

Len & Bill's Lounge

2301 South Broadway

Phone: 303-722-6484 8AM CASH

Hipster Scale



Dive Bar Rating



As in no other bar within Denver city limits, time inside Len & Bill's has seemingly stopped. And I'm not just saying that because it's a lazy way of describing how run-down everything is. Wander in on an enervated afternoon, cop a lean on the creaky wood bar, watch as John, the daytime tender, hobbles and groans and zones out over the beer tub and lose yourself in 1961, the year Len & Bill's opened.

Dust. Let's talk about it: If it could root, gardens would grow on the ancient television, warped wood booths, pennants and flags and vintage cash register. Disrepair. I'll describe it: The tile and concrete composite floor is one bar fight and a cracked skull away from revealing dirt underneath; the bathrooms are mere closets with flaking green lead paint, rickety doors and a shared sink; and the kitchen, or what used to be? Through swinging, saloon-style doors, a towering clutter of cardboard boxes is spilled over and rotted out to reveal a future estate sale worth absolutely nothing. Just about the only thing that's changed in 50 years is the introduction of an Internet jukebox, which also serves as the only reminder that you're drinking a Natural Light draw or \$3 well whiskey in an era when moon travel and the election of a black President actually happened.

But this only helps a little. Because even when the guy saddled up next to me—who rambles about his time in the navy, his dead-beat dad and his ruthless ex-wife even though no one, not even the woman in the neck brace trying to get him to buy her a beer, is listening—borrows a pair of broken eyeglasses from behind the bar so he can break up the silence with a few songs, he plays early Dylan and Chess-era Etta James. He goes back to blathering, John to hobbling and groaning, I to feeling as if time is standing still.

It's 1961 and I'm one with the dust.