



**GEORGE MORRISON, SR.**

*Businessman & Politician*

*George Morrison, a stonemason, immigrated to the Mount Vernon area in 1859 and became a United States citizen on May 22, 1862. He helped found the town of Mt. Vernon and built the Mt. Vernon House, seat of the territorial government under Robert Steele. He later moved south to Bear Creek, where he founded the Morrison Lime and Town Co. In 1874 he platted the town that became known as Morrison, and with Governor John Evans, was instrumental in bringing the Denver, South Park, and Pacific Railroad to Morrison.*

*As a quarryman, Morrison developed the building stone and other industrial stone (lime, gypsum) of the Morrison, Mt. Vernon area, bringing fame to the region for its high-quality dimension stone. Two of the three stone buildings he built in Morrison, as well as the Mt. Vernon House are still standing and are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The original Evergreen Hotel served as the first home of Sacred Heart College (now Regis University), and later as the Mt. Morrison Casino. The Morrison Schoolhouse served the town's educational needs from its construction in 1875 until 1955, and now serves as a private residence. The Cliff House, built as the Morrison family home in 1873, provides guest lodging. Stone for these structures was quarried in his "red sandstone quarry" at the end of the Dakota Hogback near Morrison. Building stone was also shipped to Denver where it comprises parts of the Brown Palace Hotel, Union Station, and many of Denver's early day mansions.*

*Mt. Morrison, behind Red Rocks Park, is also named after George Morrison. In the late 1800's an important regional geologic layer of Late Jurassic age, the Morrison Formation, was also named after the small town of Morrison, and is today famous as the first discovery site of three 150-million-year-old dinosaurs; Apatosaurus, Diplodocus, and the Colorado state fossil, Stegosaurus. This discovery brought world recognition to the Morrison area, and is still celebrated today at the nearby Dinosaur Ridge and the Morrison Natural History Museum.*

*George Morrison was elected to the Jefferson County Hall of Fame in 2003.*