

Tara Templeman 0:01

My name is Tara Templeman, I'm the museum supervisor for the Broomfield Depot Museum. Today is October 5 2018. And I'm here with Abby Yellman, who is the Director of Library Services and Cultural Affairs. Right. Alright. We'll just jump in. When did you move to Broomfield and why?

Abby Yellman 0:20

So ironically, we moved to Broomfield almost exactly two years to the day ago. We came in October of 2016. Just at its very core, I moved here for the job. I was really excited. I had seen the job and interviewed and we love Colorado. I had a grandma that lived in Loveland for years. So when we saw the job opening, we went after it because we were ready to live in Colorado.

Tara Templeman 0:45

And when you moved here who came with you?

Abby Yellman 0:47

So my husband, Seth came with me as well as our two girls, Laura and Maddie. And since then it has also drawn my parents to Colorado so my, my mom, Roxy and my dad Don have also moved to Colorado in the last probably about two three months. So we apparently bring the whole family with us.

Tara Templeman 1:05

That's great. What's your best memory of Broomfield?

Abby Yellman 1:09

So my best memory of Broomfield so far ironically, a lot of memories since I've lived here, we've hiked we've done all kinds of things on the trails. The job obviously I love the job. So there's a lot of memories with the people and events we've done. But I would, I would ironically say my biggest memory of Broomfield is before I lived here. We used to come over and shop and you know, we didn't know anything about where we were. And we didn't realize that the mall we constantly came to visit was Flatirons Mall. And which ironically now of course I know as part of Broomfield but so it's just ironic. We had a little bit of Broomfield connection before we had even really decided or knew about Broomfield in the job. We were visiting and didn't even know it. Yeah,

Tara Templeman 1:52

that's really cool. Do you remember any significant people or events? So you work with a lot of people in Broomfield but you've just been here the two years?

Abby Yellman 2:03

Yeah, I mean, obviously my my memory of significant events and people is a little bit small just because I don't have a lot of history in Broomfield. However, it's been interesting, like being able to meet Paul Derda, who obviously is the Paul Derda Rec Center is named after him and his

wife, Martha Derda was on our library board, was also part of our council. So meaning some of those names that were like kind of historic, really important, kind of those pioneers for Broomfield, it's been interesting to meet some of those folks and put faces with names. But as far as like, really remembering a significant event, I just haven't had that experience yet. So hopefully we'll build those as we're here longer. And we'll build our own significant events.

Tara Templeman 2:46

But yeah, I think you're already buildings

Abby Yellman 2:49

are trying fine. Yeah. And we, we've done some things that we hope will have a lot of impact. I mean, obviously, that's why we work here and why we do what we do. We want to have positive impact on our community. So eliminating fines at the library was a big first step. But also there's going to be a lot of things coming for Broomfield as a whole. And we're hoping we can be part of that as a city and county as other departments drive initiatives as well.

Tara Templeman 3:14

Absolutely. Describe the neighborhood you live in.

Abby Yellman 3:18

Yeah, so since we moved to Broomfield, we actually have lived in two different neighborhoods. When we first moved here, as I'm sure people who live here can attest, housing was kind of a sticker shock for us. We had lived in Missouri and Nebraska and just didn't experience that. So when we got here, we're like, okay, we need some time to really look and make sure we know where we want to live. And obviously with children, you want to look at schools and different things. So we lived in Interlocken in an apartment for just about a year, not quite a year. So it was interesting to live over there. You know, definitely more the business side of Broomfield. A lot of the big companies are over there, but also the mall. So you see a lot of visitors and a lot of business people throughout the day. We loved it over there, though, because it was so open and there's a lot of like sidewalks and you could walk everywhere and it wasn't as congested, especially on the weekend, at least where our apartment was because a lot of people were business people so they were only there during the week. So the neighborhood we live in now we actually went from the clear southwest side of Broomfield to the clear northeast side of Broomfield and moved up to anthem Highlands and again love that the trails and the openness up there. The best part about Broomfield I think and how they've developed it is that neighborhoods feel like neighborhoods. I don't care what neighborhood you're in in Broomfield. There's grass and there's people and there's housing and it's doesn't feel like everything else is right on top of you like shopping and things. You can go there definitely. But it feels like a neighborhood where you can actually let your kids go to the park and you can go walk your dog and things like that and get to know your neighbors. So we were definitely like the move to anthem, but so far we've loved both places we've lived here.

Tara Templeman 5:01

Yeah, a lot of people comment on Broomfield still having a small town feel even though we're certainly not a small town anymore

Abby Yellman 5:07

It does. And it's weird because you see so much traffic and so many people throughout the week or throughout the day. And it does really have that hometown feel, though, like you run into people that you know, and it is just a really different feeling here because I've never lived in a place and I lived in Kansas City. I've lived in small towns Scottsbluff, Nebraska, and you just really get that hometown vibe and Broomfield in a place that's got almost 70,000 in population. That's it's just mind blowing. Like, I just can't believe that there's that tight knit of a community here and such a vastly growing and growingly diverse community with new residents like me moving in and kind of be like, hey, we want to get to know your community that you guys have lived in for your entire life. So it is a definitely a different vibe.

Tara Templeman 5:58

So you didn't go to school here, but your kids do, Have any comments to make about their experience.

Abby Yellman 6:04

Sure. So we have loved the schools here. What's interesting about Broomfield as you know is we have multiple school districts within Broomfield. So the girls were very blessed to be part of Emerald Elementary. My youngest one was there a little bit longer than my oldest because she went to middle school at Broomfield heights as well. But Emerald Elementary and principal Samara Williams, they, you talk about community, they are community, it's a very diverse community, kids from all different backgrounds and experiences families that are either primarily English speaking or primarily Spanish speaking, it's just kind of like the little melting pot like they're what the world should be. And so it was a really cool experience to have my girls there. And now that we when we moved up north, and we stayed in emerald and Broomfield heights for a year, we've now since the new school Thunder Vista has opened, we've actually put our girls there, but just for sanity for mom to drop them off in one place. So it's a little selfish I'll own that, but it's really been cool, because we still feel like we keep that connection with some of the kids that Maddie went to school with at emerald, we see Samara, definitely, as part of my job, I see Samara. And we tried to do programming with emerald quite a bit. So I have to say BVSD. And my experience with those schools was fantastic. And our experience with Adams 12 has been really good. So it's kind of awesome that parents have such great choice of schools in Broomfield of where they can send their kids. And the kids have really loved it. I mean, I think the the diversity part, obviously for us is really important. And we we love that part of the schools. So it's been nice for the kids to get to know kids of different backgrounds. And I laughed because my middle schooler now is taking Spanish. And she didn't know as much Spanish but Maddie going to emerald. She actually has helped her with some of the basic beginning stuff because some of the kids had taught her Spanish just in passing when she was at Emerald. So it's been a really neat experience. And I just have nothing but great things to say about the schools.

Tara Templeman 8:04

Awesome. What job or jobs have you had in Broomfield or the surrounding area.

Abby Yellman 8:11

So thankfully, I've only had to have this one. And they apparently are happy with me. So I'm really excited about that. So as the Director of Library and Cultural Affairs, it's an awesome job, because you get to experience all kinds of different things. And as you know, I've joked with you, I knew nothing about museums, I mean, obviously I was history major, I got the importance of it, I always have respected it and supported it. But to actually know what goes on behind the scenes in a museum. Unless you work there, you really have no respect or understanding of how, how important the preservation is. So the cool thing about my job is I get to experience everything on the library side, which is where probably my strongest background is, but now getting to experience what the arts can do for a community, what history does for community through the museum's both the depot and the vets. And then now getting to experience what CSU can offer as part of the extension program. It's just a really cool job and like, I don't want to get people excited toward them wanting to come take my job. But it really is one of the best jobs I think I've ever had in my 20 plus years of professional life. I'm really excited about the potential of it. And the cool part having such a strong library background is this job is different. You know, I've worked in municipal libraries. I worked in a system library in Kansas City. I've worked in a school library, combined school and public library. This job has allowed us to really branch out beyond so our core service of what we do every day is important but we're actually getting the experience what's important to Health and Human Services and Recreation and all these different departments, which provides a more well rounded experience for our community members. So I think that's the juice of this job. That's what gets me excited every day to come here. So yeah, like I just can't say enough about it. And if you know I ever hit the lottery someday? I'm going to build another library and make sure the museum's taken care of. But I would encourage anybody that has an interest in really having impact on the community to go after this job because it has just been truly the best experience of my life.

Tara Templeman 10:15

Wow. What do or have you done for entertainment in Broomfield or the surrounding area?

Abby Yellman 10:24

So selfishly, I have to plug first, of course, the programs that we do, I mean, I think people don't realize like the Library, Cultural Affairs, the Museum. We're offering programming all the time. Most of all of it is free, or at least super affordable. I mean, I think the highest ticket price for Cultural Affairs creative season this year is like 20 bucks or \$25. Everything else is around 10. So we do a lot of that, like, we'll bring our family and we'll go to like the Goonies whenever they showed at the Audi, we're going to Cashed Out coming up. We've been to different events at the museum. We've done tours other museum, Broomfield Days, obviously. I mean, truly, I think Broomfield does a great job of engaging their community, I think there would be a little room for improvement there. So like, we do like to go down into Denver and go to Boulder and go to different things like the zoo and the Denver Nature and Science Museum, things like that. But I think Broomfield has definite potential with what development could possibly come in the north.

And if we can bring the butterfly Butterfly Pavilion and keep developing a little bit up there to make this the location and the destination for people to where we don't have to drive out of town so much. I definitely would like to see that on the art side as well. So yeah, I mean, I think there's a lot of cool things flatirons mall, we go hang out there. We go to the movies, obviously. So there's a lot of great things to do in Broomfield. We're not as cool as we used to be. So as far as like the restaurant bar scene, I can't speak to that a lot. But I know Arista is doing a lot with foodie type things where they're bringing in different kinds of restaurants to kind of entice people to come to Broomfield to engage with those kinds of restaurants. So it's been really good. I mean, really, you can't get bored here at all.

Tara Templeman 12:08

That's definitely true. I don't think having kids is pretty good excuse not to be so involved in the bar scene

Abby Yellman 12:13

Yes. Yes, it is an excuse. It also gives me an out whenever I try to act like I'm not cool for another reason. It's really because I'm just not. But I just say oh, you know, I've got kids. So that helps me a little bit.

Tara Templeman 12:27

What groups or organizations have you participated in?

Abby Yellman 12:31

Wow. So you know, that's the one thing I'd like to challenge myself a little bit on. In my previous life when I was in Scottsbluff, small town, the job was very different. I didn't have as many divisions underneath me. So I definitely was more involved those involved in Kiwanis. So I was involved in Lions Club, I was involved in Next Young Professionals. So a lot of community organizations here, I'm involved more through my job. So the job is pretty demanding. And and I say that lovingly. But there's times when I'm like, Okay, I think I still have children. And I haven't seen them this week. And luckily, I got a lot of family support. But that has prevented me a little bit from getting personally involved in like getting on some boards. I'd actually like to serve on a board for either Precious Child, FISH, you know, something that has really dynamic impact on the community. And there's others the Broomfield Community Foundation. But yeah, through my job, we're doing that right now. So obviously, we share space with FISH at 6 Garden Center. We do a lot with them and help them with donations when they need them for the food pantry. We help Precious Child. We work a lot with different organizations, arts organizations, as well. But I'd like to get myself a little bit challenged to find at least one thing that I could do on my own time, or I can have a little impact outside of my job as well.

Tara Templeman 13:49

I think you do have a huge impact within your job. And you're great at making collaborative opportunities with other organizations. So I think you have a pretty big impact now

Abby Yellman 13:58

Oh, good. I'm glad I you know, you just always feel like you could do more. But there's that point to where you're like, Okay, life has to have some balance. So it's that struggle, where you just when you're driven by really trying to make a change and have positive impact on people, you want to be involved. But you also then realize, hey, I'm one person, I can't do everything. But I but I hope too, that we can help. So maybe through the job or through different community conversations or even conversations with neighbors. Maybe my impact is that I motivate others to get involved. So I'm always looking for ways to share things like that, like when foods looking or FISH is looking for food, things like that, that we put that out through our neighborhoods, so people feel a little bit inspired to get involved as well. Obviously, as a community for all involved, the community is better. So maybe that's my mission right now until I can actually find that time to get involved myself on a personal side.

Tara Templeman 14:54

How has Broomfield changed since you moved here? I know it's only been two years but Broomfield is changing pretty rapidly

Abby Yellman 15:00

Yeah, I mean, the population obviously continues to grow. So just the influx of people Arista has definitely built out a little bit more over on the that'd be the southwest side of Broomfield. We're seeing definitely more development as far as companies, big companies moving in. Almost from my front door. I can look through and see JP Morgan Chase going up in the north part of Broomfield, I know that IKEA is potentially moving to Broomfield. So just even in the last two years, the amount of business and economic development that's happened. There's been a lot of business coming in. I think what is awesome is the changes that are on the horizon, though. So the idea of having that North development and Baseline up in the northeast part of Broomfield but also the Civic Center to have that Civic Center kind of right in the heart of Broomfield and to have that connector place. Obviously, for our department selfishly, that would be amazing because we really believe that literacy, arts, sciences, we can really, and history, obviously we can really engage folks. So having that built up around us or the traffic intensifies and we see more people that would be really selfishly great for us. But I think it's also great for Broomfield, I think they need a little bit of an identity like a downtown area. Because it's true. I think it's the first town I've ever lived in. And I moved a lot as an adult but also a lot as a child. So first town where there's not like a main downtown street of how it kind of built up. Broomfield built out a little differently. So I think it's gonna be interesting to see what's coming in the future and how the community drives what they want from that in Broomfield.

Tara Templeman 16:40

Definitely I agree with that it'd be cool to have a downtown area in Broomfield.

Abby Yellman 16:44

Just a little identity. I think it'd be good. Yes.

Tara Templeman 16:48

How do you hope Broomfield will change in the future? And you kind of address that already?

Abby Yellman 16:52

Yeah, I mean, I think the biggest thing is, you know, I struggled too as a newbie, even I know that some that have lived here for years really struggle with the vastness of how Broomfield has grown. And not because they don't want new people here. They don't want diversity here. But I just think it's just wow, it can feel overwhelming. My hope is though, that we figure out how to address that to where all residents feel like that growth is a positive thing, and to where we can address things like traffic and housing and different things like that. So my hope for Broomfield is that they stay on the trajectory they're on, and that they remain really community focused. I think that's honestly that's the most impressive thing I've seen since I've been here. I've worked for another city government I've seen obviously, as a resident, how city governments work and Broomfield as a city county really does put the time and effort into what their community has to say, what feedback they give, but also what they want. So it's not really like us coming in in our roles, right and driving what should happen. We want to hear from our residents and what they think needs to happen. And then we take our expertise, and obviously we're all experts in our fields. But we take that and try to find that common ground of what then is the best thing not only for our professions, but also for the community as well. So I'm really excited about that. I think Broomfield has a real potential to keep all their folks involved. And so I think it'll be nothing but good things as we continue to grow. And of course, my personal hope for Broomfield is that it will continue to model community involvement because I've got two children, two girls, especially that I would like to see not always caught up in the trendy and you know what's good for them, but really to teach teach my kids resilience. And what's important is that everybody around you has opportunity. And if you can impact that and help somebody to find what their passion or find that opportunity that they've been looking for. That's what I want for my children. So I'm hoping Broomfield will continue to model that for the kids that are growing up here.

Tara Templeman 18:57

Alright, so last thing, is there anything I haven't asked you about that you would like to tell me about Broomfield or your experience here?

Abby Yellman 19:04

Yeah, so I can't really think of anything beyond that. I'll just say Broomfield been very welcoming, you know, as a person. So 38 years, I think I've moved, oh my gosh, I can't even count my dad moved us around a lot for his job as well. So it's like every move I ever made was either my dad's job or my own aspirations and career aspirations. But some communities are really welcoming when you move in, and others are like, Ooh, you're new. We don't know what to do with that. So Broomfield has really been welcoming of my family, my husband and my children, and now my parents, so I just, I don't know, I just can't say enough about that feeling. And that it's nice to be the new person on the block and still be valued and respected as part of the community. That's meant a lot to me in the last two years. So I hope to pay that forward and continue to give back and help Broomfield keep on the trajectory that's amazing that they're on so yeah,

Tara Templeman 20:00

Well thanks for doing the interview such wonderful things about Broomfield

Abby Yellman 20:04

yeah thank you I appreciate it

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