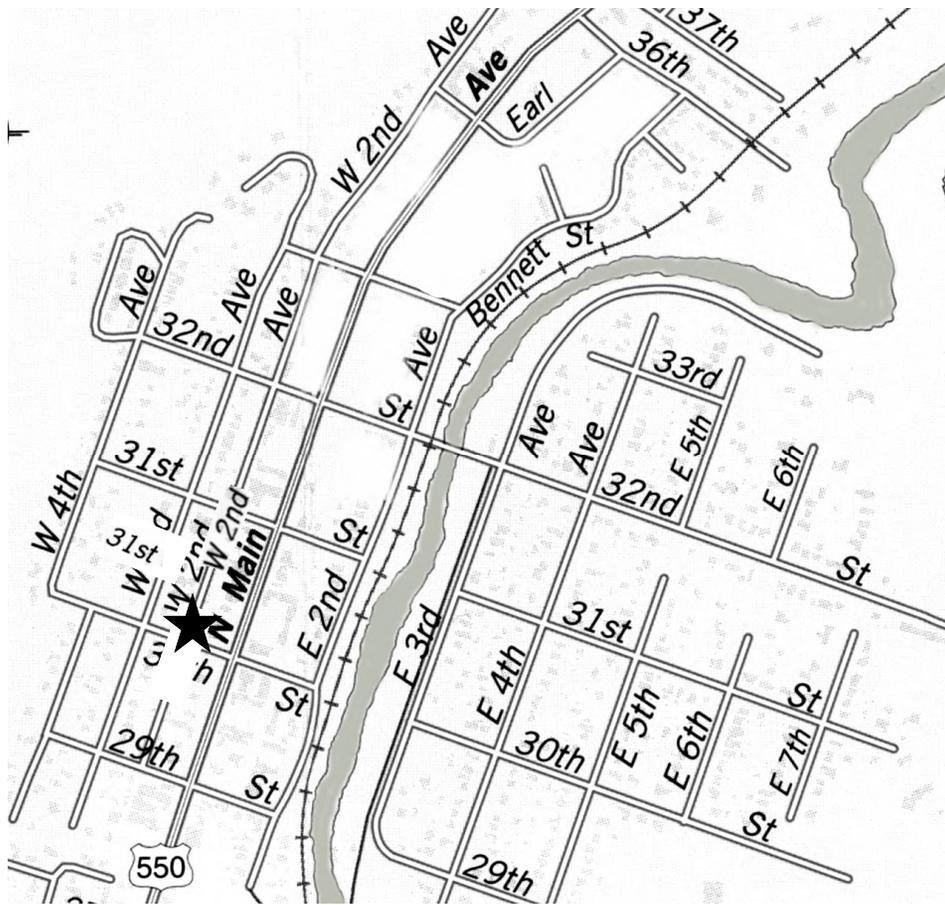


★ The Animas Museum



Animas City



La Plata County Historical Society - Animas Museum

3065 W. 2nd Ave.

P.O. Box 3384, Durango, CO 81302

970 259-2402

www.animasmuseum.org

animasmuseum@frontier.net

November - April

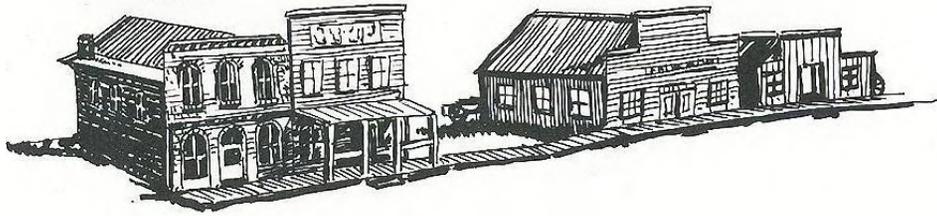
May - October

Tuesday - Saturday 10 am - 4 pm

Monday - Saturday 10 am - 5 pm

*A Celebration of Animas City,
The Town That Predated Durango*

Admission: Adults \$5, Seniors \$4, Active Duty Military \$4, Children 7-12 \$3



The Animas City Story

In 1876, as Colorado was celebrating statehood, a community was founded along the banks of the Animas River. On August 26, a group of enterprising settlers formed the Animas City Townsite Company and purchased land from John Fowler. Among the articles drawn up by the Company was Article 1: "to lay out, found and to occupy as a townsite, situated on the east and west banks of the Animas River. Extending north where the Animas Valley widens, and south near where Junction Creek enters said river. State of Colorado, County of La Plata."

With agricultural roots, the town thrived. Before long Animas City had a school, a general store, several saloons, a pool hall, a doctor and a hotel. The Shaw House, operated by Mr. and Mrs. John Shaw, was known for good home cooked meals. Dan Culver and Cy Gaines opened the first general store in Animas City. The store also contained the post office with Cy serving as postmaster.

Dr. J. P. Wallace originally homesteaded a claim on the east side of the Animas Valley. He sold the property and he and his wife, Lucinda Gaines, moved into a two-story log house on the corner of Main and today's 30th Street, where he established his medical practice.

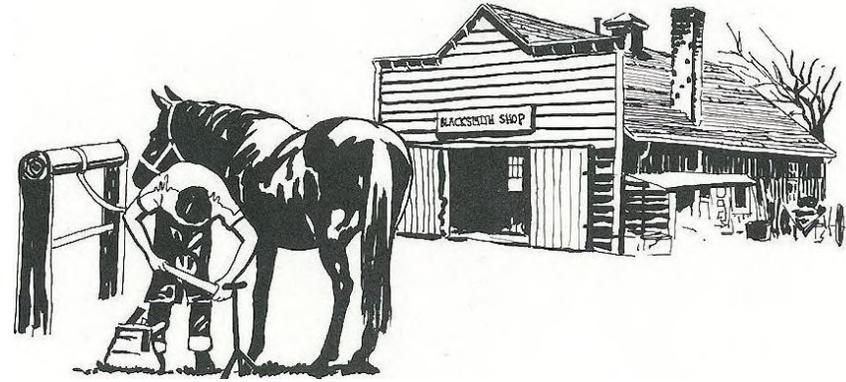
By 1879 Animas City had grown to include a church, Hemel Schwenk's new general store, a barbershop, a hardware store owned by F.A. Foyn and more saloons. In the period between January 1, 1879 and February 6, 1880, town clerk John Trew issued dozens of licenses: 12 dog licenses, six grocery stores, four eating houses, one hardware store, two billiard halls, one commission merchant, four hotels, seven saloons, one drug and notion store, three livery stables and 29 business establishments.

Unfortunately the railroad's arrival in Durango, some 2 miles to the south, in 1881 caused Animas City's fortunes to dim.

Source: "The Animas City Story" by Retha Beebe Luzar

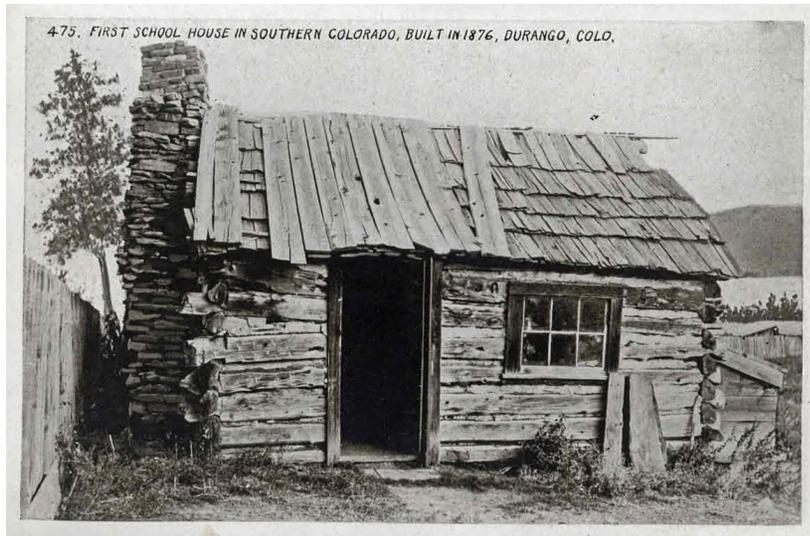
The End of Animas City

Animas City managed to hold on for 70 years after the creation of Durango. However, in 1947, badly in debt and in need of water, which was controlled by the City of Durango, the little town was forced to consider annexation into Durango. Though many residents of Animas City were against annexation, when the issue came to a vote on October 28, 1947, the resolution passed 294 to 114. On January 1, 1948 the town of Animas City officially became part of Durango.



This walking tour and map does not show all of the businesses and residences that were in Animas City. For more information, visit the Animas Museum at 3065 W. 2nd Ave. Durango, CO 81301

7. Before crossing back to the west side of Main, look north to where the first log cabin school was on the east side of Main Ave.



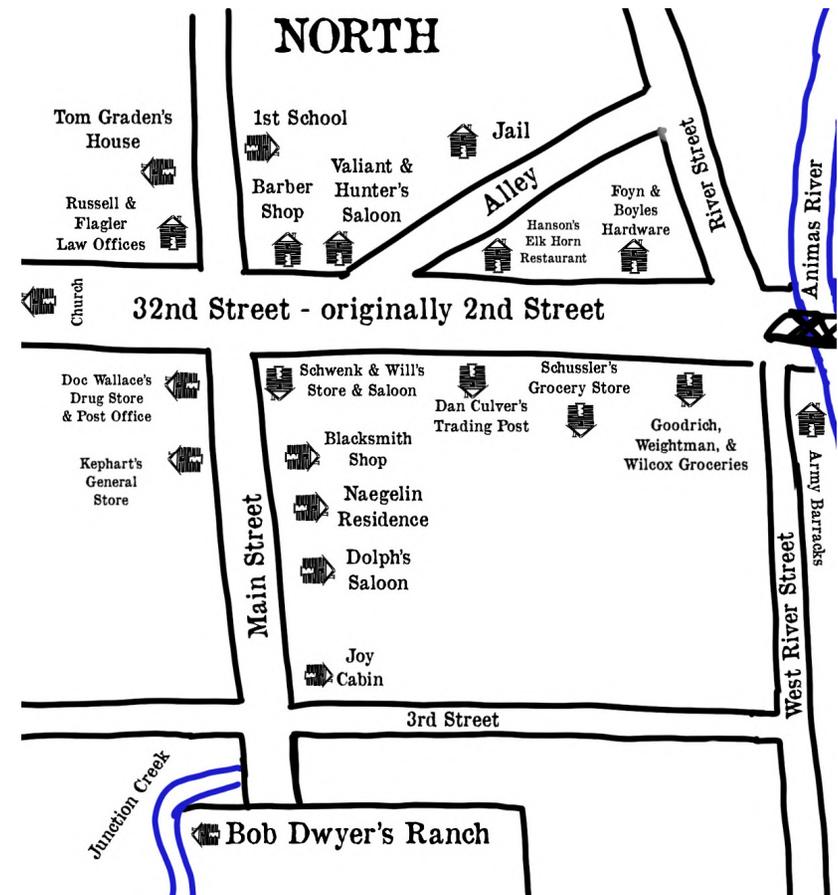
8. Once you have crossed Main, you will be near the former site of the Russell & Flagler Law Office. Tom Graden's cabin was to the north.

9. Keep going up 32nd Street to W.2nd Ave. Look west to the end of 32nd Street. Where the street ends was once the site of the first church in Animas City (Presbyterian).

10. Turn south on W. 2nd Ave. and walk one block to 31st Street. You will end your walking tour at the Animas Museum. The Museum is housed in the former Animas City School which was constructed in 1904-05. This school house always played a vital role as a community center for Animas City. As a bonus for making it all the way to the Museum, admission is free today! Come in and learn more about the people and places you have encountered on your tour. You will find a complete map of Animas City at the Museum.

Welcome to Animas City!

1. Just south of our Main Event booth at 2653 Main Ave. is Junction Creek, traditionally the southernmost border of Animas City. This is where Robert Dwyer homesteaded in 1872 before the Brunot Agreement was signed. The Brunot Agreement allowed Anglo settlers into what had previously been Ute territory. For more information on Mr. Dwyer, check out the Animas Museum's exhibit, "Law & Disorder."



Based on map by ANDY CHITWOOD, FEBRUARY, 1943; ANIMAS CITY, COLORADO

This map does not show all of the businesses and residences that were in Animas City.

2. Go North on Main Ave. to 31st Street. 3102 Main Ave. is the original site of the Joy Cabin on the east side of Main. The cabin is the oldest standing building in what is now Durango. You can visit it today at the Animas Museum. It is named for Charles Joy, a blacksmith in Animas City in 1880, who had once lived there.

3. Continue North on Main Ave. to 32nd Street. This area was downtown Animas City. Today's 32nd St. was originally called 2nd Street. Kephart's General Store, Doc Wallace's drug store and the first post office were on the west side of Main. Blacksmith shops, Dolph's Saloon and the Naegelin residence were on the east side between 31st and 32nd Streets. The sidewalks were once wooden and a streetcar (originally horse-drawn & later electric) ran up the middle of Main Avenue connecting Animas City to Durango.



4. Cross Main Ave. at 32nd Street to where City Market now stands. On this side of 32nd once stood Schwenk & Will's store, a saloon, and dance hall; Dan Culver's Trading Post; Schussler's Grocery Store and the Goodrich, Weightman & Wilcox Grocery Store with the Bank of San Juan occupying one corner of it.

5. Walk down to the bridge. Following the Meeker incident in September 1879, U.S. Troops were stationed in Animas City. Barracks were created near the bank of the river, south of the bridge.



6. Cross to the North side of 32nd Street, and walk back to Main Ave. You will pass what was Foyn & Boyle's Hardware Store and Hanson's Elk Horn Restaurant, behind which to the north was the jail (situated on an alley that no longer exists). Keep going past Valliant & Hunter's Saloon and the barber shop where Marshal Port Stockton shot the barber. Learn more about that story in the "Law & Disorder" exhibit in the Main Gallery of the Museum.