



Lafayette, Colorado... So Rich *and* Diverse



More than a century ago Lafayette and Mary Miller spent their honeymoon crossing the plains from New York and came to rest in the Boulder region. In 1863 they started farming, operated the stage coach stop, and ran several meat markets in the area. Lafayette Miller was an industrious man but his sudden death in 1878 left Mary with six young children to raise. She did this and more...she raised a town!

Soon after a fourteen-foot-wide coal vein was discovered on her property and she worked to capitalize on this rich discovery. Not long after, both the Simpson and Cannon Mines were in operation. By 1896 Lafayette had 5 active mines, two general stores, livery stables, boarding houses and several commercial businesses and a population of 1200. Because Mary wanted the miners to be able to purchase lots

and build their own homes, she devised a plan to subdivide her property into residential and commercial lots and on April 2, 1889, Mary Miller incorporated the town and named it after her husband, Lafayette. In 1900, the Lafayette Banks was organized with Mary as President. In fact, Mary Miller was the only woman in the United States who was president of a bank at that time. 1900 marked the beginning of Lafayette as an up and coming city. But that's only part of the story. Mary's pioneer spirit spawned the origin of a formal city and her business savvy formed its future.

Coal proved profitable and brought miners and their families from all over the US and Europe. By 1914 Lafayette boasted two banks, four hotels, three restaurants, a picture show, bakery, candy store, two poolrooms, pickle factory and a local newspaper. By the early 1950's coal production had died down and the rapid growth and rising housing costs in Denver and Boulder brought substantial growth to Lafayette in the 1990s.





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As Lafayette grew from a small mining town into a City of 28,000, its business community has grown as well. Old businesses have remained a vibrant and important part of the economy just as new industries have been attracted to the area and contribute to Lafayette's economic health.

Lafayette is a strong support of economic development and today the city is home to small and large businesses, commercial enterprises, small industrial and manufacturing firms and home to researchers and developers of new technologies for military, biomedical and health applications.

From its beginning as a small coal mining community, Lafayette has grown into an environmentally sensitive city with managed growth plans for residential, commercial and

industrial developments. Lafayette combines the best of both worlds...urban amenities without urban hassles. ❖

