



Golden Landmarks Association
Preserving Our Past, Protecting Our Future

Living Landmark Award 2008

❁ **Chip Parfet** ❁

Chip Parfet is a fourth generation resident of Golden. His great grandfather came to Golden in 1877 to work in the coal mines. He recognized the potential of the clay exposed along the hogback for its low iron content and good vitrification properties. Four generations of the Parfet family have now been involved in mining clay along the hogback west of Golden.

An example of the roll the Parfet family has played in Golden is illustrated by the story of the creation of Parfet Park at 10th and Washington Avenue. In 1928 great-grandfather Parfet and some friends purchased the land to the northeast of the Washington Avenue bridge that had become a trash dump. They hired William Williams, (Cement Bill) to pour the concrete area and commissioned Gerald Cassidy to do the sculptures that still grace the park.

William George "Chip" Parfet was born in 1946 in Golden. He graduated from the new Golden High School at 24th and Jackson St. in 1964. His father had graduated from the newly built high school at 10th and Washington in 1936 and his grandfather from the original Golden high school in 1908. He graduated from Colorado University in 1969 where he had been voted "Outstanding Senior Engineer" during his final year. He received his M.S. degree in Architectural Engineering from the University of Illinois in 1970. After 3 years of interning, Chip became a Registered Professional Engineer, and turned to his true love as a mining engineer sinking shafts for mines near Grants, New Mexico. He returned to Golden to help operate the Parfet Clay Mines with his father in 1978. The clay mines prospered through the years because the Denver City government had passed an ordinance severely restricting the use of wood in home construction because of the fear of catastrophic fires similar to those that had occurred in Chicago and San Francisco earlier. That was a great boon to Denver Brick and Pipe and secondarily to the Parfet Clay Mines.

He is married to Jean Elaine. They have two sons, Daniel, age 25, and Michael, age 23. He has served as a bank director of the Colorado National Bank, chairman of the Golden City Planning commission, is an Honorable Colorado School of Mines Alumni where he currently serves on the Board of Technology Transfer.

The behind the scenes activities of the Parfet family continues:

- They donated the Parfet Clay Pits property to the city to be used for the Fossil Trace Golf course.
- They donated the land on which the Canyon Point Senior Housing was built on 8th Street.

Chip and the Parfet Family are truly Living Landmarks of Golden!