

## 7 the boulder and white rock ditch

On your right just after you pass under the Broadway Bridge you will see the head gate for the Boulder and White Rock Ditch, one of many ditches that served the agricultural, industrial and household needs of the citizens of Boulder Valley.

Boulder's earliest settlers could grow almost anything as long as they had access to water. But the valley was a somewhat arid place once you ventured away from the creeks. In order to take advantage of the Boulder Creek drainage, an elaborate system of ditches was constructed. Because the ditches were limited to gravity feed systems, only land below the ditches could be irrigated thus necessitating the construction of many head gates, small channels, and flood irrigation diversions to spread water throughout Boulder Valley to the wheat and sugar beet farmers. The ditch water also powered and turned the grindstones used at the many grist and flour mills that sprung up across Boulder County. Additionally, the water delivered throughout Boulder via these ditches was used in the early days for household needs. Very few people had wells suitable for drinking or watering livestock, so lateral ditches running off the main ditches ran down the sides of residential streets, providing water for homes.

Our next stop is a little south of the Boulder Creek Path, but it's worth the detour. Distance: 0.22 mi. Cumulative distance: 1.42 mi.

## 8 the denver and interurban railroad

Take the path that leads to the south and under Arapahoe Avenue. On the south side of Arapahoe, cross the bridge over the creek and follow the path around the Boulder High football field, stopping behind the older red brick building with the circular windows (the Tebo Building). Note the incline to the south that goes uphill behind the football stands. Today this is known as Andrew's Arboretum. From 1908 to 1926 this was a railroad grade utilized by the Colorado and Southern Railroad (C&S) and its subsidiary, the Denver and Interurban (D&I), to provide rail service between Boulder and Denver. Andrew's Arboretum is essentially on the grade that ascended from the Union Depot at 14th and Water streets (now Canyon Boulevard). The rail curved toward University Hill and crossed Boulder Creek slightly south and west of the current Boulder Municipal Building, at the location of the current footbridge. It then traversed Broadway and Marine Street and crested University Hill, eventually heading to Marshall and Denver.

The green interurban cars that used this route were larger than conventional streetcars and were powered by electricity generated at a coal-fired power plant located on the banks of what is now known as Waneka Lake in Lafayette. The core of the Tebo Building was originally an electrical substation for the line supplying 550 volts of direct current for the interurban electric motors.

After a disastrous accident in 1920, the D&I began replacing the interurban cars with buses and eventually stopped service in 1926. The C&S continued to operate freight trains over the route until 1932.

Return to the main Boulder Creek Path and continue east to the ruins of the CU Ice Rink. Distance: 0.54 mi. Cumulative distance: 1.96 mi.

## 9 the cu ice rink and the ho chi minh trail

Continuing east on the path, stop at 19th Street and cross the bridge over Boulder Creek. This is the site of the old CU Ice Rink. Built at the same time as the CU Women's Gym located at the top of the hill, the rink was to serve as an ice rink in the winter and tennis courts in the summer. However due to the uncertainty of the winter weather and the treacherous path leading up the hill, the rink was never very useful. Instead it became a romantic spot for the locals. In fact one of Boulder's more sensational and unsolved murders may have taken place here or very near by. On June 9, 1949, a young CU couple, Ray Spore and Doris Weaver, walked down the hill from the campus, probably on the trail in front of you, and were attacked from behind by an unseen and never-identified assailant. Ms. Weaver was struck several times on the head but managed to escape. Spore told Ms. Weaver to run while he grappled with the attacker. His body was found the next day in Boulder Creek. Spore reportedly had a broken leg and was in a cast that prevented his escape.

In the 1960s during the height of the Vietnam War and anti-war protests, the path up the hill was unofficially re-named by the CU students as the Ho Chi Minh Trail, in reference to the supply line used by the North Vietnamese during the war.

Continue east on the Boulder Creek Path to learn about CU's veterans village. Distance: 0.35 mi. Cumulative distance: 2.31 mi.

## 10 vetsville

Continuing along the path, you will begin to notice apartment housing to the north. Today this is CU's family housing. And a little further along, before you reach Folsom Street, you will notice CU's football practice facilities. Long before its current uses, this area was affectionately known as Vetsville which sprung up in the late 1940s at the close of WWII when federal officials became concerned about the job prospects for returning veterans if they all entered the job market at the same time. The resulting GI Bill delayed their entry into the market and gave the vets the chance to enhance their skills, opening a new world to the veterans who otherwise may never have been able to go to college. CU's enrollment exploded from 4,500 in 1945 to 7,700 in 1946. And many of the new students were married and were starting families. CU had to scramble to find housing for these new and non-traditional students. As a result, trailers, old barracks, and Quonset huts were packed into this area. Vetsville became a thriving, energetic and somewhat self-contained community, electing its own mayor and council and publishing its own newspaper, the "Quontrabar" named for a combination of Quonset, trailer and barracks.

The mud and dust of the early years were, over time, replaced by grass, flowers, small gardens and even a few white picket fences as the vets and their families did their best to build a community that reflected the American dream of the late 1940s and early 1950s. By the 1960s the trailers and barracks were gone but the Quonset huts remained and continued to serve the needs of CU's married students until the last one was removed prior to the fall 1974 opening of Newton Court, one of the apartment complexes on the north side of the path.

Continue east to the Millennium Harvest House Hotel. Distance: 0.19 mi. Cumulative distance: 2.50 mi.

## 11 harvest house

As you emerge from the Folsom Street underpass you will see the beginning of the Harvest House Hotel complex (now called the Millennium Harvest House.) Construction on what would be called "America's newest highway hotel...and its best" began in 1959. The 38 acre site, acquired by the Murchison brothers, was outside the city limits and had long been the site of the 9-hole Mountain View Golf Course and an apple orchard that ran along the southern boundary. The only structure in those days was a two-story home turned clubhouse that was relocated to 2825 Marine Street where it remains today. The development, which stretches from Folsom to 28th Street and from Arapahoe Avenue to the south side of Boulder Creek, includes Arapahoe Village Shopping Center, an apartment building, tennis courts and a conference center. The Harvest House included a cocktail lounge that catered to the drinking crowd who could not at the time legally buy alcoholic beverages within the city limits. Boulder was a "dry" city until 1967.

Working at an unheard of pace, certainly by today's standards, the hotel was unofficially opened in July of 1959 as the city was celebrating its centennial. The hotel's gala formal opening took place in January 1960, barely a year after the construction of this Boulder landmark began.

Our next and final stop is on down the bike path, at one in a series of Boulder's municipal dumps. Distance: 0.37 mi. Cumulative distance: 2.87 mi.

## 12 scott carpenter park and the city dump

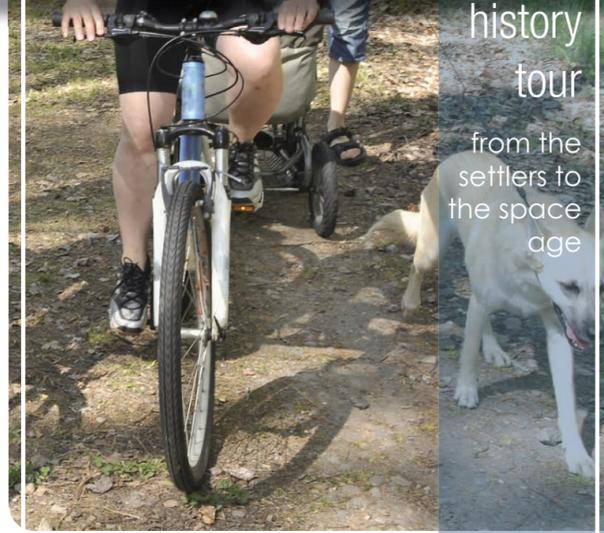
Continuing east, pass under 28th Street. Just before you come to 30th Street you will see Scott Carpenter Park on your left. The park was formerly known as Valverdan Park and was the site of the city's dump and sewage treatment facility. In 1955 the treatment plant was moved, the dump was contoured and sodded to create the hill you see in front of you, and the site was dedicated as a community park.

Valverdan Park was re-dedicated in 1962 to honor one of Boulder's favorite sons, Astronaut Scott Carpenter. The pool was dedicated in 1963 by Carpenter, who was thrown into the pool, fully clothed, by Mayor Holloway and City Manager Turner, who in turn were pushed in by City Council members.

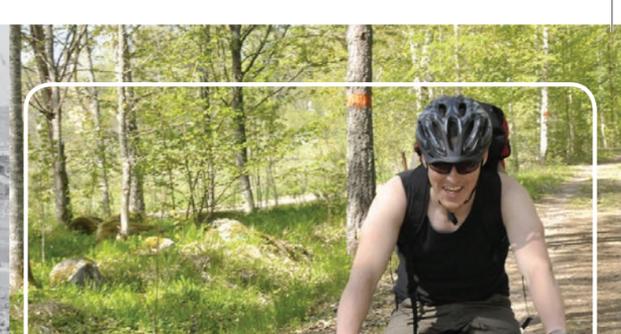
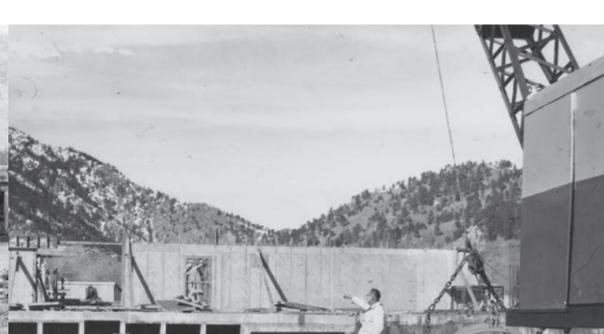
Carpenter was born in Boulder in 1925 and has the unique distinction of being the first human ever to penetrate both inner and outer space, thereby acquiring the dual title Astronaut/Aquanaut. He was commissioned in the Navy in 1949 and was selected as one of the original seven Mercury Astronauts in 1959. He served as backup pilot for John Glenn during the preparation for America's first manned space flight on April 9, 1962, and flew the second American manned orbital flight on May 24, 1962. Carpenter later participated in the Navy's Man in the Sea Project as an Aquanaut in the summer of 1965 spending 30 days living and working on the ocean floor.

The biking or walking tour that you are about to embark upon will first introduce you to Captain Thomas Aikins, an early gold seeker and first white settler in Boulder, and conclude by introducing you to one of Boulder's favorite sons, Scott Carpenter, one of the original Mercury astronauts and the second American to venture into outer space. In between you will visit the Jungle, the ghost of William Tull, the site of an unsolved murder, as well as the post WWII phenomenon, Vetsville. Take your time and enjoy the trip through some of Boulder's history.

## THE BOULDER HISTORY MUSEUM PRESENTS: boulder creek path history tour



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# ① settlers' park

# ② eben g. fine park

# ③ fourth street bridge and the 1894 flood

# ④ justice center and the site of the park allen hotel

# ⑤ the jungle

# ⑥ the hanging tree and the ghost of william tull

# special thanks

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P ♀♂

②

Our tour begins at Settlers' Park, at the junction of Pearl Street and Canyon Boulevard on the west end of Boulder.

Settlers' Park was the location of the first permanent camp established by white settlers in the Boulder area. In October 1858, a group of about 12 men, lead by Captain Thomas Aikins, broke away from a larger group of prospectors that had left from Nebraska City, Nebraska, headed for the Cherry Creek and Auraria gold strike. They took out for the Boulder area because, as Captain Aikins said, "the mountains looked right for gold." The group pitched their tents at the base of the red rock formation you see directly in front of you on October 17, 1858. Because of the red sandstone cliffs the group called the area Red Rocks, giving Boulder its first name. Pearl Street, which begins at this point, would become Boulder's main road and was built on a straight line from Settlers' Park to Valmont Butte.

To get to the next stop, follow the directions directly below.

③

Eben G. Fine Park is located at the mouth of Boulder Canyon on Boulder Creek. The park was dedicated to the memory of long time Boulder resident Eben G. Fine in 1959.

Fine was born in Missouri in 1865 and moved to Boulder in 1886 where he got a job at Fonda's Drug Store on Pearl Street. Fine later took up photography as a hobby, which would lead to him becoming Boulder's most important ambassador, dubbed "Mr. Boulder." Beginning in 1923, with a large collection of photographs of Boulder and its mountain backdrop, "Mr. Boulder" partnered with the Burlington Railroad to annually travel the country encouraging people to travel to Colorado and Boulder in particular. For more than 14 years, Fine took a two month long pilgrimage across the country making more than 3,500 appearances intent as he said on leaving Boulder "indelibly imprinted on the minds of the audience."

In 1909 Fine was placed in charge of Boulder's 50th anniversary celebration. In an attempt to add authenticity to the celebration, Fine wanted to include the earliest settlers of the area, the Arapaho and Cheyenne tribes, in the festivities. Unable to locate or convince any of the members of the original settling tribes to be involved, he brought in a number of Ute instead. In his desire to entertain his guests he treated them to a movie...a special showing of *Custer's Last Stand!*

④

6th St.

About 100 yards west of this point, across Boulder Creek, is Fourth Street, obscured now by houses built above the creek. (Note that Fourth Street on the south side of the creek lines up with Third Street on the north.) The abutments of one of the few bridges that spanned the creek in the early years of Boulder still stand in this area. The bridge was destroyed in the 1894 flood, the most devastating in Boulder's history.

Since Boulder sits at the base of the mountains and at the mouth of a major canyon, floods have always been (and will always be) a part of Boulder's history, particularly during the spring when cloudbursts combine with winter snowmelt turning small creeks into raging rivers. But the flood of 1894 was particularly destructive. From May 29 to June 2 of that year nearly 6 inches of rain fell over the Boulder Creek and South Boulder Creek basins. The warm moisture fell on the heavy accumulations of snow at the headwaters of Four Mile, North Boulder, Middle Boulder and South Boulder creeks to produce the deluge. During the night of May 30, a raging torrent came down Boulder Canyon sweeping away buildings, bridges, roads and railroads. The waters covered almost the entire area from Walnut Street to beyond Arapahoe Avenue, and from 9th Street to the city limits. In places, the waters were several hundred feet wide.

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9th St.

To your left is the Boulder County Justice Center. Somewhat ironically, the area where the Justice Center now stands has a rather checkered and dark past. In the early 1950s local insurance tycoon and financier Allen Lefferdink began construction of his dream, the Park Allen Hotel, intending to meet the needs of the government and industry convention-goers arriving in Boulder via the newly opened Boulder-Denver Turnpike (US 36). Lefferdink reportedly had built up a bogus multi-million dollar empire based on worthless securities. What Lefferdink offered was one-stop shopping for insurance, savings, loans and investments. At its peak Lefferdink's empire was comprised of 40 corporations and had 3,800 agents spreading his concepts of post-war consumer credit. These companies were underwritten by stocks reportedly sold only to Colorado residents, so as to avoid registration with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. Eventually Lefferdink's empire collapsed when he was indicted by a federal grand jury for fraud and conspiracy. The collapse brought an end to the construction of the Park Allen (later known affectionately by the locals as "Lefferdink's Folly"), leaving behind just the foundations that sat behind a chain-link fence for decades before the county acquired the land and built the Justice Center.

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What is now a beautiful park along Boulder Creek wasn't always this attractive. This area has a colorful history as it was once the slum and red light district of Boulder. It evolved into the low rent district due to its proximity to the railroad and fears of flooding close to the creek. The original freight depot stood at the corner of 10th and Canyon, then called Water Street, immediately to the north. Prostitution was a major concern to the citizens of Boulder and despite an 1873 ordinance prohibiting it, by the 1880s at least five bordellos operated in this area, known as "The Jungle." Finally in 1897 the Citizens Reform League passed a resolution intent on making "Boulder the cleanest and purest city in the state."

This area was also the site of Boulder's first professional prize fight which took place on the banks of the creek on August 24, 1873, between "Scotty" and Tim Brown. After 18 rounds Brown was declared the winner when Scotty could not answer the bell for the 19th round.

Immediately to the south of the Library on the south side of Arapahoe Avenue was once a pond used by the Boulder City Brewing Company and later by the Crystal Springs Brewery and Ice Company. The pond was used to harvest ice to be used in the plants and also for sale to Boulder residents for refrigeration.

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Broadway

We're on the north side of Boulder Creek, south of the Municipal Building and west of the Broadway Bridge. Just across the creek from this point was the location of a willow or possibly a cottonwood tree that was used to lynch William Tull for stealing horses in 1867. While being held for trial at a temporary jail set up in the Colorado House at 13th and Pearl streets, a mob took Tull, without resistance from the deputy in charge of Tull's care, dragged him down what is now Broadway and across the bridge where he was brutally lynched. It was later discovered that Tull had good title to the horses he was accused of stealing.

Seven years later a strange series of ghost sightings took place as reported in the May 15, 1874, Boulder County News. A ghost of what was thought to be Tull was seen on three separate occasions by three very well respected citizens. First by Judge Belford, second by Constable R.L. Long, and lastly by Dr. Lane. No one was ever held accountable for the hanging.

Thanks to Dennis Berry and Bill Herbstreit who researched and created this map and Sydney Tanner for the map design. Special thanks to Larry Dorsey, William Arndt and Silvia Pettem for their help and contributions, to Wendy Hall at the Carnegie Branch Library for Local History for locating the photos and to Susan Barney Jones for copy-editing. We also wish to acknowledge the help that the City Of Boulder's web site provided on numerous topics and several books, notably *Frontier Boulder* by Richard Fetter; and the *Early Boulder* series by Sanford Charles Gladden.

Photos courtesy of the Boulder Historical Society, Carnegie Branch Library for Local History, the CU Alumni Center, and the Coloradan.

Opening in May 2018  
2205 Broadway, Boulder, CO 80302  
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Follow the path west and under Canyon Boulevard to arrive at our next stop, Eben G. Fine Park. Distance: 0.25 mi.

Continue east on the path to the point at which it curves east along Boulder Creek, just west of the Boulder County Justice Center. Distance: 0.27 mi. Cumulative distance: 0.52 mi.

Our next stop is not far, just 100 yards east on your left. Distance: 0.14 mi. Cumulative distance: 0.66 mi.

Continue east to the Civic Center area between the Boulder Public Library and the Municipal Building. Distance: 0.37 mi. Cumulative distance: 1.03 mi.

Continue east to the Broadway Bridge over Boulder Creek to our next stop. Distance: 0.10 mi. Cumulative distance: 1.13 mi.

Our next stop is on the east side of the Broadway bridge. Distance: 0.07 mi. Cumulative distance: 1.20 mi.