

Way We Were  
Wednesday, March 26, 2014  
Sarah Hill, Research Librarian  
Fire Department State Convention

Park City was the place to be in August 1926. That is, if you were a member of a Utah fire department! Park City was fortunate enough to be chosen as the location for the Utah State Fireman's Association yearly convention. Businesses went above and beyond to make sure that our town was presented in the most positive light and spared no expense in regards to preparing for the event. For three days, hundreds of visitors had a packed schedule, which included regular business sessions, a parade, a banquet, a carnival, and a first screening of the biggest picture of the year.

In an article printed by the *Park Record* the week before the convention, they listed the schedule of events that would be taking place. It was a celebration that allowed both the visitors and their families to interact and meet the community members. While some things were specifically for firemen, most gave all members of the community an opportunity to join in. One way in which they were entertained was by a contest set up at the baseball fields, with prizes being awarded to winners of such games as single man hose contest, four man hose contest, ladder contest, motor race, and 100 yard dash. These contests allowed firemen to test their skills against peers from all over the state.

The excitement spread even to the American Theatre, where manager John Rugar was able to acquire quite the treasure. He secured the biggest attraction, a pre-released showing of what was considered to be the film of the year, *The Last Frontier*. Rugar was also able to get the Laurence Sisters, known as 'Utah's Merriest of Maids' who would "entertain in a frolic of dances at the American." The convention was a wonderful opportunity for all to enjoy and a chance for the businesses in Park City to gain respect. With the large turnout and a pleasant outcome, the hope was that those visitors would go back to their communities and tell stories of how much fun they had in Park City, which would surely entice them to visit too!

On August 20, 1926 after the festivities had ended the *Park Record* kindly reported that, "It was generally conceded and expressed by the firemen themselves that never in the history of the state association was a more satisfactory convention held, or as hearty a welcome, or more pleasing entertainment given the members thereof – all being anxious to accept the hearty invitation to 'come again'." It was a success indeed!

The Park City Historical Society & Museum is celebrating 30 years of preserving, protecting, and promoting Park City's history and heritage.



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Credit: Park City Historical Society & Museum

Caption: Utah State Firemen Association Convention held in Park City in 1926.