

Way We Were
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A Major(ette) Impact
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The Park City High School band in the 1940s and early 1950s was in its prime. Under the direction of long time director Byron D. Jones, the band had received forty-nine awards. During Jones's tenure, which ended in 1954, the high school band performed at many parades and noteworthy events, including playing in front of 67,000 people at the East-West Shriners Game in San Francisco in 1950. The band did not do it alone, however. Leading the way at many events were the Park City majorettes and pepsters, entertaining the crowd with their lively dances routines and skilled baton swirling.

Not to be confused with cheerleaders, majorettes and pepsters marched along to a band's tune by doing choreographed dances moves all while intricately twirling their batons as they led the band. Some advanced majorettes have even been known to twirl flags, knives, and fire batons. The Park City High School majorettes stuck to the classic baton, impressing crowds wherever they went.

Across the country majorettes were known for their elaborate costumes, and the majorettes and pepsters in Park City were no different. The Park City High School majorettes made their own uniforms, which consisted of white satin skirts and buttoned tops, black hats and white cowboy boots. On the other hand, pepsters wore white, long-sleeved blouses and black pants.

It wasn't only their uniforms that made the majorettes unique, but their performances as well. In 1950 one reporter in the Park Record believed that majorettes were important components to the high school band, claiming they "perhaps make the music sound better." Later that same year, the Park Record again had nothing but praise for the majorettes and pepsters, stating their dance moves were "clever" and that they "put the crowd in good spirit" at one of the basketball games.

The majorettes and pepsters were able to perform at events outside of Park City along with the band. In 1947 they led the band at the National Aeronautics Association's Utah Aviation Day parade in Salt Lake City, a parade which also included thirty-nine new planes of various designs towed down Salt Lake's Main Street. In addition, while in San Francisco in 1950 for the Shriner's game, majorettes Marilyn Henrion and Stanice Worthman, along with director Bryan Jones and drum major Beverly Hall, were featured on television and in numerous Bay Area publications. The Park City High School band had many achievements during its heyday, but they did so following the majorettes and pepsters.



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Credit: Park City Historical Society and Museum, Himes-Buck Digital Collection

Caption: The Park City High School majorettes and band readying to perform in a local parade, likely either celebrating the Fourth of July or Miner's Day (Labor Day), ca. 1940s.

Sources:

Way We Were by Bea Mayes, October 23, 2002.

Park Record, 9/21/1950

Park Record, 2/2/1950

Park Record, 1/26/1950

Park Record, 1/4/1951