



Face of Fillmore

By Sherry Shepard
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The Face of Fillmore's Main Street is everchanging. Pictures of early Main Street do not even resemble our present-day business district. There are a few exceptions to that, which people like me enjoy seeing. With all of the pioneer heritage in our town, it is inspiring to see older buildings being refurbished and remodeled to make way for another business. It is also enjoyable to look at pictures of older buildings that are long gone and remember being within their walls.

This week we will take a look at one of each variety.

When we moved to Fillmore nearly 50 years ago, I often shopped at Kelly's Department Store. The staff was friendly and the merchandise of good quality. Adjoining the clothing department was a small grocery store that I often frequented. When our last daughter was very small, the butcher would put her on the scales to see how much she had grown since our last visit.

Kelly's Department Store is now only a memory and thanks to many great pictures, we can share those memories with our children and grandchildren. Someone who knows about the history of automobiles will be able to fairly accurately date this picture.

James. A. Kelly started his first business, a butcher shop, in 1901 on the corner of First North and Main. Not long afterward, Mr. Kelly hired Joseph Sequine and James Frampton to build a building just north of where the drug store is now located. From there, in 1904, Mr. Kelly moved his business into the building near where the old Stevens Hotel is now and later expanded it in 1907 to the corner building at Main and Center.



J. Francis Kelly Department Store

In 1919 Mr. Kelly built the Kelly Department Store on the east side of Main and north of Center. Contractors for the building were Leon and Marvin Peterson. J. Francis Kelly, who was James' son, bought the store from his father and modernized it in every way. It has been several years since the store closed, but it is an important part of the history of businesses in Fillmore.

The other building that has certainly withstood the passing years, it the one just south of Center Street on the east side of Main. This building is one of the more historic on Main Street and was originally the Huntsman Store.

Past owners told how during the remodeling process they found evidences of businesses of yesteryear as walls and ceilings were replaced. I was told there was even evidence that the building has been on fire more than once at some point in its history.



G. R. Huntsman General Merchandise Store

G.R. Huntsman began his business career in 1894 near the corner of First South and Main Street where he operated a meat market in the basement of John Kelly’s store. Later he bought a frame building built by John King, which was on the corner of Second North and Main. Mr. Huntsman thought this was too far from the center of business in town so he had it brought to the spot just south of the brick building that Bradshaw’s was in.

The moving of the building brought quite a stir in town. It is one of my favorite stories of early Fillmore and bears repeating. Those who were partial to using oxen for pulling were certain they could out-pull the teams of horses. Three teams of horses were hitched to one side of the building and three

teams of oxen to the other. The oxen were owned by Baldy Allen, husband of Fannie Huntsman Stewart and the horses were owned by Nelson Beauregard. Many dollars changed hands during the move, which took several days as the pull was all uphill. According to Alonzo Huntsman who later wrote about the event in the Milestones of Millard, the oxen were the superior pullers.

Mr. Huntsman operated a business in this building for several years. In 1899, he began the large two-story brick building. In an article in the Deseret News dated March 31, 1900, this was the largest mercantile institution in southern Utah, with an inventory worth nearly \$50,000. The brick building was constructed by Albert Day and sons. The thousands of bricks were made by hand by Mr. Day’s men and sandstone from the basement came from the old Hoyt tannery and some was also quarried up Chalk Creek Canyon. The large pine floor joists were once part of the old grist mill built by Noah Bartholomew.

As business grew, Mr. Huntsman added the building just to the north.

Mr. and Mrs. Huntsman operated the business in the brick building until 1912 when their son George took over. He operated it until World War II. Following those years, the building became the home of Utah Poultry Company, then Rowley’s Variety Store, Bradshaw Auto Parts and now a fitness center.

Gracing the Face of Fillmore beginning in the early 1870’s was the elegant



Huntsman Hotel

Huntsman Hotel. The spacious hotel shared an exterior wall with the Huntsman Store. Located on the southeast corner of Main Street and Center Street, this hotel was among the finest in its day. The hotel boasted 24 guest rooms with large porches on the first and second floors. These were decorated with fancy hand-carved posts and railings done by Hans Hanson. There was a beautifully decorated dining area as well, and even a barbershop. The spacious brick building had a frame addition on the back, which served as living quarters for the family. There was also a large barn where guests could put their horses for the night. Built in 1872 by Gabriel and Eunice Huntsman, the hotel often provided lodging for Brigham Young and other statesmen when they conducted business in Utah's territorial capitol.

While the store section is still in use today, the hotel is long gone from Fillmore's Main Street. However, for anyone wanting to visit the old hotel, a replica has been constructed at This Is The Place State Park in Salt Lake City.