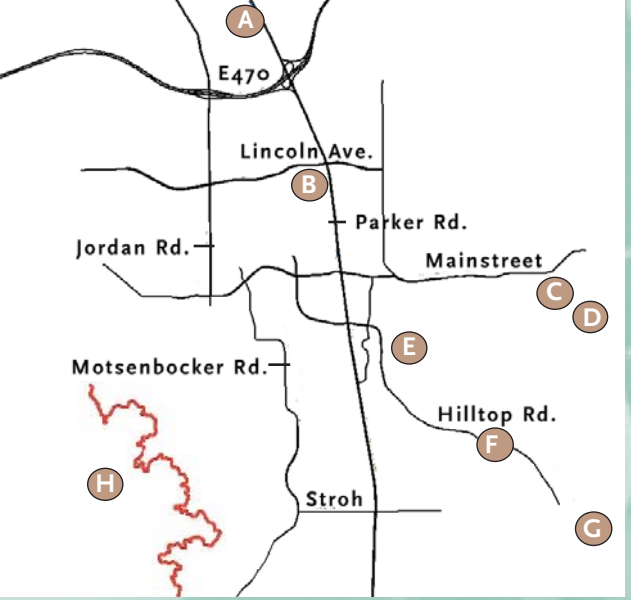


Other Historic Places

Outside of our historic downtown area, Parker is home to several other important structures and sites that reflect our heritage. These locations can be visited by taking a driving tour.

- A. 17-Mile House and Stage Barn
- B. Pouppirt House
- C. Tallman/Newlin Cabin
- D. Newlin Cemetery
- E. Slemmer Ranch Barn
- F. Denver & New Orleans Railroad bed visible
- G. Hill Top School
- H. Arapahoe Canal



For additional information on the history of Parker, consult *A Guidebook to Historic Sites in the Parker Area*, Third Edition, by F.B. McLaughlin and Parker Colorado *A Historical Narrative*, Fourth Edition, by Ruth L. Miller in collaboration with F.B. McLaughlin, Larry Smith and Loyd Glasier.

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Town of
Parker COLORADO™

Walking Tour

From Pine Grove to Parker Living History



Welcome to the Town of Parker!

Let your imagination bring you back in time while you leisurely stroll through the streets of historic 'Pine Grove' and visit the sites of our historic downtown on your self-guided walking tour. This walking tour brochure is brought to you by the Parker Landmarks Commission with special thanks to the Parker Area Historical Society members who provided valuable information.

Historical Overview

In 1858, gold was discovered in Colorado and during the next year, over 100,000 people followed the trails here in search of their fortunes. As the focus changed from gold to land, small towns and settlements sprang up. Many of Parker's first families established dairy farms in the area, others raised cattle and horses. While dry land farming was experimental, a fortunate few began irrigating from ditches connected to Cherry Creek. According to popular legend, in 1862, Alfred Butters built a one-room building in a grove of pine trees about a mile south of the present-day Mainstreet. The cabin became a place to purchase provisions and a refuge for weary travelers. Although it was not a post office as we recognize one today, messages and letters could be left there for other travelers. It was appropriately named Pine Grove. In 1864, the 'post office' was sold and moved to the 20-Mile House site in present-day Parker.



James Sample Parker bought 20-Mile House and the associated 'post office' in 1870. Parker granted the right-of-way for future roads, ditches, telephone lines and eventually the Denver and New Orleans Railroad. The railroad, which began scheduled service in 1882, was the first standard-gauge railroad to cross Douglas County, running between Denver and Pueblo.

Although the railroad provided some impetus for growth in the town, growth really began in 1897 when the Littleton Creamery was built on land donated by George Parker. By the turn of the century, Parker boasted a hotel, post office, two blacksmith shops, railroad depot, section house, water tower



James and Mattie Parker. Photo courtesy Colorado Historical Society #F42732.

and pump house, three mercantile stores, dry goods store, saloon, livery stable, brick works, stockyard, creamery, barber shop, school and some homes.

After its initial growth period, the town went into a slump. In 1931, the railroad stopped running and in the 1940s, the population was down to 150; the membership of the Methodist Church dropped into the teens; the Ladies Aid disbanded for lack of members. The town did not begin growing again until the late 1950s.

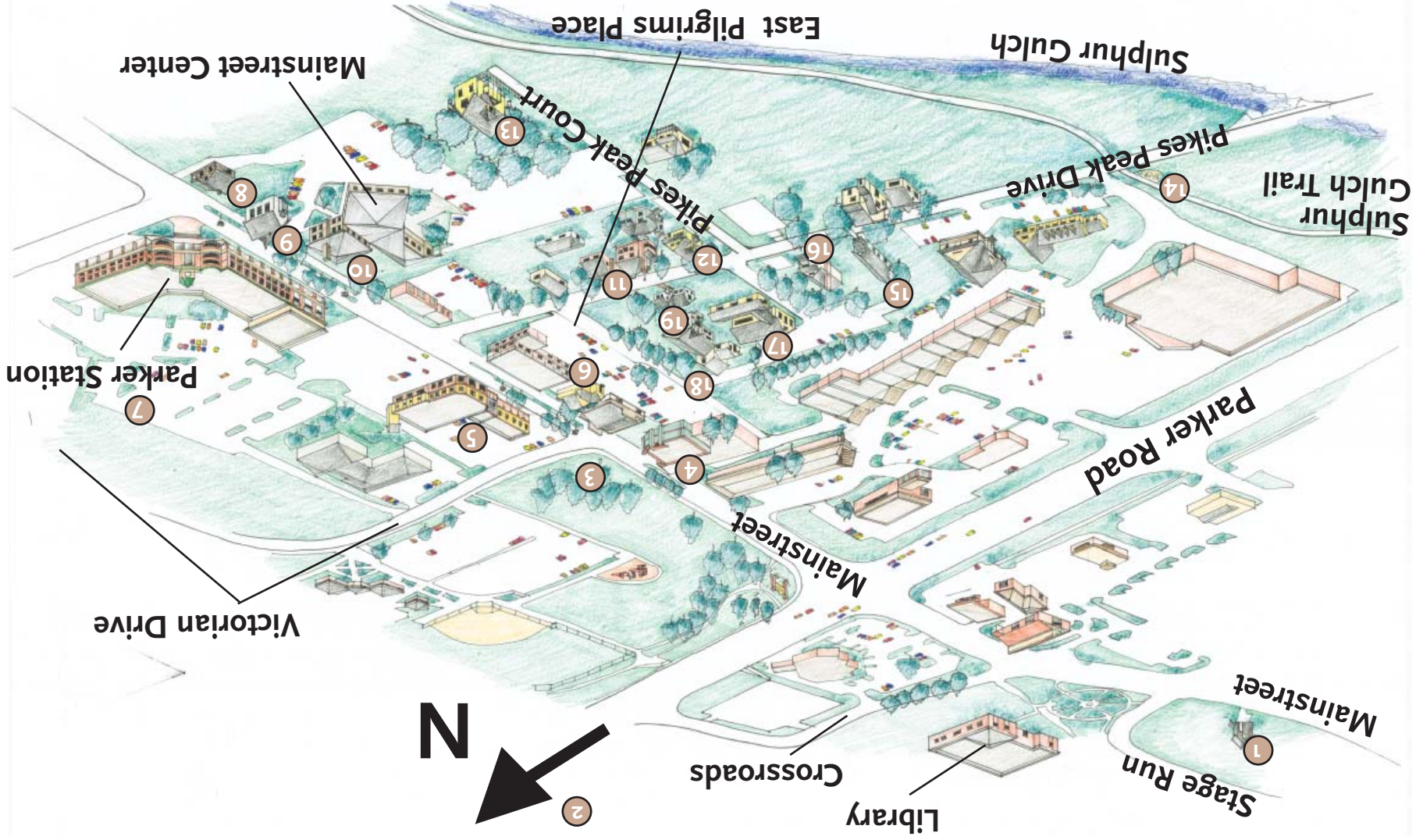


Parker Hardware and Liquor Store in 1962. Photo courtesy of Parker Area Historical Society.

From James Parker's 20-Mile House and post office, Parker has become a thriving community. The incorporation of the Town of Parker in 1981 encompassed approximately one square mile and included 285 residents. During the 1980s and early 1990s, several annexations took place which increased the Town's size to 13 square miles. Currently, the Town has grown to a population of over 45,000.



Parker Mainstreet in the 1940s looking West. Photo courtesy of Marilyn Parker.



Parker's Living History Walking Tour

This map reflects those places in Parker's downtown area that hold historic significance to our community.

1. 20-Mile House (Pine Grove Post Office)
2. J.S. Parker Cemetery
3. O'Brien Park
4. Parker Garage
5. Rhode Island House
6. Emma C. Lewis Building
7. Denver and New Orleans Railroad (Depot)*
8. Dora Heath House
9. Ruth Memorial Chapel
10. Parker Schoolhouse
11. Daisy Rowley House
12. Herzog House
13. Hoskins House
14. Sulphur Gulch Bridge
15. Montgomery House
16. Charlie O'Brien House
17. Ave Maria Catholic Church
18. William DuRay/Bert Hall House
19. Newcomb House

*No longer standing/visible

From Pine Grove to Parker..Take a Tour through Parker's Rich History.

1. 20-Mile House (Pine Grove Post Office) 1895 East Mainstreet



According to legend, Alfred Butters built this tiny, one-room building in 1862. George Long purchased the building in 1864 and moved it to its present location on Mainstreet. He added a large building containing 10 rooms, a kitchen, dining room and a ballroom upstairs. As a stage stop located 20 miles south of Denver, it became known as 20-Mile House. At one point, there were four different stage lines serving the 20-Mile House. James S. Parker bought the property and business in 1870. The structure became the official post office of Pine Grove, which was later renamed Parker when the railroad came to town. Over the years, ownership of the property changed many times. By 1998, all of the outbuildings and additions to the original Alfred Butters' structure had been removed. This historic building is now restored and preserved as the Pine Grove Post Office and memorialized in 20-Mile Historical Park. The Town of Parker owns the building. *Photo courtesy of Colorado Historical Society #F21220.*

2. Parker Cemetery 10375 South Parker Road



This cemetery is on land once owned by James S. Parker, former owner of 20-Mile House. Parker's second son, Charlie, died in infancy in 1874 and his third son, Bela, died in 1882. Both sons are buried in this cemetery. In 1885, the remains of four people who had been buried in the first Parker cemetery, just east of today's Parker Road where E-470 is constructed, were exhumed and re-interred in the new J.S. Parker Cemetery. Then, in 1887 Mattie (Martha) Parker, James' first wife, died and was buried in the cemetery near her sons. Parker died in 1910 and was buried next to Mattie. Title to the cemetery was transferred by James Parker's heirs to the J.S. Parker Cemetery Association in 1911. Nearby is the grave of another Parker pioneer whose head stone reads, "Jonathan Tallman. Killed by Indians, May 1870". Many of Parker's first settlers are buried in this cemetery. *Photo courtesy of Dave Aldridge.*

3. O'Brien Park Mainstreet and Victorian Way



Baseball in Parker goes back to the early 1900s, but the first game on this site was recorded in the May 16, 1935 issue of the Parker News. In the early 1960s, the park was used for adult softball league games and little league baseball events. In 1950 the property, approximately 8 acres, was donated by Charles "Charlie" H. O'Brien and Lena Pouppirt to the newly formed

Parker Community Club which operated the ballpark with donations received from the community. In honor of Charlie O'Brien's community service and membership on the first recreation board, the park was designated O'Brien Park in 1978. Under the ownership of the Town of Parker, the park has grown to a multi-functional community park, a jewel in the center of town. *Photo courtesy of Douglas County Library History Research Center.*

4. Parker Garage 19420 East Mainstreet



In 1916, Ernest DeKoevend built a brick garage and gas station on the site of the Littleton Creamery for Roy J. Woodbury and the Davis brothers, Walter and Marvin. Sometime between February of 1916 and March of 1917, the local Ford distributorship passed from Hood and Senter, local bankers, to the Woodbury and Davis

Garage. The structure was site of several destructive fires and completely destroyed in 1929. It was then rebuilt using the original plans. Over the years, it has served as a feed store, auction house, electronics store and Western wear store, and most recently, a restaurant. *Photo courtesy of Larry Smith.*

5. Rhode Island House 19559 East Mainstreet



In 1906, William H. O'Brien built the Rhode Island House, a hotel and dining room, for Martin H. Goddard. Modern for the times, it had acetylene gas lighting, hot and cold running water on both floors, steam heat and even indoor plumbing. Telephone service was added in 1910. A windmill supplied the hotel's water until 1911, when a gasoline engine was installed to power the pump.

The building currently houses several private businesses. *Photo courtesy of Marilyn Parker.*

6. Emma C. Lewis Building 19560 East Mainstreet



The Emma C. Lewis Building was built in 1898 at a location on the railroad right-of-way, just east of the railroad water tower. The building was first used as a mercantile. The building was moved to its current location by Andrew Amos, the second owner, where it sat vacant until May of 1907 when Norman D'Arcy purchased it and opened the Spencer/D'Arcy mercantile. In

March of 1909, D'Arcy sold out to Ray C. Jones, who maintained a mercantile store in the building until 1911, when Jones moved his business across the street. The building is believed to have sat empty until 1915 when Emma C. Lewis purchased it. She had the building lifted up and moved back from the street, fitted with a new foundation and cellar and refitted to form two units for rental purposes. The picture shows the building as it looked in 1945. *Photo courtesy of Larry Smith.*

7. Denver & New Orleans Railroad (Depot)



John Evans, former governor of the Colorado Territory, was the entrepreneur behind the idea of a railroad connecting Denver with the Texas Gulf. In 1881, the Denver & New Orleans Railroad was established and became the first standard gauge railroad to operate in Douglas County. Thanks to James Parker, who donated a 100-foot right-of-way to the railroad,

the D&NO came to Pine Grove in 1882. That same year, the town was renamed Parker to end confusion over another Pine Grove in the state. "Pollywog," as the D&NO was affectionately referred to, began operations between Denver and Pueblo via Melvin, Parker, Hill Top, Elizabeth, Elbert, Eastonville, Falcon and Manitou Junction, with a branch line from Manitou Junction to Colorado Springs. In its heyday, the D&NO boasted 10 locomotives, 13 passenger cars and 200 freight cars. In 1884 the line reported 4 million passenger miles and 5 million tons of freight business. At its peak of operation, the railroad property at Parker consisted of a combination freight house/passenger depot, well and pump house (stones from the well were used in the construction of the 20-Mile House monument), water tank, section house and stock-holding pens.

After 1899, the main line through Parker was downgraded to a secondary line and fewer trains came through, as most were rerouted over the Santa Fe line through Castle Rock and Monument. This more direct route between Denver and Colorado Springs avoided the steep grade south of Parker and many sharp curves and shaky wooden trestles. With the advent of automobiles and trucks, and decent roads, the railroad experienced a further decline. On April 10, 1931, permission was granted to close the Parker station. Remnants of the railroad bed are still visible, especially on the northern side of Hilltop Road. *Photo courtesy of the Colorado Historical Society.*

8. Dora Heath House 19690 East Mainstreet



This cottage was built for Dora Heath a few years after her husband, Dr. Walter Heath, died. She moved into the house in 1918 and occupied the house for many years. Mimie Dietrich, a long-time resident, also owned the house for several years until she moved to Castle Rock in 1997 at the age of 94. *Photo courtesy of the Parker Area Historical Society.*

9. Ruth Memorial Chapel 19670 East Mainstreet



George Parker donated the land and Dr. Walter Heath donated money to help build this church. Although Dr. Heath died before the church was completed, it was named the Ruth Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church in honor of his daughter, who died at a very young age. The church was completed and dedicated in 1913. The church served the congregation's needs until 1970 when the Methodist Church bought the old Parker School Building next door. The Ruth Memorial Chapel, as it is now known, was thereafter used for Sunday school classes, weddings, funerals and social events. The Chapel was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1989. The Town of Parker now owns the building and rents it for multi-use and cultural programming. *Photo courtesy of Douglas County Library History Research Center #96038.*

10. Parker Schoolhouse 19650 East Mainstreet



The Parker Consolidated School was built in 1914-1915. Grades one through twelve were housed here until 1958 when high school students began attending Douglas County High School in Castle Rock. In 1967 use of the school was discontinued, and the structure was sold to the Parker United Methodist Church in 1970. The Town of Parker purchased the building

in 1996 and is currently using it as a center for civic and social activities. If you venture inside the schoolhouse, you can view a diorama of historic Parker and visit a reproduction of a 1930s to 1940s classroom with historic pictures and memorabilia of Parker. *Photo courtesy of Gertrude Kordziel.*

11. Daisy Rowley House 10962 Pikes Peak Drive



Frank Rowley (1872-1912), whose parents were William Rowley Jr. and Polly Ann O'Neal who homesteaded property two miles south of Parker, was one of five children. In 1894, Frank married Daisy Bell Hawkey. They had three children, Vera, Robert and Retta, and lived on nearby farms until 1902, when they bought the 960-acre Hoffman and Foster homestead east of Parker. There they built a log home. While building a new barn after the flood of

1912 destroyed the old one, Frank died and was buried in the J.S. Parker Cemetery. Daisy continued with the rebuilding of the house and outbuildings and the running of the farm until 1918, when she handed the operations of the farm to her stepson, Harvey Kime, and built a new brick home on Rural Road (now Pikes Peak Drive) in Parker where she lived out her days. Most of the old homestead became what is now known as Rowley Downs. *Photo from the Parker Diorama.*

12. Herzog House 10970 Pikes Peak Drive



Charles Herzog and his parents immigrated to the United States from France in 1874. This house was built by Charles and his wife, Esther Lewis Herzog, in 1911. Charles was a rancher and with his brother-in-law, Walter Lewis, operated a mercantile on Euclid Avenue which is now Mainstreet. Esther taught at the Fonder and Pine Grove schools. Charles died in 1939. Several years later, Esther married Stafford Tallman, son of John M. and Elizabeth Tallman. Esther displayed her father's extensive ornithology collection

in the home and was delighted to show it to anyone interested. She occupied the house until her death in 1967. *Photo courtesy of Lewis Palmer with photo imaging by Randy Mace.*

13. Hoskins House 19767 Pikes Peak Court



In 1910, Maude Hurlburt Bicknell and her husband, Edward Wallace Hoskins, moved to Colorado from Vermont because of Edward's health. Maude eventually became Superintendent of Schools in Douglas County and Edward was a painter and decorator. In 1911, the Hoskins purchased a lot in the Heath Addition for \$50 and built this home. This house was one of two in Parker that

escaped damage during the flood of 1912. *Photo courtesy of the Parker Area Historical Society.*

14. Sulphur Gulch Bridge Pikes Peak Drive at Sulphur Gulch Trail



The original bridge over Sulphur Gulch was built in 1908. The road was a major arterial from Denver to Franktown and locations further south. The shallow arched bridge was made of a 'new' material at a

time when the turn of the century saw an explosion of concrete bridge construction, attributable in large part to one American designer - Daniel B. Luten. The photo includes a horse drawn carriage and a Model T in the foreground. The large concrete pillar, now resting on this site, was unearthed by local resident Denver Pope while doing some excavation in Sulphur Gulch. Attached to the pillar is the original 1908 dedication plaque. *Photo courtesy of Larry Smith.*

15. Montgomery House 11023 Pikes Peak Drive



After his participation in the Civil War, Frank Leviga Montgomery moved from New Hampshire to Colorado, and worked as a freighter between Pueblo, Denver and Salt Lake City. In 1872, he married Elizabeth Ellen O'Neal, who was originally from Missouri. In 1873, they homesteaded on Cherry Creek, near the current Stroh Ranch, and soon acquired more land further west, between the railroad lines. After a brief stay in Denver, they returned to the farm west of

Parker for several years until 1915, when they built this house on Pikes Peak Drive. The Montgomery's, who had six children, were farmers and ranchers and became a part of the social and business life of town. Frank was active in politics and was elected county commissioner in 1887. He stayed in Parker until his death in 1918. After Frank's death, Elizabeth lived in the house for only a few years; however, she stayed in Parker until 1945 and then lived in Denver until her death two years later. *Photo courtesy of Lewis Palmer with photo imaging by Randy Mace.*

16. Charlie O'Brien House 11017 Pikes Peak Drive



This residence was built in 1932 for the Charles O'Brien family, which at that time consisted of Charles, first wife Gladys and their daughter, Patsy Ruth, born Sept. 30, 1932. A son named Charles Edward would be born later on March 17, 1933. When the house was finished it was rented out, as the family was reported to be moving to Denver. However, the O'Briens only stayed in Denver a short time and then returned to Parker. On a trip to San Francisco in 1935, tragedy struck and daughter Patsy died unexpectedly from unknown causes. The remaining family members returned to Parker and eventually occupied the home, except for the elder Charlie, who by this time had parted company from Gladys. They divorced soon after. Charlie did occupy the home just briefly before his death in 1984. *Photo courtesy of Dave Aldridge.*

17. Ave Maria Catholic Church 19580 East Pilgrims Place



In 1915, construction of the Ave Maria Catholic Church began on a lot on the north side of today's Mainstreet. The first High Mass was conducted in the new edifice in 1916. Catholic Church activities were moved to Castle Rock in 1955. The church was boarded up and sat vacant until 1982, when it was donated to St. Matthew's Episcopal Church and moved to its present location on Pilgrim's Place. It now serves as the church's chapel. *Photo courtesy of Douglas County Library History Research Center.*

18. William DuRay/Bert Hall House 19580 Pilgrims Place



This two-story house was built by William H. O'Brien for Will DuRay in October of 1911. In October of 1916, Will left Parker to work in Denver. Around 1923 the property was sold to a Mr. and Mrs. Bertram from Fort Morgan. The Bertram's were unhappy in Parker and sold the store building they owned and their home in 1919 to Bert Hall, who had come to Parker with his wife for her health. In 1923 he moved his wife and family to Fort Morgan where he worked on a bridge gang. It wasn't long before he became acquainted

with the Bertram's and a new opportunity arose. He purchased their business, business property and their home in Parker. He started a truck line in May of 1927, hauling milk, live stock, hay and general commodities, but sold it in 1953. Bert lost his son in WW II and his wife died in 1958. After her death he sold the store to Rupert Weimer and ended his business activities in Parker. He died in 1977.

Mary and Jerry Lance owned the home and lived there from about 1963 to 1970 when they sold it to a technical school. The Episcopal Church purchased the property which contained two homes; one small two-bedroom home on the East end of the property, and the larger two-story home further to the West. The church eventually tore down the small home to build an addition to their main church building and now use the two-story building for office space. *Photo courtesy of Dave Aldridge.*

19. Newcomb House 10965 Pikes Peak Drive



James M. Newcomb was the town barber and opened up a barber shop in July 1910 at the Rhode Island House. In August of that year, he married Victoria Stover, who taught school at Pine Grove. In 1911, they had a new home built for them on Rural Road (now Pikes Peak Drive) which they moved into in 1913. That

same year, Victoria was appointed postmaster and served in that role for 34 years. She lived in the house off and on until her death in 1963. *Photo courtesy of the Parker Area Historical Society.*

OTHER AREAS OF HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

A. 17-Mile House and Stage Barn

The 17-Mile House is one of three remaining "mile houses" along the Cherokee/Smoky Hill Trail. This was an important route that connected Bent's Fort and other settlements along the Arkansas River and Palmer Divide to the gold camps and settlements along the Front Range. The 17-Mile House did not figure as a stage stop, but it was a stop for freighters and other travelers, and was well known as a hotel and tavern. It was built in the 1860s of squared logs covered with clapboards. Originally it was one and one-half stories high in the front sloping to one story at the back. Over time, several additions and modifications have been made to the house. Before Parker Road was re-aligned in the late 1930s it ran between the house and the barn.

The first owner of record was Mary Hightower, who acquired the property in 1867. Susan Doud, who with her husband Nelson, had owned and operated the 20-Mile House at Pine Grove (Parker), purchased the property in 1870. She added the large barn, using typical frontier mortise and tenon construction. The house and site are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

B. Pouppirt House

The Pouppirt House was built in 1918 by William H. O'Brien, Ed Pouppirt's brother-in-law. It was one of the first homes in the area to use acetylene gas for interior lighting. Ed came to Douglas County around 1901, where he worked for a time on ranches near Parker. He was born in Leavenworth, Kansas, one of seven children of French parents. He farmed the land until his marriage to Lena Bell Kern in 1904. The Pouppirts were ranchers, farmers and developers. They eventually acquired 7,000 acres in Douglas and Arapahoe counties, where they ran dairy operations until 1917 and also raised herds of beef cattle. The Pouppirts developed the Pouppirt Addition to Parker, which was across the tracks to the north from the Rhode Island House. Their holdings included the 20-Mile House property, which they bought in 1917 from Neal Duncan. After Ed died in 1942, Lena donated the land east of the J. S. Parker cemetery between the cemetery and Parker Road. The Pouppirts are both buried in the J. S. Parker Cemetery. They had no children.

C. Tallman/Newlin Cabin Canterbury Trail and Callaway Road

This is one of two remaining log structures of its type in the Parker area, the other being the 17-Mile House. The core of the house is the log cabin built by John M. Tallman in 1866. Portions of the original log cabin are still visible. Tallman was born in New York in 1837 and came to Colorado at the age of 22. In 1865 he married Elizabeth Pennock and they raised two children on the site. Elizabeth left a legacy of stories about life in the early Parker area. She wrote about Ute, Cheyenne and Arapaho warfare. Ute bands under Chiefs Ouray, Colorow and Washington crossed the homestead demanding biscuits and tried to buy her red haired son for 20 ponies. The house was sold to William Gilpin Newlin and his wife, Elizabeth, in 1879. The house was donated to the Parker Area Historical Society by Black Creek Capital. In 1996, it was moved from its original site 1,000 feet due east to its present location. It was added to the State Register of Historic Properties in 1997.

D. Newlin Cemetery Canterbury Trail and Callaway Road

William Gilpin Newlin and his wife, Elizabeth, came to Colorado in 1865 from Minnesota with their children William Jr. and Mary. The Newlins, who brought the first shorthorn cattle to Colorado, first lived south of this homestead. They relocated to the Tallman property after purchasing it from John Tallman in 1879. They gradually acquired a total of 720 acres of land for ranching, dairy farming and agricultural cultivation. In 1898, Newlin created the Newlin Cemetery Trust for burial of Newlin family members only. William and Elizabeth are buried within the fence and Mary E. Newlin just outside the fence to the north. Three graves are not documented, but Newlin family lore says they contain the remains of neighbor Moses Parker and his family. The Newlin family maintained ties to the property until 1961. The cemetery was deeded to the Parker Area Historical Society in 1996.

E. Slemmer Ranch Barn Tallman Drive and Club Drive

Edmund Charles and Anna Ophelia Hornneman Slemmer moved to the Parker area in 1918 from Illinois and began building a dairy farm shortly after their arrival. As part of the Slemmer Ranch, the family built a barn in 1919 that was used to house dairy cows and horses on the first floor and functioned as a hay loft on the second floor. Anna was an avid gardener. To assist in the plowing of her garden plot, Anna employed a retired, old gray horse named Fred. To get him to plow, Anna would fill a saucer with sugar and stand at the far end of the garden which would entice Fred to pull the plow toward her. Anna would then refill the saucer and go to the other end and wait till Fred got there. This was repeated for every furrow until the plowing was done. The barn was restored by Curtis Dale in 1995 with the help of a number of local businesses.

G. Hill Top School

The school building at Hill Top was built in June of 1898 and is located on Flintwood Road, north of Democrat Road. It replaced the original log structure built in 1888, which was located one-quarter mile to the west. Hill Top had grades one through eight. At one time a movable partition was made to separate the large room into two rooms, and two teachers were hired before the partition was removed. An addition was made for a small kitchen and dining area and another addition was installed to form a small bedroom so the teacher could live at the school. Sunday school and sometimes church services were held at Hill Top. It was also used for dances, parties and meetings of those who lived nearby. The building was used as a school until 1954, when school districts were consolidated. At that time enrollment had dropped from a high of 30 students to three - one first grade student and two fifth graders.

H. Arapahoe Canal

In 1889, the Denver Water Storage Company planned to erect a 600 foot by 75 foot hard rock and concrete dam to be known as Castlewood, with the overflow to be handled by a ditch, to be known as Arapahoe Canal. Construction of the dam and overflow canal was completed in 1890. In 1897, a 100 foot section of the dam washed out and by 1901, it was leaking so badly that local farmers complained that there was not enough water to properly irrigate their crops. The Denver Sugar, Land and Irrigation Company purchased the dam and canal in 1902 in order to provide water for a proposed sugar beet factory on 18,000 acres in nearby Parker, but the factory was never built. The dam and property changed hands again in 1903 to create a suburban agriculture community; however this project failed and the Cherry Creek Mutual Irrigation Company was formed.

In August of 1933, the faulty dam collapsed under the stress of rain and hail. It was condemned by the state engineer many years earlier but no action had been taken to repair it. A wall of water, 30 feet high by some estimates, rushed down the canyon, widening out to more than a mile along Cherry Creek. Property was destroyed, livestock killed and the devastation continued into Denver. Today remnants of the dam are visible in Castlewood Canyon State Park and traces of the canal are intact and visible along the slopes west of Cherry Creek through Parker.