

Berthoud — Back in time

In the midst of the Pikes Peak gold rush of the early 1860s, many people traveled through the Little Thompson Valley in search of their fortunes. Some staked homestead claims on the rough and arid prairie, but many left the land to others hardier than themselves.

In the 1870s when the Colorado Central Railroad made plans lay tracks across the Little Thompson Valley to connect its rail line between Longmont and Cheyenne, Capt. Edward L. Berthoud surveyed the route. When the line was completed in 1877, a tiny settlement that had risen to life where the tracks crossed Little Thompson creek was named Berthoud in honor of the engineer who had laid out the route.

Soon the valley was filled with homestead families and the fledgling town of Berthoud grew to fill their needs.

The course of the community shifted in the early 1880s when the rail company realized that Berthoud's location on the river bottom required their locomotives to strain mightily to ascend the grade out of the valley. At the railroad's request the town was moved to its present location one mile north of the river in the winter of 1883-84.

At a new town site platted on Peter Turner's homestead, Berthoud blossomed into a bustling agricultural center. Farmers prospered from crops grown with irrigation water diverted from the Big and Little Thompson rivers while businessmen flourished by providing much needed goods and services.



Photo courtesy of the Berthoud Historical Society
W.H. McCormick (center with the straw hat) at his general store in Berthoud c. 1910.

Photo by Mark French
In 1921 the Berthoud Farm Products Company doubled the size of the Lovejoy Public Elevator they had purchased one year earlier by adding a second cement silo on the south side of the original building.

Berthoud Library grows with the community

In 1932 the Berthoud Women's Club founded the Berthoud Library. Jane McCarty was the club's head of the library committee and she made book-buying trips to Denver to stock the new library.

The library was first housed in the Berthoud Grade School that was located in what is now Fickel Park. In 1952 the library moved to a space in the town hall. Two additions were made as the collection grew. The dream of a library building became a reality when the present location opened in 1995. The new facility was made possible by a very generous gift from Drs. Helen and Bruce Fickel as well as gifts from Berthoud businesses, organizations, individuals and the town of Berthoud.

In July 2008 the Berthoud Community Library District was formed as another step in providing the best possible library service to Berthoud residents.



From the initial book collection of 800 volumes, the library now houses a collection of over 27,000 items and served nearly 35,000 visitors in 2008.

Parks & Recreation

The town of Berthoud maintains several parks within its limits that afford a number of opportunities for recreation including ball courts, swimming pool, playgrounds, picnic areas and skate facilities. The town's recreation program organizes a great number of classes and activities such as volleyball, softball, soccer, aerobics and swimming lessons.

Contact numbers:

Main office:.....(970) 532-1600
Town fields(970) 532-3086
Weather cancellation....(970) 622-2524
Swimming pool.....(970) 532-3667

Berthoud is in close proximity to the Carter Lake recreation area. The scenic reservoir which is three miles long and one mile wide sits in the foothills west of town at 5,760 feet. Surrounded by 1,000 acres of public land, the area is popular for sailing, fishing, camping, rock climbing, scuba diving, hiking and much more.

Additionally, Berthoud is just an hour drive from the splendors of Rocky Mountain National Park. With over 100 peaks above 10,000 feet, 359 miles of trails and 265,000 acres of natural wonder, visitors can endlessly explore the parks resources.