

Way We Were

September 2, 2015

Miners' Union Day

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Parade, festivities, mucking and drilling contest...no Miner's Day is complete without all of these activities! In the early mining days of Park City, miners celebrated with a host of these activities not only on Labor Day, but on Miners' Union Day on June 13th.

Mine companies usually gave miners the day off on Miners' Union Day¹ to enjoy festivities, which alternated between activities organized and held in Park City and excursions to other locations. In 1904, the *Park Record* announced a "State Excursion to Lagoon,"² where there was a grand parade, a band, a baseball game with Park City taking on Eureka, and an evening dance. The *Record* noted that, "many a laborer" looked forward to the day as one "set aside for him to rest from his work and enjoy himself...The mines and mills were practically closed all day."³

In 1906, teams competed for prize money in a drilling contest held on Miners' Union Day in Salt Lake. Teams from the Ontario, Kearns-Keith, Alliance, and Silver King mines represented Park City against teams from Bingham, Eureka, and Mammoth.⁴ A few years later, in June 1910, the *Park Record* complained when Miners' Union Day was celebrated again at Lagoon: "Would it not be wise to wake up and endeavor to get people to come to Park City instead of letting Park City people go out of town. Are we ashamed of our town—or merely too "tired" to make an effort?"⁵

The June 13, 1911 Miners' Union Day was much advertised in the *Park Record*. From a boxing match to dinners, it was going to be a great local community day. And no holiday is official without a sale—Blythe Fargo Co. advertised: "Celebrate Miners' Union Day with a pair of our \$4.50, \$5.00, or \$6.00 Men's Oxfords for \$3.45."⁶ The parade started at 9:00 sharp with the Park City Military Band. Parade participants gathered in front of Miners Union Hall with Dr. LeCompte leading the procession of union men, their friends, and lots of children. The parade went down Main Street to Park Avenue, south to Woodside and back on Main Street to return to Miners' Union Hall. There were concerts and sports, and a grand ball to finish off the evening.⁷

¹ *Park Record*, 1903-05-23

² *Park Record*, 1904-06-04

³ *Park Record*, 1904-06-18

⁴ *Park Record*, 1906-06-09

⁵ *Park Record*, 1910-06-18

⁶ *Park Record*, 1911-06-10

⁷ *Park Record*, 1911-06-17

By the 1930s, mention of a separate Miners' Union Day had disappeared from the *Park Record* and the only celebration in town was Labor Day. Of course, the tradition of sports, festivities, and the parade live on each "Miner's Day" (Labor Day) when Park City celebrates our mining past.

The Park City Museum wishes everyone a happy and safe Miner's Day celebration on Labor Day, September 7.



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Caption: Men walk up Park Avenue for the Miners' Union Day Parade on June 13, 1911. The ribbons the men are wearing were decorated and colorful, and indicated which union the men belonged to.