

Way We Were

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Silver King Boarding House

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Park City's history is alive in our town's streets, the mountains and in the stories of those who lived the history. Preservation of this history has, in part, enabled Park City to retain a mountain town charm beloved to residents and tourists alike. One preservation story to remember is that of the Silver King Boarding House, now known as the Mid Mountain Lodge at Park City Mountain Resort.

The Silver King Boarding House was completed in 1896 and provided room and board for miners at the Silver King Mine, a dining room and mine offices. The *Park Record* gushed about the new boarding house on November 21, 1896 saying: "It has hot and cold water, electric lights, and every modern improvement and is pronounced by everybody to be the most complete institution of the kind in the world. It is a monument to progressive management of the company and must be seen and inspected to be fully appreciated."

The boarding house became more than just a place for single miners to live. In addition to daily meals, special meals at Thanksgiving or Christmas, social events, and entertainment meant mine employees had a chance to come together socially. Boarding houses also served a civic duty, as the *Park Record* reported that the Silver King Boarding House was designated as the voting location for District 9 in 1932.

In the early mining camp, mine owners built boarding houses near the mines where single miners lived, while married miners could live on Main Street. In 1901, The Boarding House Law made this practice illegal: "Every ... manager or employer doing business in the State of Utah, who by coercion, intimidation, threats or undue influence compels his employees to board at a particular boarding house ... shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor." After this, boarding houses for single miners were being built not just at mine sites, but on Main Street.

As mining declined and Park City transitioned into a ski town, new uses for old buildings were found. The Silver King Boarding House became the Mid Mountain Lodge, and served as a lunch spot for skiers. However, it was awkwardly located near the gondola Angle Station, making it difficult for the ever increasing size of snow grooming machines to get around it.

By 1987 the resort planned to tear the building down, but locals who had an eye to preservation stepped in with a plan. On September 3<sup>rd</sup>, the 140 ton Silver King Boarding House/Mid Mountain Lodge was pushed uphill by bulldozers. The Mid Mountain Lodge was restored and still hosts skiers for lunch at the base of Pioneer Lift.

*The Park City Museum's annual Holiday Ornament features the Silver King Boarding House. Make sure to pick yours up for the holidays at the Park City Museum Store at 528 Main Street.*



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Park City Historical Society & Museum

A special road was built by the resort to move the Mid Mountain Lodge to its current location.



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The Silver King Boarding House provided housing for miners at the Silver King Mine.