

Way We Were

June 22, 2016

Park City's First Hospital

Chris McLaws, Museum volunteer

In 1893, laborers in Park City joined together to form the Western Federation of Miners Union #144. One of the priorities the miners wanted to address was the availability of healthcare due to the dangers of mining and the town's remote location. There were some doctors in Park City but no medical facilities and miners had to travel thirty miles to Salt Lake City for emergency care, an especially difficult journey in winter.

The Union began to raise funds for a local hospital in December 1903. This took cooperation from the community and union alike. Eliza Nelson donated the one-acre section of land where the hospital was originally built. The spot, also known as Nelson Hill, was away from the noise and potential fire danger of the city. It was also ideal because of plentiful sunshine and fresh air. The site is now the northwest corner of the parking lot at the Park City resort near Thaynes Canyon.

Construction started in April 1904 and was completed that October. The building was designed by Henry Campbell. The dedication services began with all in attendance singing "America." Reverend J.H. Murray of the Methodist church gave the dedicatory prayer. LDS Bishop Fred Rasband and Reverend D.G. Graybill of the Congregational church also made remarks. Colonel William M. Ferry, mine owner and philanthropist, was the featured speaker.

The Miners Hospital served Park City's medical needs for thirty years under the Union. It was sold and run as a private clinic in the 1930s. In the late 1960s and 1970s it functioned as a restaurant, bar, skier dorms, and hostel.

In the late 1970s plans were made to demolish the hospital and develop the land into a condominium unit, hotel, and conference center. Citizens of Park City rallied together to save the hospital. It took two days to move the 400-ton building to its present location at City Park on Park Avenue. Voters approved a bond to turn the hospital into a public library. It was renovated in 1981 and opened in 1982. The building is listed on the state and national registers of historic places.

The Miners Hospital at City Park is the headquarters of this year's Historic Home Tour. The neighborhood featured on the tour this year encompasses lower Park and Woodside avenues. Please join us this Saturday, June 25, from 10am – 3pm to learn more about the history of this unique area of our town. 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.



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Credit: Park City Historical Society and Museum, 70s Group Photograph Collection

Caption: The Miners Hospital was moved from its original location on Nelson Hill near the Glenwood Cemetery and Thaynes Canyon, to City Park in October 1979.