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Stranahan's leaves LoDo for old Heavenly Daze Brewery

by Jonathan Shikes
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Stranahan's has become Colorado's best-known distilled spirit - a favorite of locals and national whiskey connoisseurs alike. And now the micro-distillery will be able to meet that demand, even if it means leaving the neighborhood where it was born.

On May 6, the company bought the old Heavenly Daze Brewery space, a distinctive 60,000-square-foot building at 200 South Kalamath Street, just off of I-25. Heavenly Daze opened in 1998 and closed a number of years ago; the building has been vacant for the past eighteen months.

Stranahan's, which was founded by Jess Graber and George Stranahan, had been in its current location at 2405 Blake Street since 2004. It corked its 1,000th barrel on April 8 during a celebration with Mayor John Hickenlooper that commemorated the production of 5,280 gallons of whiskey.

The move will enable Stranahan's to add more distilling equipment and increase its production, according to a press release from Graber. It will also allow Stranahan's to produce its own "wash," a product created by fermenting barley, which adds to the whiskey's distinctive flavor, Graber said. The company had been getting its wash from the Oskar Blues brewery, and from the Flying Dog Brewery before that. Flying Dog, which moved to Maryland in 2007, was also founded by Stranahan.

Stranahan's purchased the building from Boulder's Tebo Development Company for \$3.05 million, says Colorado Commercial Companies broker Natasha Felten, who handled the sale for Tebo; it had been listed for \$3.75 million.



"It was incredibly niche," Felten says of the unusual brewery building, which has a recognizable set of giant barrels out front., and the current economic climate made finding a buyer who could get a bank loan even more difficult. The inside will need some significant renovations, she adds; Stranahan's plans to lease out the upstairs office space.

Graber couldn't be reached for comment early this morning, so we don't yet know if the Stranahan's move will involve reopening a restaurant in the building (Heavenly Daze had one) or opening a retail facility on the site. We'll pour out the details -- like the Stranahan's -- when we get them.