

After 1869 people left the Fort in Gunnison and some moved south to the Field. The Land owners' set up and agreed on the Rules and Regulations for the Government of the Field. Three men called the Field committee were appointed to make a plot, number the lots and issue certificates to the owners. New entries and transfers were recorded for the sum of \$.25.

Owners were required to make fences and keep them in good repair. Noxious weeds were to be destroyed. One such weed was blackseed.

This was the beginning of Centerfield as we know it today. It wasn't until 1871 with the beginnings of co-operative farming that the first families moved into the Field as Centerfield was called then. In the next few years, the Field grew considerably. The first three families to settle here were the Chris Sanders, Michael Nielsen and William Childs families.

When the United order was put in, in 1874, the large 1200 acre U.O. Farms No. I, II, and III, were located in the Field. In 1875 the land was appraised at \$4.00 - \$5.00 per acre. Axel Einerson, John Christensen and L. Lubin were the foremen of the U.O. farms. In Nov. of 1876, the men of the Field considered it too cold and dangerous for their children to walk the three miles into Gunnison for school and church (especially Sunday School). They asked no monetary reward from Gunnison, they just wanted to be allowed to form their own district as pertained to school. At first school was taught in private homes. Then in 1882, the first school and community hall was built just south of the present Town Hall. It was fashioned of logs and had a dirt roof. It was heated in the winter months by a cobblestone fireplace. The people of the Field were generally happy about their new "school house". There were those who didn't think this log cabin was good enough for them and continued to walk the three miles into Gunnison.

In the early 1800's more and more settlers came to the Field. Many new homes were built . Some were of adobe and some were of log. The last commercially owned and operated adobe hole, was east of the sugar factory and was owned by Thomas Nielson until 1904.

House logs and lumber were hauled from Twelve Mile Canyon. Usually families accompanied the men to the narrows for a full week of fun and work.

According to Hannah Thunnison, "A good deal of furniture was made for our own and other settlements". Bedsprings were made of rope. Mattress of straw ticks or featherbeds. Home spun blankets & quilts were made from worn clothing. The Mother of the home usually was responsible for all the family's clothing. She carded the wool to make her own thread and material. She colored fabrics using common berries and weeds, etc.

Field residents loved to have fun and dance. Especially at a home warming. This was done just after a house was built and before the new residents moved in. In the early 1800' s the people worked hard, but had all they needed in the way of a good living.

In 1885, Albert Tollstrup came to the Field to teach. He had 50 students. Some older than himself. Winfred Fjeldsted, Soren Anderson, Lizzie Jensen and George Peterson were a few. His pay was \$10.00 a qtr. usually paid in gold. For this he walked the two miles to teach in any weather. He was responsible to keep the school room clean and the fire made.

In 1886, people wanted to build a new school and church house (back part of old church). Money was scarce, so labor, hay and grain were donated & sold for materials needed. Chris Tollstrup and Gustav Nielsen cut and laid the stone.

Before it could be finished tragedy struck the Field in the form of an epidemic of diphtheria. Death visited every family sometimes 2 or 3 times. It was especially hard on the children here. A lot died.

The building was finished by January 18, 1889 when a picnic was organized to benefit the organ fund. The Centerfield Elementary that a lot of valley residents went to was built in 1941 and used for nearly 20 years when the children were then taken to Gunnison Elementary School. It burned down and was located where the Town shed is now. The present Town Hall was also used as a school and community center from the time it was built in 1908 and when the Elementary School was built behind it. On June 10, 1891, school was let out and the children walked to the

Rio Grande Western railroad tracks to watch the train make its first run through Centerfield. A siding called the "Grove" was put in early in the 1900's to help with the loading of farm produce.

In August of 1897, the front of the Fields Rock Church as almost finished (the old rock building south of the present Town Hall) It still stands with its distinctive mansard roof, found in no other Sanpete town except Centerfield. Andrew C. Fjeldsted as sustained was Bishop of the Centerfield ward. His counselors were Sylvester Whiting and Charles E. Embley.

Centerfield was called so because it was Located in the middle a fine field. It continued to prosper and grow. Following are some of its businesses and some of its services.

In 1898 Centerfield was granted a Post Office. It was in a private home for 7 years.

In 1909 The Gunnison Telephone was incorporated. Lines to Centerfield and Axtell were hung on Mt. States poles for a rental fee of 10 cents per pole per year.

High School basketball league games were played in the Centerfield Opera House in 1912. The Opera House burned down in October 5, 1927. It destroyed the barber shop and a confectionary and the pool hall. Brooksbanks Photography studio used to be located to the North of the Opera House. The Walter Christensen's stock company put on live plays at the Opera House. It had a curtain that they rolled up with ropes that had a beautiful forest scene hand painted on it. Centerfield City had an excellent basketball team that played in the Opera

House also. Later years it was used for roller skating. Dances were held during Christmas, Fourth of July, and any old time.

In 1904 or thereabouts, A. L. Fjeldsted bought a store on the East Side of the highway in Centerfield. He bought it from John Edwards. There the post office came to rest. It was north of the store with a photography shop to the south.

On the West side of the highway was a Butcher shop in the present China Gate Cafe. It was owned by Andreas Jensen and Adrian Larsen. In the middle part was a store owned by Oswald Beck. Where Kents Service is presently, was his house. Then he built a new house where Grant Mogle lives today. Right on the corner was a root beer stand. This rootbeer stand is now at Dean Andersons father's place.

North of the Opera House, where the upholstery shop is now, was a grocery store run by Henry Siminon.

Another store was located across the street south from Donna Roberts. Everything was sold here. Eggs were brought here for goods and scripts. All the old stores used their own script. James Beck had a store just south of the Old Rock Church. It was the trading post and is now gone. The Barlows bought it after James Beck died. They brought fruit in to sell. They also sold gas.

There was a store by Construction Services, South. Margaret Sorensens father Tassie owned the store. He was killed by a train in Salina. This was a relative of Norma Jean Funk.

There was a sawmill located just south 100 S, above 100 E. It was owned by Milton Jensen.

Centerfield received electricity in 1913 when Telluride came to town.

Centerfield's culinary pipeline from a Spring north of Mayfield was laid in 1914.

September 19, 1919 everyone assembled at the million dollar Sugar Factory for the Grand Opening. It was located South of Centerfield. In a 88 day campaign 43,307 tons of beets were processed. Wages were 40 cents an hour. The sugar factory was at one time controlled by William Wrigley, Jr. Millionaire gum manufacturer. He made extensive improvements and the railroad spur was officially known as Spearmint. Many benefits were realized from the sugar industry. Not just the money collected from farmers that grew sugar beets, but from the wages paid 200 men during a sugar campaign.

In 1919 Alfred L. Fjeldsted built a joint bank and theatre building on the East side of the highway in Centerfield. It is the present S & H. Heating building. Many stock company shows, and local plays, and silent movies were shown in the theatre. A.L. Fjeldsted was the head

cashier of the bank. After his death, the Bank was merged with the Gunnison Valley Bank in 1926.

As you can see, Centerfield has enjoyed a rich satisfying history. We love our small town and feel an great pride for it.