Objectives

Students will:

× Describe the history of South Temple through a role play.
× Articulate different viewpoints about the demolition of South Temple mansions.
× Explore the impacts of these demolitions.
× Discover that historic buildings can be adapted for new uses.

Background

South Temple tells a fascinating story about changes in the economy and people’s thinking over the last 100 years. The east end of the street (east of 700 East) retains much of its historic character. Most of the houses in this area were built in the early 20th century as substantial, upper-middle class residences. The majority of them continue to be residences.

The west end of South Temple (west of 700 East), however, has changed a great deal. The grand mansions of Utah’s turn-of-the-century nouveau riche stood on this end of the street. Of the approximately 33 large homes built in the area, 20 have been demolished. Of those remaining, none continue to be used as single-family residences.

The process which led to the demolition of many of South Temple’s grand mansions was set in motion during the first decades of the twentieth century. The creation of the first federal income tax in 1913 made it harder for wealthy families to live the lavish lifestyle which supported the mansions. On the whole, income tax rates for the very wealthy gradually increased over the next 30 years.

The economic devastation of the Great Depression in the 1930s also reduced the number of family fortunes able to support a mansion. Utah was particularly hard hit by the Depression. The state’s economy was dependent on mining and agriculture—two industries crushed by the economic collapse. Many of the mines which built the mansions on South Temple ceased production. By the 1930s, the South Temple mansions were in a period of decline. Some were divided into apartments. Others simply became run-down.

Note

Lesson 13: Teaching Old Buildings New Tricks introduces the concept of “adaptive use.” This concept will help students understand the fate of the buildings in this lesson. You may wish to use Lesson 13 before Lesson 14, but it can also be taught without any introductory activities.

Materials

Who’s Still Standing map
— make overhead —

Our House on South Temple Description Sheets
— Divide class into 9 groups. Groups 1-6 each receive a different House Description Sheet. Make 1 copy of description sheet for each group member.—

South Temple in Decline Description Sheet
—1 copy for each member of Group 7—

Don’t Stand in the Way of Progress Description Sheet
—1 copy for each member of Group 8—

Preserve our Heritage Description Sheet
—1 copy for each member of Group 9—

Cut-out Sheets
— make overheads, cut out symbols —
— Give appropriate houses to Groups 1-6
— 6 cobwebs to Group 7
— 3 wrecking balls to Group 8
— School and office symbols to Group 9
During the 1950s and 1960s, many people believed “urban renewal” was the solution to the problem of America’s deteriorating downtowns. Programs sponsored by the federal government encouraged the demolition of old buildings and the construction of new ones. Because of its proximity to downtown, the west end of South Temple experienced the effects of urban renewal. During the 1960s, one mansion after another fell to the wrecking ball. Because many of the mansions had deteriorated, many people felt it was time for them to go.

Not everyone was pleased with the effects of urban renewal. The demolition of mansions on South Temple served as a catalyst for the historic preservation movement in Utah, including the establishment of Utah Heritage Foundation. Preservationists argued that the historic buildings on South Temple are a vital part of our heritage which should be protected for all to enjoy. The determined efforts of a small group of preservationists led to the creation of Utah’s first historic district on South Temple in 1978. Today, Salt Lake City’s historic preservation ordinance can prevent the demolition of historic buildings on South Temple in many cases.

The way people look at the historic buildings has also changed since the 1960s. Urban renewal proponents tended to see old buildings as obstacles to progress. During the late-1960s and 70s, however, many people realized the historic buildings could be put to new uses. (See discussion of “adaptive use” in background section of Lesson 13.) Today many the mansions of South Temple have been rehabilitated to provide elegant spaces for commercial offices, government agencies, bed & breakfasts, and a business college.

**Student Instruction**

1. **Ask students:** What are some changes have we discussed in our study of the Kearns Mansion? (e.g. use of the mansion, transportation, lifestyles, etc.) Show Clue 35, Who’s Still Standing map. **Tell students:** This is a map of South Temple. Today you get to act out changes on South Temple Street over the last 100 years. We’ll be able to see the changes on this map.

2. Divide class into nine groups. Groups 1-6 each receive a different Our House on South Temple (Clues 36-41) Description Sheet and the cut-out of their house from Clue 45. Group 7 receives Clue 42, South Temple in Decline Description Sheet, and six cobwebs from Clue 45. Group 8 receives Clue 43, Don’t Stand in the Way of Progress Description Sheet, and three wrecking balls from Clue 45. Group 9 receives Clue 44, Preserve our Heritage Description Sheet, and the school and office symbols from Clue 45.

3. Instruct all the groups to carefully read the instructions and information on their description sheets. Ask each group to prepare a role play presentation based on the information on their sheet. Emphasize that students should not simply read their description sheet, but act it out. Students are welcome to make up things for their characters to say and do, as long as it fits with the general information on their description sheet. Monitor the groups to insure they understand the instructions.
Have Groups 1-6 perform their role play presentations for the class. At the end of their presentation, each group places their cut-out house on the map.

Have Groups 7-9 perform their role play presentations for the class. Group 7 places a cobweb over each house on the map. Group 8 places a wrecking ball over each demolished house and then removes it from the map. Group 9 removes cobwebs and places the school and office symbols on remaining houses.

Explain that about one-third of all the historic homes on South Temple street have been demolished. As a class, discuss how people today are affected by these demolitions (e.g. people who live in the neighborhood, people who work on South Temple, people who drive down South Temple regularly, tourists, historians, students, artists). Brainstorm others who might be affected and explain how.

Ask each group to brainstorm a list of pros and cons for demolishing historic buildings and a list of pros and cons for preserving historic buildings. Groups report back to the class.

**Student Activity/Product Options**

- Students write an essay defending one of the following positions: “Demolishing historic buildings is a good idea” or “Preserving historic buildings is a good idea.” They should support their views with examples whenever possible.
- Students choose one of the houses described in the lesson and draw three pictures showing the different phases in the house’s life. Students write a brief caption for each picture explaining what has happened to the house.

**Links**

- Lesson 6: *South Temple Styles* Pre-Tour
- Lesson 13: *Teaching Old Buildings New Tricks* Post-Tour
David Keith was Thomas Kearns’s business partner and good friend. After his parents died when he was 14, David went to work in a gold mine in Canada. He came to Park City in 1883 to work in the silver mines. He and Thomas Kearns bought the Mayflower mine and both became millionaires. David and Thomas Kearns were also partners in The Salt Lake Tribune.

Mary Keith was born in Salt Lake City and became a school teacher. She met David when she worked as the manager of the Rocky Mountain Bell Telephone Company in Park City. Mary and David got married in 1894. There were five children in their family: Charles, Etta, Lillie, Margaret, and David.

The Keiths built their mansion on South Temple in 1900. The front has a tall, two-story porch meant to look like an ancient Greek Temple. Inside is a splendid dome with stained glass made by America’s most famous glass company—Louis Tiffany & Company. The mansion also has a ballroom and an ice box large enough to hold one ton of ice. The Keith Mansion’s carriage house is probably the biggest on South Temple. Inside the carriage house are a bowling alley and a shooting gallery.

David Keith was a quiet man. The Keith family did not have as many big parties as Thomas and Jennie Kearns did. Mary Keith, however, invited her lady friends to tea once a week. The Keiths also had a large, fancy wedding for their daughter Etta at their house.

Our House on South Temple

Instructions

1. Read the information on this sheet carefully. With your group, plan a role play presentation for your class. Everyone in your group should take part. Pretend that you are members of the David and Mary Keith family. Tell your friends a little bit about your family and your house on South Temple Street.

2. At the end of your presentation, place your house on the map.

David and Mary Keith House

529 East South Temple

David Keith was Thomas Kearns’s business partner and good friend. After his parents died when he was 14, David went to work in a gold mine in Canada. He came to Park City in 1883 to work in the silver mines. He and Thomas Kearns bought the Mayflower mine and both became millionaires. David and Thomas Kearns were also partners in The Salt Lake Tribune.

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Ezra and Emily Thompson moved to their house on South Temple in 1898. They had three sons, Lynn, Ezra, Jr., and Clyde, and a daughter, Norinne. Ezra Thompson grew up in Salt Lake City when it was still a pioneer town. As a young man, he hauled goods to the Park City mines. Later he became the owner of several rich mines and founded the Thompson Mining Company.

In 1899, Ezra was elected mayor of Salt Lake City. He was popular and served three terms in office. During the time he was mayor, many streets in Salt Lake City, including South Temple, were paved for the first time.

Ezra loved horses. On Sundays the Thompson family often dressed up in their best clothes and took a carriage ride “way out to Liberty Park.” Ezra also bought an electric car.

The front of the Thompson house has a big square tower with a top that looks like a bell. The inside has beautiful wood wall panels, ceiling beams, and fireplaces. Many windows have stained glass panes. Nearby is a two-story brick garage and stable.

Ezra and Emily Thompson lived in this house until 1917. Then they moved across the street to the David and Mary Keith House. Their house, however, stayed in the Thompson family. Lynn, the oldest son, and his family lived there for many years.
Sam Newhouse was probably the richest of Utah’s mining kings. He grew up in Pennsylvania and later moved to the mining town of Leadville, Colorado. Here he met and married Ida Stringley. She worked in a boardinghouse for Leadville miners.

Sam and Ida opened a hotel in Leadville. With the help of a friend, Sam bought some mines and sold them for millions of dollars. This was only the start of his fortune. The Newhouses came to Utah in 1896. Soon Sam bought some copper mines in Bingham Canyon, where the Kennecott Copper mine is today. These mines proved to be very rich. Everything Sam touched seemed to succeed.

The Newhouses bought a house on South Temple in 1905. They hired a famous architect to remodel the house into an elegant mansion. Inside is a grand hall with white marble walls and a huge staircase with a copper railing. Everything in the house is made of the finest materials. Some people say the Newhouses served dinner to their guests on solid gold plates.

This was only one of Sam and Ida’s mansions. They also had houses in New York, England, and France. In fact, Ida spent most of her time in Europe where she visited kings, queens, and other royalty. Sam, though, made Salt Lake City his home. He put a lot of money into projects that helped Salt Lake City grow.
John and Elizabeth Dern were from Germany. In 1870 they settled in Nebraska and soon became well to do farmers. In 1890 a friend told John about a gold mine in Utah. John bought part of the Mercur Mining and Milling Company. The mine was a success. The Derns moved to Salt Lake City in 1892 so John could help manage the mine.

In 1897, John and Elizabeth bought a house on South Temple. The house has a tall tower in the middle. There is a beautiful fence around it like no other in Salt Lake City. Inside, each room has a different kind of wood—cherry, walnut, maple, oak, mahogany. There is a ballroom on the third floor.

John and Elizabeth’s son, George, moved to Utah to work in his father’s mining company. He married Lottie Brown a few years later. George worked hard and soon became the general manager of a large mining company in Mercur, Utah. After John’s death in 1922, George and Lottie moved into the family house on South Temple.

George is most famous for his political career. He was elected Utah’s governor in 1924. George and Lottie’s South Temple house was the official governor’s home during George’s term in office. In 1933, President Franklin Roosevelt asked George to be the Secretary of War. George was the first person from Utah to hold such a high national office.
Enos Wall had already worked in mining in several western states when he came to Silver Reef, Utah. He bought three mines in Silver Reef, but ran into money problems and couldn’t pay his miners. The miners were angry. Enos had to escape town in a wagon with his sweetheart, Mary Mayso. A friend with a rifle guarded the back of the wagon as they sped away. Later he paid the miners the wages he owed them.

Enos and Mary stopped in Salt Lake City to get married and then went on to Idaho. Enos again worked in mining and invented several ore-crushing machines. Enos and Mary had nine children, but only five—Alice, Selma, Mary, Olive, and Peggy—lived to be adults.

Enos thought Utah would be a good place to sell his ore-crushing machines, so the Wall family moved to Salt Lake City in 1885. Two years later, Enos visited the Bingham Canyon mining district. He believed that copper mining here would pay well and began to buy land in the area. Wall helped found the Utah Copper Company, which later became Kennecott Utah Copper. This company made him very rich.

Enos and Mary bought a house on South Temple in 1904. The hired Richard Kletting to remodel and expand the house. Richard Kletting is best-known for designing the Utah State Capitol Building. The Wall House has a beautiful balcony on top of the front porch. Guests in the third floor ballroom could wander out on the balcony to enjoy the view. The house also has one of Salt Lake City’s first elevators and a built-in vacuum system.
James and Catherine Wood House

307 East South Temple

Catherine Veit grew up in Austria in a rich family. Her father wanted her to marry an old baron, but Catherine didn’t like him. Her uncle helped her escape to America. She married a man in Denver, Colorado, but he soon died. A few years later she married another man, but he died too. With two small sons to support, Catherine decided to open a hotel in Idaho.

While running her hotel, Catherine met David Wood. He had many different businesses in Idaho, including mining, cattle ranching, running a general store, and hauling goods. Catherine and David got married in 1882.

Catherine and David were good business partners. They set up the Wood Live Stock Company which became one of the largest sheep ranching businesses in the United States. They also owned one of the world’s biggest cattle ranches in Chihuahua, Mexico. The Woods moved their business offices to Salt Lake City in 1900.

Catherine and David hired Carl Neuhausen to design a house for them on South Temple. Catherine dreamed of living in a house like one she had seen as a girl in Austria. Her dream house is similar in style to the Kearns Mansion. The walls are even made of the same limestone as the Kearns Mansion. The house has twenty rooms. The rooms in the curved tower are particularly beautiful.
It is the 1930s. A lot has changed since wealthy families first built their mansions on South Temple. First of all, there is a new income tax. Now everyone must give some of the money they make each year to the national government. At first it wasn’t much, but the tax has been growing. This means rich families, like those who live on South Temple, have less money to spend. It costs a lot to live in a mansion and keep it in good shape.

Even more important, though, is the Great Depression. The whole country is going through hard times during the 1930s. Many people have lost their jobs and all the money they saved in banks. Some people have to live in houses made of cardboard and tin.

Things in Utah are particularly bad. Many of the mines have shut down. These mines made many of the families on South Temple rich. They also provided jobs for lots of people. Now Utahns are moving to other states to look for jobs.

Rich people are better off than most. But some rich families have lost all their money. Even the lucky ones are having a hard time keeping their mansions in good shape.

Walking down South Temple you can really see a difference. The beautiful mansions are starting to look a little run down. Some of them have been divided into apartments.

Instructions

1. Read the information on this sheet carefully. With your group, plan a role play presentation for your class. Everyone in your group should take part. Pretend that you are rich families who live on South Temple Street. Explain how the changes described below have changed your life and your house.

2. At the end of your presentation, put a cobweb over each house on the map.
Instructions

1. Read the information on this sheet carefully. With your group, plan a role play presentation for your class. Everyone in your group should take part. Pretend that you are city officials, business people, and builders who want to construct new buildings on South Temple. You must convince others that tearing down some mansions on South Temple is a good idea.

2. Look at the list of houses on South Temple that were demolished. At the end of your presentation, put a wrecking ball over each house on the map that was demolished. Then take the house off the map.

It is now the 1960s. Many people are worried about downtown Salt Lake City. Not as many people are coming downtown to go shopping like they used to. Some stores are going out of business or moving away. Some buildings are empty.

The solution to this problem is getting rid of old, run-down buildings in our downtown and building new, modern buildings. People don’t like old buildings. They are out-of-date, cost too much to fix up, and won’t work for modern businesses. What people want are shiny, new, modern buildings. Salt Lake City can even get money from the national government to help us tear down old buildings and build new ones. If we build new buildings, people and businesses will come back downtown.

South Temple Street is very close to downtown. There are old mansions there and some of them are pretty run-down. A new building for a new business would do a lot more good for our city than an old mansion. Let’s tear down some of the mansions.

Demolished Houses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of House</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Year Demolished</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James and Catherine Wood House</td>
<td>307 East South Temple</td>
<td>1961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sam and Ida Newhouse House</td>
<td>165 East South Temple</td>
<td>1960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John &amp; Elizabeth Dern/George &amp; Lottie Dern</td>
<td>715 East South Temple</td>
<td>1970</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Instructions

1. Read the information on this sheet carefully. With your group, plan a role play presentation for your class. Everyone in your group should take part. Pretend that you are Salt Lake City citizens who don’t want the mansions on South Temple to be demolished. You must convince others that saving and reusing the mansions is a good idea.

2. Look at the list of mansions on South Temple with new uses. At the end of your presentation, take the cobwebs off the mansions and put the matching symbol next to it.

It is now the 1970s. Many mansions on South Temple have been torn down over the past ten years. Some people don’t like what they see. They want to save, or preserve, the historic buildings on South Temple.

After all, the historic buildings on South Temple tell part of the story of Utah. They are part of our heritage. If they are torn down, a piece of our heritage is lost forever. The houses on South Temple are also beautiful. They are nice to look at as you walk down the street. Inside they have wonderful examples of craftsmanship that you don’t see in many modern buildings.

People around the country are finding new uses for old buildings. Creative people have adapted old buildings so they can be restaurants, offices, and stores. They discovered that fixing up an old building costs about the same as, or even less than, building a new building. People like doing business in historic buildings. They admire the beautiful architecture and feel a connection to their history. Let’s save the mansions on South Temple and find new uses for them.

Mansions with New Uses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of House</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>New Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enos &amp; Mary Wall House</td>
<td>411 East South Temple</td>
<td>LDS Business College (School)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David &amp; Mary Keith House</td>
<td>529 East South Temple</td>
<td>Business Offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ezra &amp; Emily Thompson House</td>
<td>576 East South Temple</td>
<td>Business Offices</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>