

Historic Granby Real Estate

By Penny Rafferty Hamilton, Ph.D.

William Shakespeare, the historic play writer, said, “There is a history in all men’s lives.” The same could be said for many Grand County buildings. According to author, Lela McQueary in her 1962 book, **Widening Trails**, real estate sales and land give-aways helped to build our towns.

“In 1905, a town site was obtained from Jim Snider, who had homesteaded the land upon the sagebrush mesa. The village was called Granby for Granby Hillyer, a civil engineer. Two general stores, two livery stables, a post office and a tiny café (all built with false fronts to make them appear much larger) were scattered on the north side of Main Street, three blocks long,” wrote McQueary. That Main Street today is Agate Avenue.

A quick search of the Grand County tax rolls reveals an interesting historic mix of buildings. For example, the current Brynoff home at 170 2nd Street was the Post Office building constructed in 1910 and originally located at 458 East Agate. That building was moved to its current home to make way for the construction for the new Post Office building in 1945 at 458 East Agate. Deb Brynoff, the Executive Director of the Grand County Board of Realtors, said, “When we updated and built onto the original building, we found old letters stuffed in the walls. Obviously, they used them in the early years to add insulating value. I guess they had junk mail even then!”

On July 1, 1966, a new Post Office building was dedicated at 225 East Jasper Avenue (now the current home of the Grand County Library District Administrative Office). According to Granby-area Realtor, Susie Peterson of Glenn Realty, who used to own the building at 458 East Agate when they converted it to the Granby Veterinary Clinic, “Downstairs was full of those neat glass front post office boxes with the gold dials. You can just imagine the history in that building.”

Other buildings constructed in those early years were 127 4th Street in 1909. In addition to a private home, over the years businesses such as Re/max Real Estate and Katie’s Flower Shop were located at 247 East Agate, which was also built in 1909. In 1910, the property at 110 Garnet was built.

The Roaring 20s saw a spurt of construction such as 172 Topaz (1922), 307 Jasper and 59 4th Street (1924), 166 Jasper and 291 Topaz (1929). The current Columbine Café property at 395 East Agate was built during the hey-days of 1927 when it was called the Town Crier Restaurant.

After the Great Crash of 1929 and the Depression of the 1930s, New Deal jobs and loan programs helped fuel new construction. In fact, in 1933, the famous Payne’s Café was built at 365 East Agate. Today, the Greater Granby Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Enhancement offices, along with Noriyuki & Parker law offices are housed in the almost 75 year-old building.

Today’s Shadow Mountain Chiropractic Clinic of Drs. Jeff and Deb Shaw at 60 2nd was built in 1935 as a private home. On April 18, 1935, the first addition to Granby helped the town grow. In

1938, 387 East Agate was the site of the new pool hall run by Alva West. Today Lorene Linke's Fabric Nook welcomes customers and quilters at the historic location.

1938 was also the year the building at 185 East Agate, which was Granby's first strip mall, was constructed with Craig's Café, later Olson's Café. Over the years business such as Maureen's Clothing Shop, a laundromat, a barbershop and the Carpet Wagon found homes where today the Longbranch and Schatzis Pasta & Pizza Restaurants are found.

Post World War II America and Granby boomed. Granby had an influx of new residents because of the continued construction of the Granby Dam and the Co-Big Thompson Water Project. In 1946, the Granby Dairy Building at 106 Jasper sprung up. That same year, Carmichael Real Estate Company built a new office at 191 East Agate. Today real estate is still king at that corner building with the Grand County Board of Realtors and The Title Company of the Rockies offices located there.

The Granby landmark, Frontier Motel, at 232 West Agate was built in 1951 by Earl Saylor. In 1954 Jenkins & Fulk began construction of the Granby Trading Post at 231 East Agate. Ken and Debbie Eaker and Jay Young bought that property in May 1995 and renamed the store, The Grand Mountain Trading Company.

Want to learn more about Granby History? The Greater Granby Area Chamber of Commerce is selling the historic preservation book, **Granby, Then & Now**. Each numbered and signed book is only \$14.95 with all proceeds donated to the Chamber for Heritage projects. Call 887-2311 or toll free 800 325-1661 or email www.grcoc@rkymtnhi.com because supplies are limited.