

# The Broomcorn

*Express*



## Historic Sites Tour

Saturday, Oct. 7, 2023  
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

From Earliest Habitation to the 1940s

Learn about early Broomfield from prehistoric peoples to Native Americans, the homesteaders, farmers, entrepreneurs, railroads and bank robbers!

Visit the Broomfield Depot Museum, Crawford Honey House, Brunner Farmhouse and Kozisek Farm, Lakeview Cemetery, Broomfield Crescent Grange, Broomfield State Bank, Metzger Farm and Anne Crouse Park. Includes sites that may have once been prehistoric or indigenous camps.

**\$10 adults; \$5 children (under 5 free)**  
Purchase tickets at [friendsofbroomfieldhistory.org](http://friendsofbroomfieldhistory.org) or on event day at the Broomfield Depot Museum

Sponsored by the Friends of Broomfield History



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Pumpkins by Andrey\_and\_Lesya@Pixabay.com

# BROOMFIELD HISTORIC SITES TOUR: FROM EARLIEST HABITATION TO THE 1940s

Did you know that this area was occupied by early peoples who hunted woolly mammoths, that honey was once a major export of Broomfield, or that a dramatic bank robbery took place here?

Join us on **Saturday, October 7th** for a fun tour of historic sites in Broomfield. Volunteer docents, many in period costumes, will be at each site to welcome you and provide historic details. Starting at the Broomfield Depot Museum (2201 W. 10th Avenue), you will be given a list of sites and map. From there you can drive to the various locations on your own schedule and in the order of your choice.

**Tours hours are from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

**Tickets for the tour can be purchased [here](#) at our online store or at the Broomfield Depot Museum on the day of the event.** Prices are only \$10 for adults and \$5 for children (under 5 free).

Proceeds will help support other local history projects and classroom visits to the Depot Museum. Come join us and learn more amazing and interesting details of Broomfield's story!





# A Sparkle in My Eye

**Andrea Margheim-Minnich  
President,  
Friends of Broomfield History**

There is a twinkle in my eye that not many can see. I can't see it, but I feel it, especially as Autumn comes around; it's kind of like the closing of doors and waiting in limbo, wondering what is next, with the opening of other doors just ahead. It's the end of the warm weather and the beginning of the frigid, sometimes shocking (but fun) cold weather. This last quarter of the year is like a season of its own. It's mysterious but exciting. The Friends of Broomfield History have several things planned for this quarter and into the new year. We would LOVE to see you purchase tickets (to help fund our ongoing work), and attend the Historic Sites of Broomfield Tour!

We love connecting with you—answering questions, asking questions, and hearing your stories. We are all a part of this thing we call Broomfield History, and we have been working hard this year to collect your stories! Please consider helping us with the ongoing Broomfield Oral History Project, either by interviewing someone or by being interviewed yourself. Email us at [broomfieldhistory@gmail.com](mailto:broomfieldhistory@gmail.com) with your interest.

Another exciting event we will be hosting in October involves hearing stories and discussing the history of Colorado with elders of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma. Their stories are new and mysterious to many of us—our knowledge of history is expanding, and our perspective is becoming clearer. This is EXCITING! Please keep reading and being engaged with the happenings and stories we will continue to share!

*Andrea*



# Mary Meikle Wright

By David Allison, Broomfield History Coordinator

Just recently, I visited Emerald Elementary and spoke to 4th graders about Broomfield's history. As part of the presentation, the teacher had asked me to share more in-depth information about one outstanding individual from Broomfield. I knew instantly who the best person would be—Mary Meikle Wright.

Mary Meikle was born into a cheese- and dairy-making family in Scotland. Before coming to the United States, Mary won first prize in a cheese-making contest at the age of 15. She married Robert Wright in Scotland, and they immigrated to Ohio and then to Lafayette, Colorado, in 1883. Before moving to Colorado, the Wrights had four children, so their lives were probably quite busy. During their time in Lafayette, Robert worked in the coal mines in the area while Mary ran a boarding house.



Mary Meikle Wright

In 1892, the Wrights moved to Broomfield (purchasing land from the Zang holdings) and opened a dairy business, producing cream, cheese, buttermilk, and butter. Evidence suggests that Robert continued to work in the mines while Mary took the lead in running the dairy operation.

By 1895, the Wright's dairy business was going strong, but Mary was badly injured in a wagon accident while traveling back to Broomfield from Henderson that summer. She recovered, only to have the cheese factory in Broomfield burn to the ground in September of that year.

Mary, who was described as a “woman of considerable energy,” was mentioned in a January 1896 issue of the *Boulder Daily Camera*: “Mrs. Robert Wright, proprietress of

the Broomfield creamery, was in town today. Mrs. Wright is rebuilding, their creamery having burned last fall. It was a successful enterprise."

Mary Wright continued to be active in her community in the wake of rebuilding the dairy. She was appointed as a "committeeman" for the Populist party, which supported farmers' rights and working people more generally. Then, in 1902, Mary was appointed by Governor James Peabody as the state's Dairy Commissioner—the first woman in Colorado to hold this position.

By 1906, the cheese factory couldn't continue operations and declared bankruptcy. Mary and Robert got divorced shortly thereafter, and she remarried and moved to Long Beach, California. Mary's time in Broomfield and her remarkable fortitude in the face of life's difficulties places her in the pantheon of Broomfield's most notable people.

**Source:**

Pettem, Sylvia. *Broomfield: Changes through Time*. Boulder: *Boulder Daily Camera*, 2001.



# Old Broomfield Stories

By Annie Lessem



Image by Ratfink1973@Pixabay.com

I've been having a very enjoyable time listening to oral histories about Broomfield that were recorded many years ago. Most of these stories were from people of European descent who were young children when their families moved here. Below are a few quips from some of the stories they told. I hope you find them interesting.

One of the earlier European-descent families that came to Broomfield (around 1916) lived in a tent for a few years before they found a house to move into. Another family lived in a three-room house. In addition to the mother and father, there were ten children: eight girls and two boys. I can't imagine what it must have been like in that tent with no running water or in that house with those close quarters. Both stories stressed how much more pleasant their lives were because of the help their families received from the others who lived here.

By the time of the Great Depression and Dust Bowl (1929–1935), many more families were living and farming in Broomfield. Several individuals mentioned how hard it was to make a living via farming during that period, so members of their families

took on other jobs in addition to their farming chores. At one point, Broomfield had something that made it different than other nearby towns, and that was a pickle factory. This factory employed kids who would have been around middle school age. Those kids sorted the cucumbers by size and put them on conveyor belts that went from outside the factory to inside the factory. The kids earned 15 cents an hour. Older boys (around high school age) could earn extra money working at the mines in nearby communities. Their job was to be “trappers,” which didn't mean that they trapped anything. It meant that they opened and closed the trap doors over the shafts that were used to take donkeys down into the mines. The wages for being a trapper were one dollar a day plus 10 cents for the oil for their lamps. One time, some of these boys decided to go “on strike” to make more money. But it didn't work out as they'd planned. The owner of the mine simply told them to go home because he could always find other boys to do the trapping.

The Dust Bowl also took its toll because of monumental wind storms. A woman said that one time, the wind blew so hard it blew their shed away. The sand and dust

from those storms could penetrate the cracks around doors and windows, so people wet curtains, sheets, and blankets and hung them up over those doors and windows to capture some of the dust. It must have been pretty dark inside those houses when that happened.

Compounding the hardship of the depression and the dust were the frequent “grasshopper plagues” in Broomfield. Another person said that during one of these plagues, the grasshoppers were so hungry that, after they had destroyed most of the crops, they began eating the wooden fence posts.

Early Broomfield schools only went up to the 8th grade, and anyone who wanted to go further had to go somewhere else. One woman said that her school was about four miles away, and she walked there every day. Another woman said she went to a two-room grade school on the Nordstrom property (probably very near the current Nordstrom Open Space at Huron and 160th) and noted that she was only one of two girls in her grade. For some reason, this woman “forgot to stop going” until she graduated from 8th grade and got a scholarship to a business school in Denver, which she then attended. She ended up working away from home for most of her life (something very unusual for that time) and still married and raised a family, doing both household and professional work.

Even though life was hard, it wasn’t all work and no play or fun. Several people said that as children, they enjoyed having water fights with their siblings and neighboring children while they were watering crops. In the winter, people ice skated on Broomfield Pond. Adults and

older children attended dances at the Grange and in the room above the Jones Store. At least one of those dances got so loud and rowdy that items began falling off the shelves of the store below—much to Mr. Jones’s dismay. And once, when a local dam broke on a creek or river (I don’t know which) and flooded nearby yards, adults and children had a good time when the water receded as they tried to capture the wiggling fish. The storyteller said that they threw those fish back into the creek/river, but I suspect some of those fish might have become dinner.

Hearing these and more firsthand stories about early life in Broomfield brought this community alive for me. Even though the old downtown area no longer exists, I could almost picture it in my head. I could hear the children laughing as they squirted water at each other and ran around trying to capture those fish; I could feel the pain and heartache of those mothers and fathers as they tried to make do during the depression; and I also could better understand that feeling of community that arose as people unselfishly helped each other out.

As you might know, we are currently doing another oral history project and trying to get stories from regular everyday Broomfield residents whose voices are typically not heard in formal written histories. We’re doing this so that someday, years from now, people can listen to those stories and better understand Broomfield and what makes it special. If you would like to participate in this project, please contact Annie Lessem at the Friends of Broomfield History: [quixotic.meow@gmail.com](mailto:quixotic.meow@gmail.com)



# Stagecoach Days

By David R. Feineman



Image by  
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## INTRODUCTION

On the southern edge of Broomfield in Westminster, you may have passed signs for Church Ranch Boulevard or Upper Church Ranch Lake. Following the Civil War, stagecoaches passed north and south through our area, heading north to Boulder and beyond, and south to Denver. A stagecoach stop at Church Ranch provides direct evidence that stagecoaches were once common vehicles passing by present-day Broomfield.

## THE CHURCH RANCH

The Church Ranch name is derived from George Henry and Sarah Church, who left Iowa by stagecoach in 1861, one month after getting married, and acquired homesteads and leases in the area.<sup>1</sup> In 1863, while George was looking for land to graze cattle, he and his wife stopped at "The Child's House," about 12 miles

northwest of Denver. Sarah described it as a "wretched dirt-covered log house."<sup>2</sup> Naturally, they decided to buy the land, house, barn, and corrals because of the view and the relative isolation of the area rather than for the house itself (perhaps like many others who have come this way since). Within a year, the original house had been replaced by a new two-story house.

## CONCORD STAGES USED BY THE OVERLAND MAIL AND EXPRESS COMPANY

Between 1862 and 1870, mass transit heading north from Denver along the Front Range was provided by stagecoaches run by the Overland Mail and Express Company.<sup>3</sup> The company used Concord stagecoaches, which were built in New Hampshire. These particular coaches were considered to be a good design for the poor quality of roads in the western United States since they used leather straps to insulate the riders from bumps and instead exposed them to a



Photo: An original Overland Stage preserved at the Woolaroc Museum in Oklahoma (author's collection).

constant swaying motion while the stagecoach was moving. Mark Twain described riding in one of these coaches like this:

*Our coach was a great swinging and swaying stage, of the most sumptuous description—an imposing cradle on wheels. It was drawn by six handsome horses, and by the side of the driver sat the 'conductor,' the legitimate captain of the craft; for it was his business to take charge and care of the mails, baggage, express matter, and passengers. We sat on the back seat, inside. About all the rest of the coach was full of mail bags—for we had three days' delayed mails with us. ... We changed horses every ten miles, all day long, and fairly flew over the hard, level road.<sup>4</sup>*

As you can see from the photo above, the

passenger area of these stagecoaches didn't have windows, but it did have leather curtains that could be rolled down if needed.

There was a swing station located at Church Ranch (which originally was called Child's Swing Station), about one day's travel from Denver. At a swing station, the livestock pulling the stagecoaches was changed out. Coaches left Denver every ten hours every day, regardless of the weather, and did not make overnight stops. The stage stop appears to have been located about three miles south of today's Broomfield County line.

### **PRESIDENT GRANT SLEPT HERE— MAYBE**

I grew up in northern New Jersey, where most of the houses that had existed in the

1700s made claims about George Washington having slept there—difficult for a casual visitor to sort out which were authentic and which were just folklore. In trying to research this article, I came across an exciting piece of information about a famous visitor along the stage route in our locale. Here's what caught my attention on the history blog for Rundus Funeral Home: "In 1868, President Ulysses S. Grant and his daughter, Nellie, spent the night (at Church Ranch) with them on their way to Central City, where the excited miners laid gold brick for them to walk on in front of the Teller House Hotel."

We do know that Grant made multiple trips to Colorado and clearly spent time in Denver and Golden both as a visiting Civil War hero and as a president.

Unfortunately, I think the sentence is somewhat problematic, and here's why:

- 1) U.S. Grant didn't become president until 1869.
- 2) Nellie Grant was in England in 1871 and was engaged to be married to an Englishman in 1873—I didn't find any references for father and daughter traveling together in Colorado.
- 3) Grant's visit to Central City was in April 1873.
- 4) Grant was invited to walk to the Teller Hotel in Central City on a sidewalk covered with silver ingots. The silver path was a political ploy intended to sway him to declare silver as the metal to back up the US currency standard rather than gold, a topic that was hotly debated at the time of his presidency. He avoided the implications of the gesture by walking to a back door of the hotel and avoiding

stepping on the silver bars.<sup>5</sup>

It's still a good story, even if all the facts don't line up.

## THE END OF THE LINE

With the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad in the 1870s, the Colorado stagecoach business went into a rapid decline. Nevertheless, it's interesting to think that there was a time when travel across Broomfield meant a stagecoach and not a drive along US 36 by automobile.

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1. Austin Briggs, "Church Ranch was a family home before it was a Westminster development," The Denver Post, April 27, 2016, <https://www.denverpost.com/2014/09/09/church-ranch-was-a-family-home-before-it-was-a-westminster-development/>.
  2. "Historic Highlights of Broomfield County: George Henry and Sarah Church," Rundus Funeral Home, October 7, 2022, <https://www.rundus.com/about/blog/historic-highlights-of-broomfield-county-george-henry-and-sarah-church/>.
  3. Doug Conarro, "The Overland and Denver-to-Cheyenne stagecoach lines utilized major pre-Lafayette transportation corridors," Lafayette History, November 14, 2018, <http://www.lafayettehistory.com/the-overland-and-denver-to-cheyenne-stage-lines-were-major-pre-lafayette-transportation-corridors/>.
  4. "The Concord Coach," Concord Historical Society, <https://concordhistoricalsociety.org/the-concord-coach/>.
  5. Eric Chinn and Erin Osoverts, "The Teller House Turns 150 Years Old," Central City Opera, July 13, 2022, <https://centralcityopera.org/the-teller-house-turns-150-years-old/>

# Sonny and Mary's Restaurant and Lounge

By Elizabeth Beaudoin



Sonny and Mary's Restaurant and Lounge, 1960 (Broomfield Depot Museum Collections).

The building at 7510 West 120th is one of Broomfield's earliest restaurant buildings still standing. In 2023 it is currently home to Great Scotts Eatery, a restaurant that features nostalgic 1950s kitsch as part of its décor, an appropriate choice for this structure completed in 1960. But in 1960 its sleek modern design was the height of fashion. The building reportedly cost \$125,000 to construct (for reference the houses in First and Second Filing were selling for around \$17,000). The first

owners were Mary Kovacheff and her son Sonny Petroff. They called the establishment Mary's Restaurant and Sonny's Lounge. The venue seated up to 100 people and was open from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. The lounge featured live music Friday and Saturday nights, provided a venue for events like the Miss Broomfield Pageant and bowling team banquets, as well as a meeting place for the Jaycees and Newcomers Club.



Mary was born in Russia and came to Colorado in 1914 at the age of 8 where her father worked in mining. Mary had years of experience in the food business, operating a “drive-in” restaurant in Brighton, and a cafe near Denver University. She also operated a small 16x30ft roadside diner in Broomfield “before the existing houses were built.” She entered the food industry when her husband George was diagnosed with cancer and could no longer work. Mary recounted in 1964 that she would watch the “horizon change day by day as the houses began to spring up in place of the fields.” (*Broomfield Star-Builder*, October 8, 1964). Sonny and Mary noted at the restaurant’s opening in July 1960 that “... Broomfield has a fine future...”.

In a September 2023 Facebook post calling for memories of the building, Janis Brown wrote, “It was a big hangout for the workers from Jeffco Airport and Mary was the best cook! Sonny was great at making Shirley temples to keep us kids happy while our parents were enjoying music, dancing and adult beverages.”

In another post Joan Sawall said, “I remember so well going to Sonny and Mary’s restaurant in the early sixties when we first moved to Broomfield. It was always entertaining because Sonny and Mary were always arguing about things, and not holding back in front of the customers. Sonny was her son, and they didn’t agree on much.”

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Advertisement for the Inn Between, 1985 (Broomfield Depot Museum Collections).

And from Susan Allard Werner, “I spent much time in that building in several of its lives. From Mary’s through bars and restaurants when I was just getting my civilian legs back after the Navy. Made some very good money and tips.”

Michael Neifert, “My dad took me into Sonny's when I was a boy. They had a

shuffleboard table. I had to sit at a table (no minors at the bar). As an adult, we ate at the restaurant in the same building. Btw, my dad bought our First Filing house near 1st and Agate Way for \$16,500.”

Mary’s and Sonny’s restaurant changed hands sometime in the 1970s and has been through many iterations since. During the 1970s, the building was known as “The Inn Between,” which served Chinese and American food. The original owners were Woon Ki Lau and David Yang with “Chef Ying-Goo from Hong Kong.” In 1978, the Inn Between got new owners, Kim and Wyn Miller. The Millers expanded the dance area and added a “giant” six-foot(!) tv screen for sporting events “just as Broncomania hit town” (*Broomfield Enterprise*, January 4, 1978).

In the 1980s, it was the Windjammer and Mariah’s Lounge (open a lot later—until 1:30 a.m.). Much like the Inn Between, the Windjammer advertised that it served Chinese and American Food.

In the early 1990s, it was Mr. Bill’s Restaurant. However, Mr. Bill’s was short lived as owner William Spallinger had to file for bankruptcy after the state agents demanded payment for unpaid sales and payroll taxes (*Broomfield Enterprise*, November 26, 1992). In 1993, Clayton Lee opened the Country Cottage, noting to reporters that “It’ll be a family restaurant

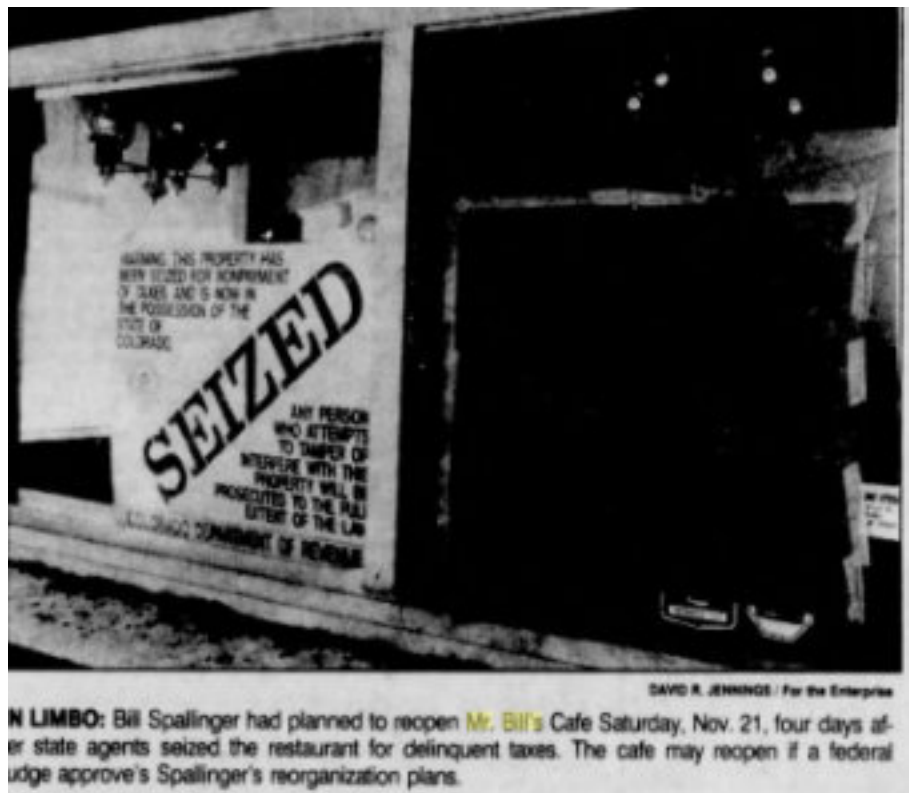


Image from the Broomfield Enterprise, November 26, 1990 (Broomfield Depot Museum Collections).

with an American menu, some Mexican and Daily specials.” And typical for the mid 1990s, the restaurant was decorated with muffin tins and iron skillet on the walls, and old lanterns and other country-style knickknacks on shelves and ledges throughout the restaurant. A far departure from the original sleek modern design of Sonny and Mary’s (*Broomfield Enterprise* February 18, 1993)

By researching old local newspapers as well as gathering first hand accounts, I have attempted to piece together the history of the building. If you have memories or information relating to the history of this building, please contact us at [depotmuseum@broomfield.org](mailto:depotmuseum@broomfield.org).

# What's in a Name? Or Welcome to Zang's Spur

By David R. Feineman

*"A rose by any other name would smell as sweet."* (a popular adage that paraphrases a speech from Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*)

*"A chrysanthemum by any other name would be easier to spell."* (by William J. Johnston)

*"A rose by any other name would be a gardenia."* (Anonymous)

I'll begin this history foray with a personal recollection. There was a time when our family lived in a town called Penngrove in Northern California. You may have driven past it at some point in your life and not paid much attention: it consisted of one school, two railroad crossings, and three bars. I mention the town here not to tarnish its image but to use the name as an illustration.

The agreed history was that there was a railroad stop in a nearby field called Penn's Grove, which is how the name was established. However, the deeper issue was that there was no record of anyone named Penn ever living there, nor anyone from Pennsylvania who had lived there, nor even that there was ever a grove. Here's an example where a town gets a name while the historical basis for the name is lost and uncertain. As you'll see, it's a fitting introduction to this article on

toponymy (the study of names) as it relates to Broomfield.

The U.S. Board on Geographic Names was created in 1890, and its job is to maintain uniform geographic name usage in government.<sup>1</sup> An overview of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names can be found at <https://www.usgs.gov/us-board-on-geographic-names>.

Place name standardization became a big issue after the Civil War when there was a rapid expansion into the Western States. In their attempt to establish names, researchers used historical records, maps, and interviews with residents. As you might expect, places can wind up with names based on the surnames of early settlers, geographic features, or local animals and vegetation.

What do we know about the name Broomfield? The Colorado Encyclopedia says that the name Broomfield became associated with the area with the opening of a post office in 1894.<sup>2</sup> The encyclopedia links the name to fields growing a type of sorghum called "broomcorn" in the area.<sup>3</sup>

Today, if you are driving around town and see large swaths of land growing a tall plant with a brown top, it is likely to be an invasive weed called curly dock—not



Figure 1: The "legendary" Broomfield sign (Broomfield Depot Museum Collections).

broomcorn. In a CPR News interview, David Allison said the preferred name origin is related to the crop but also offered a much less likely alternative that there was some long-forgotten connection to a Broomfield in England. He summed up his interview, saying, "History is full of things that we cannot put our fingers on definitively, but that is fun to explore." What does that tell us about the name "Broomfield"? Broomfield appears to be a

legend—it's supposed to be based in the history of the area but lacks any way to substantiate the claim.

Most legends are embellished by oral storytelling, but I am unaware of any great epics expanding on the reputation of Broomfield. If crop use patterns were still a key driver on a name choice, I guess we're lucky we didn't wind up as Bindweedburg or Tumbleweedtown.



Based on my experiences dodging tumbleweeds on windy days, I'd say our tumbleweeds are more legendary than any broom-making materials that ever happened to grow here.

But wait—there's more. We know that the Zang family were big landowners in the area. Their Elmwood Stock Farm covered about four thousand acres and grew grains to support the family brewery in Denver. A railroad connection was built to the farm, and that line was given the name Zang's Spur before the Broomfield post office was built. Given a choice between the two, maybe Broomfield isn't that bad a name after all.



Figure 2: Broomfield c. 1970: no broomcorn in sight (Broomfield Depot Museum Collections).

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1. An overview of the US Board on Geographic Names can be found at <https://www.usgs.gov/us-board-on-geographic-names>

2. There isn't much on the naming of Broomfield in the Colorado Encyclopedia, but what they have can be found at <https://coloradoencyclopedia.org/article/city->

[and-county-broomfield#page-title](#)

3. Broomcorn (*Sorghum vulgare* var. *technicum*) was used for making brooms, and there are references that link Benjamin Franklin to its expansion as a crop grown in the US beginning in the 1700s. Following the link below will get you more information on broomcorn, and the interesting assertion that there are four US counties that claim to be the US broomcorn capital—and none of them are our Broomfield! <https://bacacountyhistory.com/2014/12/31/so-where-is-the-broomcorn-capital-of-the-world/>

# Anne Crouse Park: An Ancient Vista

—Roberta Depp



Anne Crouse Park (Sandra Roberts, Sept. 2023)

This park with a spectacular view of the Front Range was dedicated in 2013 to longtime community activist and volunteer, Anne Crouse. Anne was a woman of many talents and interests. She settled in Broomfield with her husband, Pete, in 1957 and together they raised four children in the new Broomfield Heights neighborhood. A partial list of her accomplishments includes working as a reporter for the *Broomfield-Star-Builder* and *The Broomfield Enterprise*; helping found the United Church of Christ, FISH,

and the Broomfield Community Foundation; and serving on the Broomfield Town Council. The park site with its sweeping vista is an appropriate location to commemorate this woman who held such an expansive view of community.

The park overlooks an area of presumed prehistoric and Native American campsites. Preliminary archeological investigations in the open space area below discovered a woodland projectile point and evidence of Native American

campsites. Scan the vista in front of you and imagine a long ago past.

Explorers Zebulon Pike and Stephen Long's early 1800s expeditions to Colorado's Front Range gave a false impression of an unoccupied wasteland. Their reports created the myth of "The Great American Desert." In fact, this land has been the home of many different peoples, beginning most likely with the nomadic hunters who crossed the land bridge into Alaska from Asia as long as perhaps 25,000 years ago. They gradually migrated onto the northern Great Plains and then southward along the Rockies.

By the end of the ice age, around 10,000 B.C., early inhabitants, designated Clovis peoples, occupied the now wetter and cooler plains. They were excellent hunters who took advantage of the abundance of game in the Pleistocene era including Mammoths.

As the climate became drier and warmer, the type of flora and fauna that could flourish here changed and the inhabitants appeared to have moved on. After about 8,500 B.C., another group, the Folsom peoples were found on the plains hunting the *Bison antiquus*, a much larger version of the modern Bison. Evidence of their hunts have been found in several Colorado locations.

Beginning around 5,000 B.C., as the climate became even warmer, Paleo-Indian hunter gatherers continued to live along the Front Range. The land at the base of the mountains was lower than the high plains to the east so some protection was provided from winter winds. The wetter conditions there from mountain

streams also meant more vegetation available for food sources and fuel. They hunted the *Bison bison*, a smaller version of the earlier animal, and ventured into the mountains for other game.

From 500 B.C. to 1,000 A.D. the nomadic Plains Woodland peoples ranged over this area following the game and flora through the seasons and creating projectile points like the one found here. They traveled in small family groups, living in temporary camps, and traded with other groups further east and south.

Around 700-800 A.D. the weather changed, becoming wetter. Early forms of agriculture emerged, including variations of the "three sisters" cultivated by native peoples across North America: maize, beans and squash. This was a short-lived period. As the climate became drier again, new migration patterns arose among the various peoples, some moving further east, others south.

According to their oral traditions, the Ute peoples have always lived in Colorado. When the Spanish explorers arrived in Colorado in the 1500s, they found the Utes already here. Various Ute bands occupied an area stretching from what is now Utah to across the Nebraska and Kansas border. Unlike many tribes, they have no migration story as part of their culture. Apache bands also roamed the eastern plains at this time.

Native peoples were greatly impacted by European and American incursions into their homelands; from the Spanish explorers to French trappers, early American explorers, miners, the railroads and farmers. As white settlement moved



westward, native peoples were displaced, leading them to migrate west into territory occupied by other native groups. By the 1600s the Commanche tribe had moved onto the High Plains. They were joined by the Lakota Sioux in the 1700s and in the early 1800s by the Arapaho and Cheyenne. The adoption of the horse by these groups gave them great mobility and the ability to more effectively hunt buffalo and other game. However, as more white settlements occupied the land, inevitable conflicts arose with the native tribes resulting in their eventual expulsion. By 1869 the native peoples of Colorado had been forcefully removed to reservations.

### Sources:

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