden Building".*





*Map Item #16 - Building 357, built in 1940, was the old Fire House now is the John Hand Theater and Colorado Free University.*



*On the back side of building 357 was the location of the 1910th Communication offices. It has housed the Lowry switchboard and later was storage for recreation equipment and is now part of the Colorado Free University.*





***Do you remember any of these businesses  
from the Lowry days?***

***Happy Cat Lounge outside the Yosemite Gate***

***Apple Tree Shanty***

***China Doll Restaurant***

***Gold Key Lounge***

***Denver Drumstick Restaurant***

***Shakeys Pizza – all you could eat lunches***

***Andy's Smorgasbord – with lingerie show at  
lunch time***

***Sid Kings strip club***

***Plainsman Lounge Hoffman Heights Aurora***

***Blue Onion***

***ZanZabar (Z Bar)***

# *One Last Oldie*

*Rev-Meter*  
*September 5, 1941*



Have fun! Relax! Skate tonight  
on the largest rink in the Rocky  
Mountain region.

**MAMMOTH GARDEN**

**Colfax at Clarkson**