

Way We Were

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New buildings for Park City high schoolers

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“All schools will open for the regular school year next Monday, September 28, at 8 a.m.,” the Park Record reported in 1927. In August of that year, the superintendent had announced a delayed opening for all schools due to construction at the new high school building at 1255 Park Avenue. By the end of September, however, “sufficient classrooms and office space will be available for beginning, without material interruption of class work.” There were still some things to do, but the town was ready.

Completed at a cost of nearly \$200,000, the new building was praised as a model of convenience, efficiency, and beauty. Even its location next to the old city ballpark was chosen with economy and expediency in mind. After some upgrades, the ballpark was to be used as the school’s athletic field.

Salt Lake City architectural firm Scott & Welch designed the building to be fireproof, with twelve inch-thick concrete walls, ornamental brick veneer, poured concrete roof, and metal door and window frames. The only wood meant to be found on campus was the gymnasium floor, the doors themselves, and the desks and furniture. In addition to the classrooms and gymnasium, the building also featured a state-of-the-art auditorium, library, study hall, and modern offices. Even the “manner in which the benches [were] arranged” was meant for the “convenience of students.” The building was meant to accommodate all of Park City’s 200 high school aged students plus half again as many.

In 1936, the Mechanical Arts Building was built as a project of the Public Works Administration (PWA), an organization founded as part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal during the Great Depression. It, too, was designed by Scott & Welch and features Art Deco and Art Moderne styles. The building housed shop classes, a drawing room, woodworking, cold and hot metal working, and auto mechanics.

1255 Park Ave served as the high school for fifty years before being converted into the Carl Winters Middle School in 1977. In 1981, the middle school closed and the district abandoned the building. Ownership transferred to the city. The Mechanical Arts Building was converted to a bus barn and storage building at that time. In 1995, the district sold it. It was restored and is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The high school was also restored and now houses the Park City Library and Education Center.

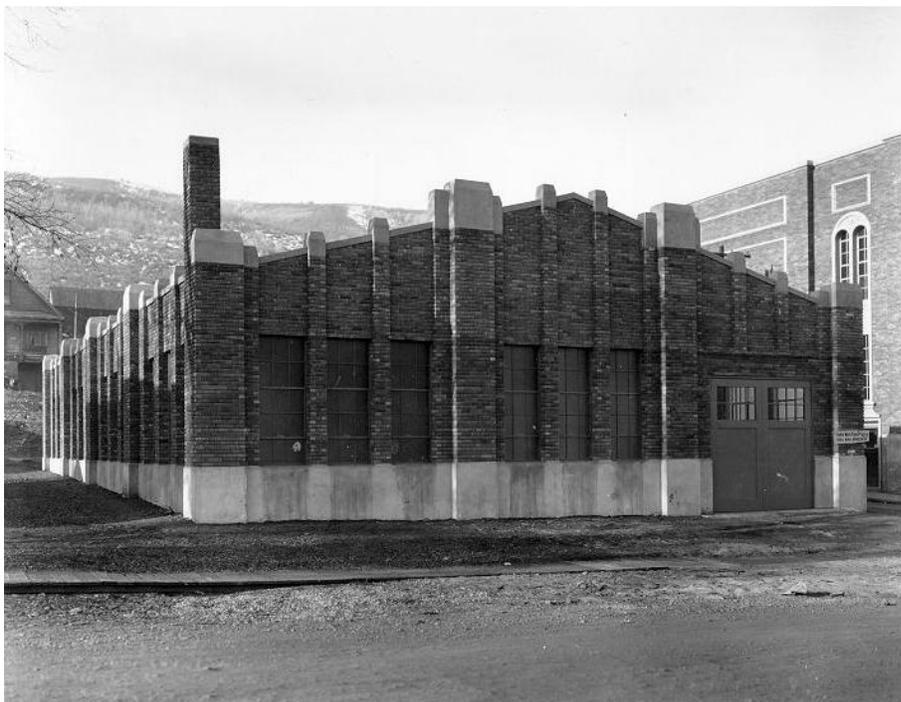
Both of these buildings are featured on this year’s Historic Home Tour. Join us on June 25 from 10am - 3pm to explore lower Woodside and Park Avenues and learn more about Park City’s history. Tickets are \$15 for members, \$20 for non-members. For more information, call the Park City Museum at 435-649-7457 or visit our website at parkcityhistory.org.



Image ID: 1947.14.13

Credit: Park City Historical Society and Museum, Kendall Webb Collection

Caption: In the new building, the domestic science and chemistry departments included “every possible convenience” like lab stations equipped with running water and gas jets, pictured here in 1947.



(Inset?)

Image ID: 1987.2.16

Credit: Park City Historical Society and Museum, Pop Jenks Collection

Caption: The Mechanical Arts Building sits just south of the high school at 1167 Woodside Avenue.