The Wheat Ridge Historical Society has lost a long-time member recently Ms. Karin Heine (pronounced Heina`) was a big part of the efforts to restore the Baugh House property. She quietly backed the society in its efforts to preserve the local landmark.

Karin was just 75 years old when she died peacefully at her home. Karin moved to Denver at the age of 21, then to Wheat Ridge in the 1970s. She was a member of the Wildlife conservation society. As a life-long champion of nature, she purchased three vacant lots in northwest Wheat Ridge in 1997 and created a private wildlife refuge called the Heine Wildlife Sanctuary. Home to birds, butterflies, foxes, rabbits, and other wildlife. Today this property now totals more than 11 acres.

Located off 44th Avenue between Parfet and Oak streets, the vacant parcel of land was a trash heap when Heine first bought it.

According to an April 23, 2003, Rocky Mountain News story, Karin planted more than 300 flowers, shrubs and trees, and added rock piles for wildlife shelter. In 2003 she successfully petitioned to rezone the properties under the city’s then-new Conservation Zone District and shortly after entered into a conservation agreement with Colorado Open Lands, a nonprofit land trust. The original zoning allowed for 16 homes. In 2004 Westword named it Best Private Wildlife Sanctuary. This one’s for the birds. That's who Wheat Ridge resident and nature-lover Karen Heine had in mind (along with the foxes, squirrels and occasional deer wandering through) as she worked to create a woodland paradise on undeveloped land she purchased expressly for that purpose. Now it's a tiny northwest-metro treasure.

Karin grew up with family who nurtured her artistic talents, love of nature and wildlife.” From a young age she would find injured birds and bringing them home to nurture them back to health. She knew every neighborhood pet and would visit and play with them,” according to her sister Peggy Heine.

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