

MURRAY CITY MUSEUM

Land, Lead, and Leadership:
A Century of Progress



Welcome to the Murray City Museum!

Have you lived in Murray all your life? Or are you a newcomer? You may wonder:

- How did Murray City get its name?
- Why did people move here?
- How did the pioneers live when they first arrived?

We'll answer those questions and more on this virtual tour of the Murray City Museum.

AGRICULTURAL ERA

Land

Before the pioneers arrived, and before the Native Americans were here, the land was open and full of life. Go back far enough, and there may have been dinosaurs!



AGRICULTURAL ERA

Water

During the last ice age, the valley was covered with a huge lake – Lake Bonneville.



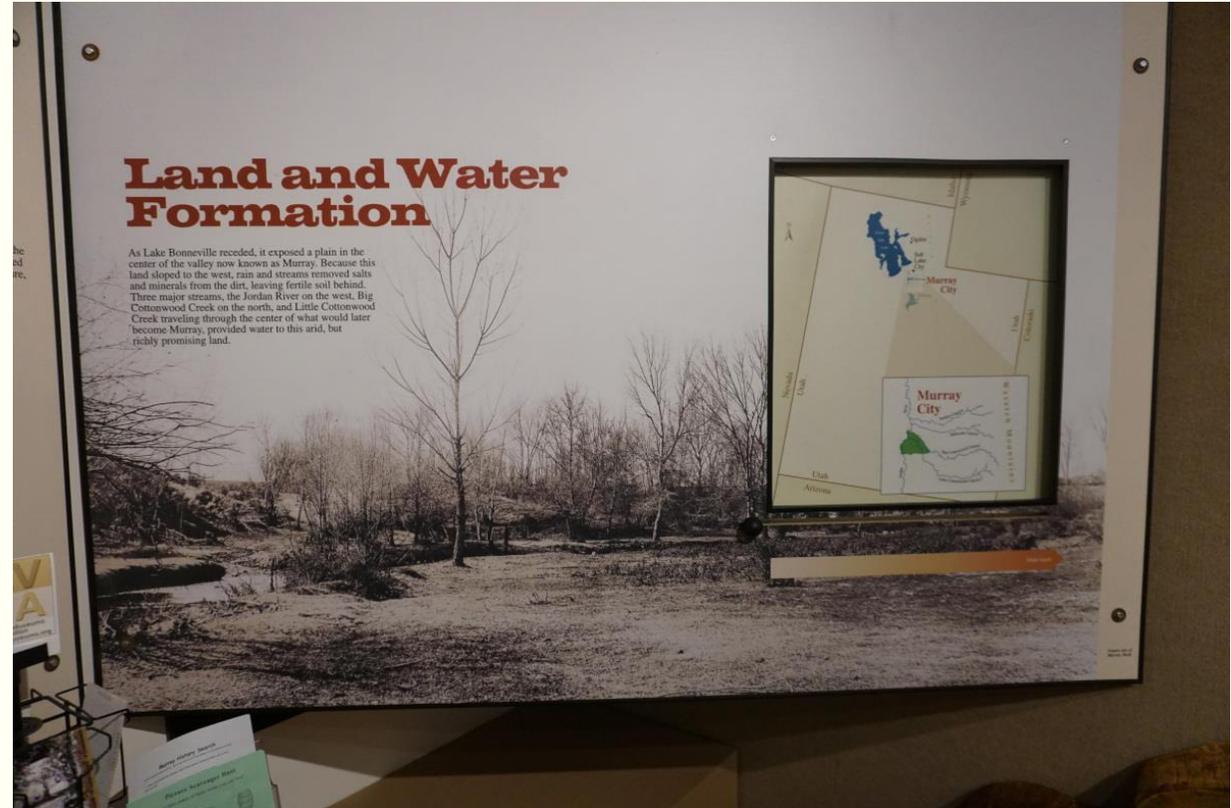
14,500 years ago, the lake drained away, leaving three rivers: the Jordan River, Big Cottonwood Creek, and Little Cottonwood Creek.



These three rivers brought water to this dry but rich land.

AGRICULTURAL ERA

In a central location and with three good sources of water, the Murray area was a great place to settle, and to grow and find food.



AGRICULTURAL ERA

Native Americans

Native Americans liked to camp here because of the three waterways and the abundant animal and plant life.

Murray Cemetery and Murray Park were once camping grounds for native tribes on their way to their summer grounds.



AGRICULTURAL ERA

Native Americans

Native tribes would camp and trade with one another – and with the pioneers, once they arrived in the valley.

They would trade furs, knives, weapons, and beads, for food and blankets.



AGRICULTURAL ERA

Native Americans

Brigham Young, the leader of the pioneers, told the pioneers to make friends with the Native Americans, and for the most part, they got along.

The area was about 10 miles from the fort in Salt Lake City, so they would hold rodeos and contests here.

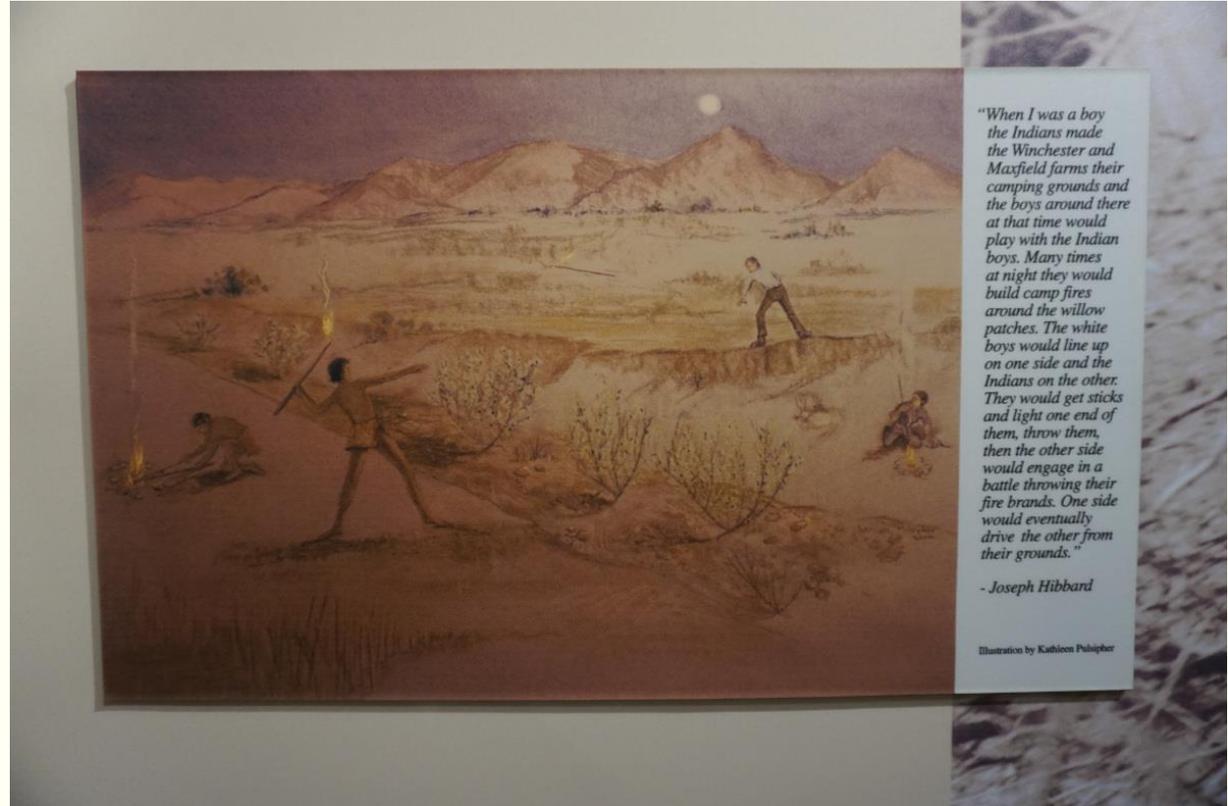


AGRICULTURAL ERA

Native Americans

The youths would play a game together. The pioneer boys would stand on one side of the river, and the Native American boys on the other. Then they would throw sticks at each other.

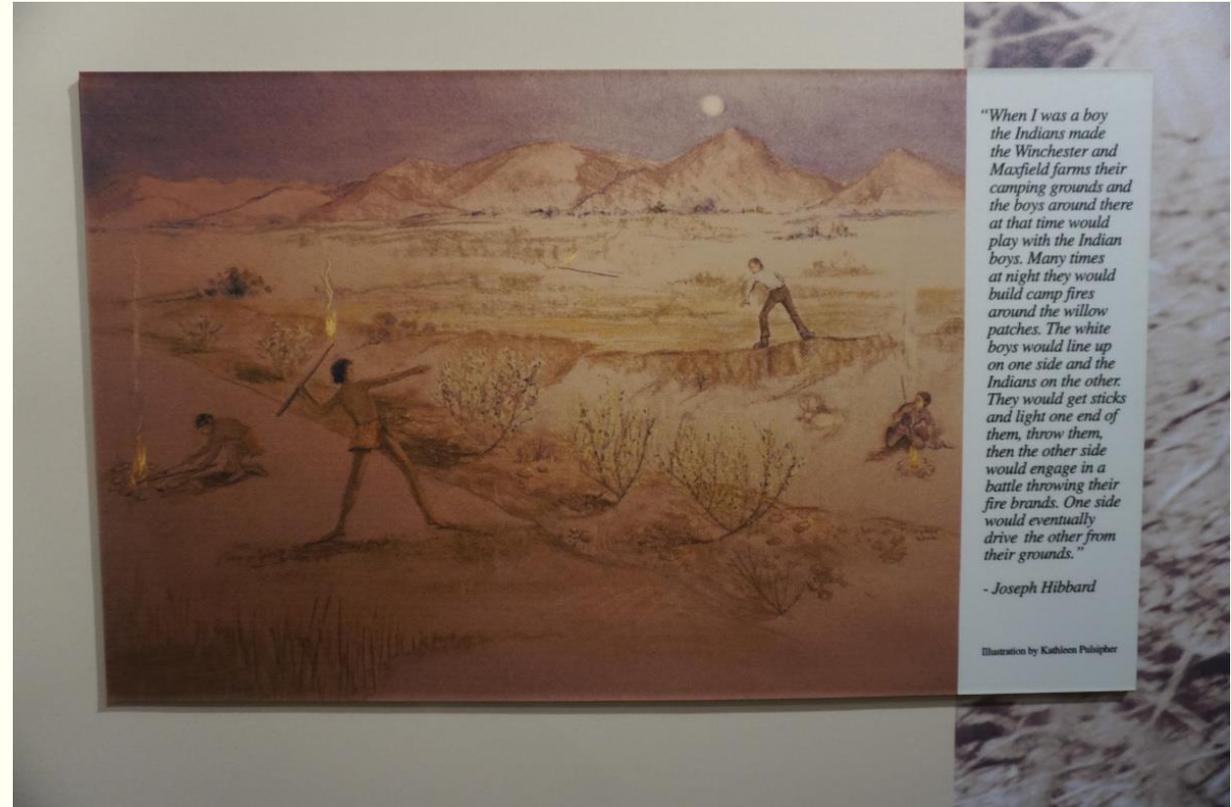
The sticks would get thicker, and as it got dark, they would light them on fire. Whichever side lasted the longest was the winner.



AGRICULTURAL ERA

“When I was a boy the Indians made the Winchester and Maxfield farms their camping grounds and the boys around there... would play with the Indian boys. Many times at night they would build camp fires around the willow patches. The white boys would line up on one side and the Indians on the other. They would get sticks and light one end of them, throw them, then the other side would engage in a battle throwing their fire brands. One side would eventually drive the other from their grounds.”

- Joseph Hibbard



“When I was a boy the Indians made the Winchester and Maxfield farms their camping grounds and the boys around there at that time would play with the Indian boys. Many times at night they would build camp fires around the willow patches. The white boys would line up on one side and the Indians on the other. They would get sticks and light one end of them, throw them, then the other side would engage in a battle throwing their fire brands. One side would eventually drive the other from their grounds.”

- Joseph Hibbard

Illustration by Kathleen Peisopher

AGRICULTURAL ERA

Pioneers

When the pioneers first came, there were no houses, buildings, or stores.

They only had what they brought with them from the East. Otherwise, they had to make everything themselves.



AGRICULTURAL ERA

Pioneers



They couldn't buy butter from the store; they would make it in a butter churn, like this one, by pouring cream in the top and churning it by turning the handle.

They would wash their own clothes by scrubbing them against a washboard like this one, and squeezing the water out through a ringer.



AGRICULTURAL ERA

Pioneers

The pioneers' first homes were dugouts – shelters dug into the sides of hills. They lived in the dugouts until they could bring timber from the canyons, and make clay into sun-dried adobe bricks to build houses.



AGRICULTURAL ERA

Pioneers

A man named Amasa Lyman guided the first settlers to the Murray area in 1848. Because these Mormon settlers were from the Mississippi area, they called themselves the Mississippi Ward – later changed to South Cottonwood.

These adobe bricks and wooden pegs were used to build the South Cottonwood Ward house in 1856 – the first church building in Murray.



AGRICULTURAL ERA

Pioneers

Pioneer children helped with the chores – churning butter, husking corn, helping plant – but they also played. They (or their families) made their own toys.

They made dolls from corn husks, marbles from clay, and other toys from carved wood.



AGRICULTURAL ERA

Water Access

Water was very important to the pioneers coming into the valley!

- To water their crops
- To drink
- Later, for electricity



AGRICULTURAL ERA

Water Access

As the pioneers settled in the Murray area, they made canals from the Big and Little Cottonwood creeks, with special gates to allow water to flow to their farms.

Farmers were assigned certain days and times for water, and their children would go out to open the gate when it was their turn.



AGRICULTURAL ERA

Farming

The pioneers who first arrived had to farm to grow the food they needed to eat. They couldn't buy food at the store, because there were no stores yet.

The water they found in the Murray area helped them grow food for themselves and for their farm animals to eat.



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AGRICULTURAL ERA

Farming

Soon farmers were able to grow large enough crops to sell them to others. This is called cash-crop farming.

The most important cash crops in Murray were dairy products, sugar beets, and garden crops like vegetables and other foods found in family gardens.



AGRICULTURAL ERA

Farming

Soon farmers were able to grow large enough crops to sell them to others. This is called cash-crop farming.

“Truck and garden farms” would take produce in wagons to Salt Lake to sell at large markets – like this one, with produce from the Tadehara Farm in Murray.



AGRICULTURAL ERA

Farming

The Tadeharas came to Murray from Japan, and used these tools on their beet farm.



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AGRICULTURAL ERA

Farming

The Erekson family had a large dairy farm, and if your grandparents lived in Murray, they probably bought their milk from the Erekson dairy.

The Ereksos ran a store, and wrote their sales down in a large book. They would reuse flour sacks by using the cloth from them to sew underclothes for the girls.



AGRICULTURAL ERA

Farming

The Ereksons would make their own clothes, like this baby gown and wedding dress.



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AGRICULTURAL ERA

Farming

Transporting crops was first done with horses and wagons. Horses were also used to deliver mail.

The Pony Express was an early mail system. Young men used the fastest horses they had to carry mail through hostile territory and all kinds of weather to bring mail west. Mail delivery took months.

Murray had a Pony Express station near where Fashion Place Mall is now.



AGRICULTURAL ERA

Farming

In 1869 the railroad came to Utah. It arrived in Murray in 1871. Before trains were built, it took as long as 6 months to travel between Utah and the east coast. With railroads, it only took 2 or 3 days.

This began a new era for Murray and paved the way for the smelters.



SMELTER ERA

Early Smelters

In the next 80 years after the railroad came to Murray, the city would be home to at least 8 different smelters.

The first smelter workers were local farmers, railroad workers, and miners from the Eastern US. Later, workers came from the British Isles, Scandinavia, and northern Europe.



SMELTER ERA

Early Smelters

In the smelters, workers would turn rocks like these into minerals that could be used in a lot of other ways.



SMELTER ERA

Early Smelters

In the 1860s, Christian Berger came to Utah from Switzerland, and brought this musket with him.



Christian Berger with his wife and daughter



SMELTER ERA

Early Businesses and Industry

As men arrived to work in the smelters, the community grew and the residents needed all kinds of services. They had brickyards and flour mills, barbers and shoemakers, watchmakers, and tailors. Tailors would sew clothes using treadle sewing machines, powered by foot.



SMELTER ERA

Ethnic Diversity

People came from all over the world to work in the smelters. Many men came by themselves and saved their money to pay for their families to follow them.

Murray's population changed as the smelter, mining, and railroad companies brought workers from Greece, Italy, eastern Europe, and Japan. Each new immigrant group brought their language, food, and customs with them.



SMELTER ERA

Ethnic Diversity

The musical instrument in this picture is from Greece, and is called a Bozouki. The Greek family that brought it to Murray would play it on holidays and other special occasions.

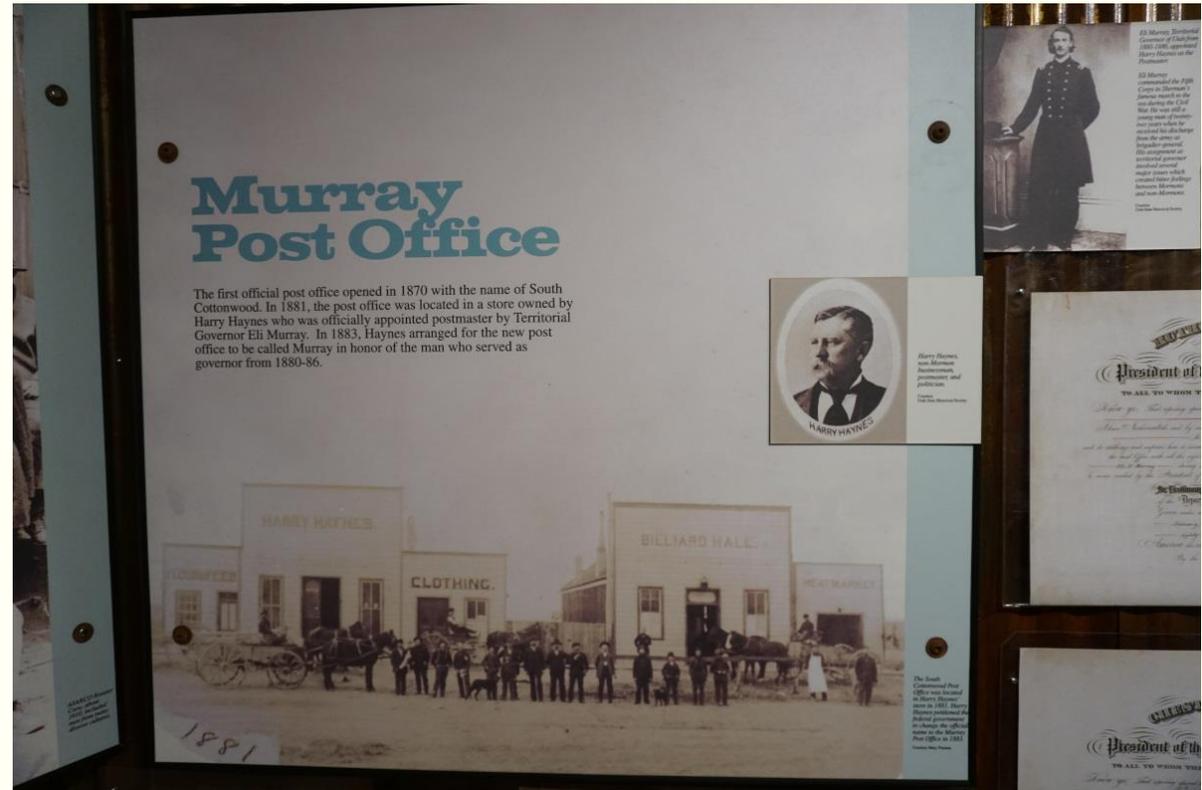


SMELTER ERA

Murray Post Office

Most post offices are named after their communities, but Murray was named after our post office.

The post office was important to the many people working in the smelters. Many of them had family living in other parts of the world.



SMELTER ERA

Murray Post Office

This area was called South Cottonwood by some, and Little Cottonwood by others. Harry Haynes, who ran the post office from his store in the 1880s, asked the US Government to give his post office a permanent name, and suggested two Civil War military leaders: George Custer and Eli Murray. They chose Murray.



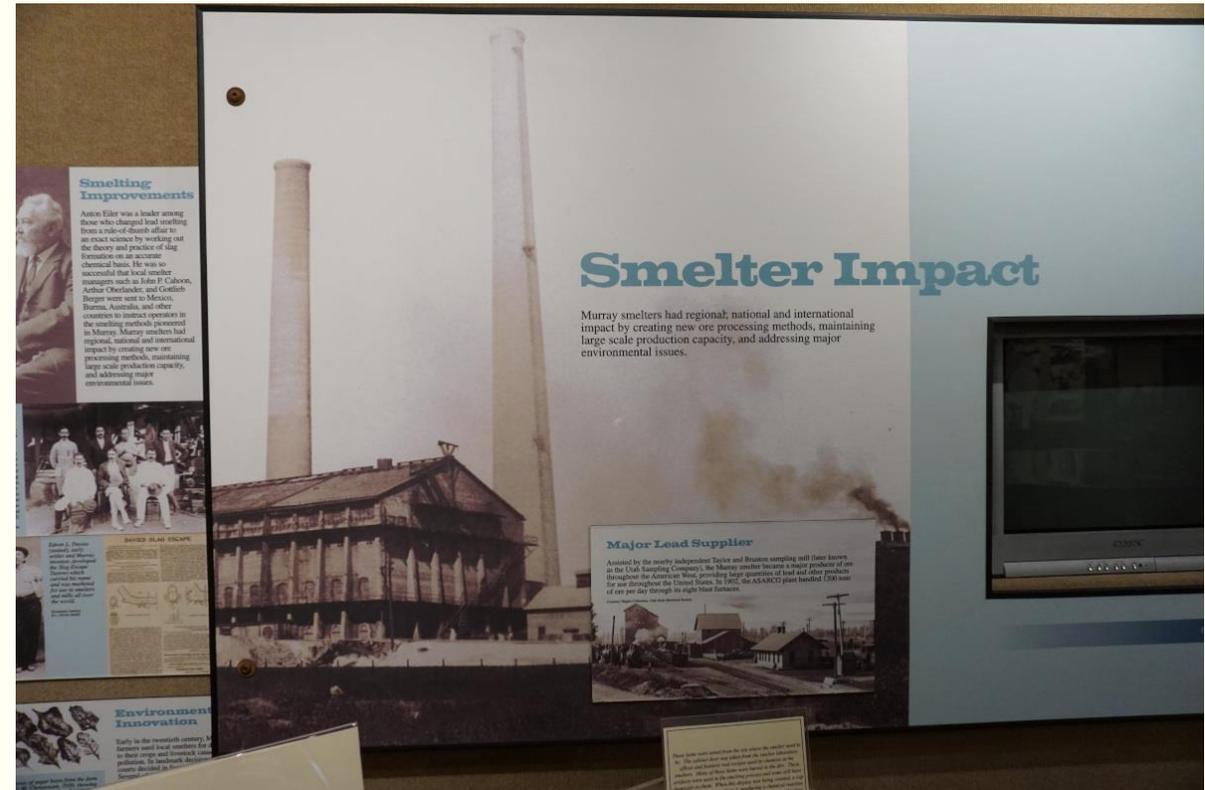
SMELTER ERA

Smelters

Smelters are an important part of mining.

Miners look for gold, silver, iron, copper and other minerals found in rocks. Smelters get the minerals out of the rocks.

Miners would dig ore out of the mountains, and would send them on railroads to the smelter, where workers would bake the ore in hot furnaces to get the gold, silver, and other valuable things out.



SMELTER ERA

Smelters

After getting the ore out, everything was left over would cool into black rock called slag.

This “slag button” is slag that cooled into the bottom of a slag cart.



SMELTER ERA

Smelters

Murray had 8 smelters at one time. The smelters made a lot of black smoke that would kill the farmers' gardens and cows and sheep.

If it was killing those, it was certainly not good for people to breathe. The farmers complained, and the smelters shut down, one by one.



Highland Boy Smelter, 1880s

SMELTER ERA

ASARCO

In 1902, a new smelter opened: the American Smelting & Refining Company. It became one of the most modern smelting facilities in the world.

Scientists thought that if they built a smokestack tall enough, the pollution would be carried high enough in the air not to hurt things on the ground. So that's what ASARCO did.



SMELTER ERA

ASARCO

The smokestacks at the ASARCO smelter were built in 1917. One smokestack was 455 feet high, and the other was 295 feet. The largest one weighed 12.3 million pounds.



SMELTER ERA

ASARCO

ASARCO produced lead, silver, and arsenic. The Highland Boy Smelter produced copper.

Copper was used for electrical wiring and pennies. Silver was used for silverware, photographic film, jewelry, and coins. Lead was used in house paint, pipes, and electrical wire insulation.

Arsenic was left over after smelting was done. It was used in rodent and bug poison and as a weed killer.



SMELTER ERA

ASARCO

The ASARCO smelter stood where the big Intermountain Health Care hospital is now. The smokestacks were brought down in August 2000 so the hospital could be built there.

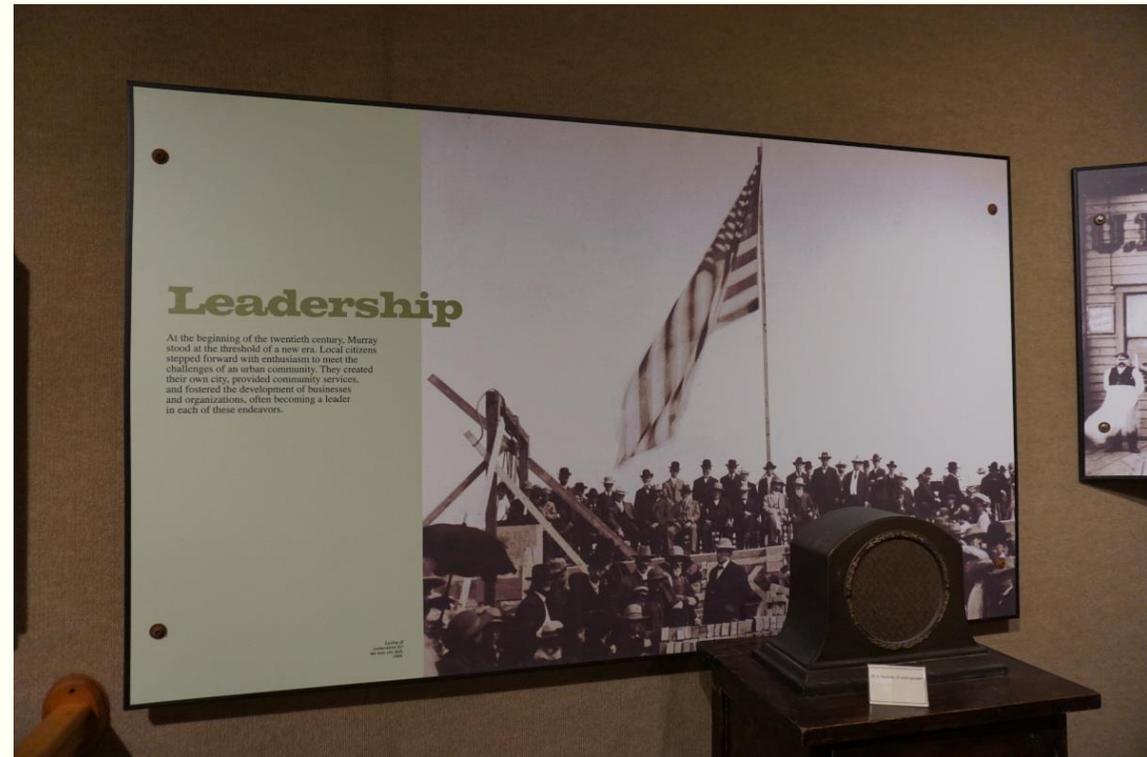


LEADERSHIP

City Incorporation

With all the new smelter workers coming in, Murray started to look like a town, with many businesses, and at one point over 40 saloons.

That caused a problem. People would go to the saloons and fights broke out and windows got broken and men were getting in trouble... but Murray didn't have any law enforcement to stop this from happening.



LEADERSHIP

City Incorporation

One night in 1897, a group of workers got drunk, robbed a number of businesses, and started several fires.

This upset a lot of people. With the support of the newspaper editor for *The American Eagle*, a group of people in Murray began to campaign for incorporation as a city.

They wanted local control of laws and law enforcement.



LEADERSHIP

City Incorporation

The vote was finally held in November of 1902, and Murray officially became a city on January 3, 1903.

Our first mayor's name was C. L. Miller. Below is his hat and cane.



LEADERSHIP

Businesses

After the election, Murray City began to grow, with many kinds of businesses.

Mercantile stores carried many kinds of household goods. Furniture and appliance stores became popular as new products were invented for the home – like the refrigerator, washing machine, and television.



LEADERSHIP

Medical Services

Residents were glad when doctors and hospitals came to Murray.

In early days, doctors and midwives went to people's homes to help sick people or deliver babies. Many people died, including newborn babies and sometimes their mothers.



LEADERSHIP

Medical Services

One doctor, Dr. Sheranian, built an emergency hospital, for people to go to when they were very sick.



A woman named Amanda Bagley encouraged the community to turn a home into a hospital for mothers giving birth to babies. It was called the Cottonwood Maternity Hospital.



LEADERSHIP

Murray Public Services

Murray has its own services, like schools, police, fire, electricity, water, cemetery, and parks.

Within the first 20 years of being a city, the people decided they wanted to take care of themselves. This is very unusual, and few cities in Utah (or even the United States!) do this.



LEADERSHIP

Murray Fire and Police

In the first election, the people elected a City Marshall to enforce the laws and protect people.

The city did not have a paid fire chief. Murray's fire department was entirely volunteer for many years. They usually worked near the fire station, and when the siren sounded, they would run to the station.



LEADERSHIP

Murray School District

The Murray School District was established in 1905. At first, they only had school until 8th grade, but they added a high school in 1914, adding one new grade each year until they had 12.



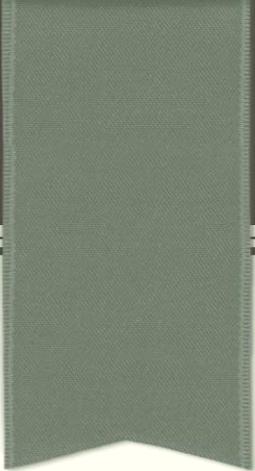
LEADERSHIP

Water and Power

Murray was the first place in the Salt Lake Valley to use electricity for commercial purposes. In 1880, the Horn Smelter installed two arc light systems.

By 1897, a power company called the Progress Company provided electrical services to Murray and other areas. In 1905, Murray City gave this company permission to supply the town with drinking water.





THANK YOU FOR VISITING!

We hope you can come visit us with your families soon!

Murray City Museum
5025 South State Street
Murray City, UT 84107

