

Way We Were

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FEED YOURSELF!

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### FEED YOURSELF!

*“A garden should not be considered as a piece of wild nature, nor plants regarded as architectural ornaments, for one must not do violence to the other. Above all must there be harmony. Otherwise the builder has labored in vain, for he has not made a picture that artists care to reproduce.”*

*Park Record August 24, 1917*

It’s almost that time of the year already! With Spring fast approaching, many of you may be considering a plot with the Park City Community Garden, or even getting your own gardens ready for planting, as they always have in Park City. Planning your garden plots and deciding what you shall plant can be a most rewarding activity, one that has been an important part in the history of Park City.

With the decline of mining and the Park City economy, as well as the national economy, it became essential for families to find other ways to provide nourishment for themselves. With even the smallest garden plot families could generate enough fruits and vegetables not only to feed their family through the growing season but also well into the winter. Having both a root cellar and the ability to can one’s fruits and vegetables lengthened the life of a home garden. These gardens gave families the opportunity to eat healthier, be self-reliant, and save money by avoiding costly market prices.

With such benefits it is no wonder the Park Record encouraged locals to take advantage of whatever growing space was available. Several articles highlight the importance of having one’s own food source. The newspaper itself assisted by providing advice on tools, the growing season, crops, garden plans, and sustainability. It also encouraged owners of vacant land to share with those that might not have any.<sup>1</sup> By encouraging this sense of community, it was believed that private and public gardens were a “long

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<sup>1</sup> Park Record, 18 May 1917, *Feed Yourself*.

step toward the prosperity of the entire community.”<sup>2</sup> By 1944, a home garden 50 feet by 100 feet was valued at more than \$120.<sup>3</sup>

Gardens didn’t just benefit the town or stand as potential for financial gain, however, they also provided family bonding time. Although considered a chore, taking care of the family garden was remembered fondly in Oral History Interviews by the Adamson family. Their family garden was something the kids took part in at an early age, and an activity that yielded a great sense of accomplishment. The Park Record captured this sentiment best in 1926: “And some how or other the things you raise afford the greatest satisfaction when placed on the dinner table.”<sup>4</sup>



1990.25.1

Credit: Park City Historical Society & Museum, Nan McPolin Collection

Caption: Men from Park City 1<sup>st</sup> Ward standing in a carrot patch in Snyderville for Welfare program, 1939.

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<sup>2</sup> Park Record, 2 April 1926, *Have a Garden*.

<sup>3</sup> Park Record, 25 May 1944, *Home Garden Values*.

<sup>4</sup> Park Record, 2 April 1926, *Have a Garden*.