

Way We Were  
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David Nicholas – Researcher

This is the third in a series of articles based on photographer Dick Steinheimer's images from his visit to Park City in February of 1953.

As discussed in the previous articles, Park City in the early 1950's endured a period of economic hardship which can be witnessed in several of Dick's images from the time.

The building in the foreground of the image is located at 523 Main Street, and was constructed in 1898 just after The Great Fire. You might recognize the building today as Prospect Youth, but it has had a long and vibrant history. Originally known as the Taylor Building, 523 Main housed Nu-Way Cleaners well into the late 1940s. By the time of Dick's visit to Park City the building had been abandoned. Later in 1953, Kendall Webb purchased the property for what would become his renowned photography studio, Valley Studio. In fact, Kendall Webb saw so much success that about ten years later he built the building at 525 Main Street, where today's Main Street Deli stands.

The larger building in the background was originally the George Washington School. It was constructed in 1889 of limestone quarried in Peoa, Utah, and was one of the few buildings to escape destruction in The Great Fire. It was, and still is, the last remaining structure of three public schools that served Park City in the late 19th century.

The school closed in 1931, and in 1936 it was sold to the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW). The VFW used the building for dances and social events through the 1950s. In 1984 new owners converted it to a Bed and Breakfast. Known today as the Washington School House Hotel, the building went through a renovation in 2011 and is now considered the premier Bed and Breakfast in town.

However, on the day of Dick's visit, better times were only a dream for the future. His camera captured the image of abandoned and rundown buildings, evidence of a once prosperous town struggling to survive.

If you are interested in the availability of Dick's prints please email Shirley Burman at [railwomen@earthlink.net](mailto:railwomen@earthlink.net).



Credit: Richard Steinheimer, S. Burman Collection.