

Way We Were
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The Lone Survivor
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Being 131 years old I look and feel great, though it's a miracle that I am still with you. I am one of the most historically significant buildings in Old Town. I have witnessed the ebb and flow of Park City's fortunes. Most of you knew me as Zoom - one of the town's premier restaurants for twenty-two years, though recently closed. I am designated as a National Historic Landmark and hold a similar honor from Park City's Historic Preservation Board. I am the former Union Pacific depot.

Of Park City's once vibrant and essential railroad infrastructure I am the "lone survivor". From Park City one could travel by train virtually anywhere in the country. For decades the United States had the world's most advanced railroad network. By 1920, 250,000 miles of track stitched the country together. Today only 140,000 miles of that once vast network remain in operation. Besides Union Pacific, the Denver and Rio Grande (DR&G) also served Park City. Their depot and freight house were located on Park Avenue near today's Town Lift.

With much fanfare I opened in 1886. My address then was 102 Pacific Avenue - a dirt road which paralleled the Union Pacific tracks into town. In modern times the road was developed out of existence, a constant threat for historic sites and buildings in and around Old Town. My current address is 660 Main Street.

My initial construction cost exceeded \$5000 - a considerable amount for those times. Besides the Union Pacific freight and passenger business, the Railway Express Agency (a forerunner of Fed Ex) and the Western Union telegraph company also operated in the depot. I faithfully served Park City for over 100 years. During that time I hosted upwards of 28,000 trains. In 1977 I closed; there just wasn't enough business to justify continued operation, though freight service on the Union Pacific line continued until 1986. The twenty-seven mile Park City branch was abandoned in 1989 and converted to our Rail Trail.

My competitor, the DR&G, reached Park City from Salt Lake City via Parley's Park. Their right-of-way closely followed today's Interstate 80. In 1941 their station was dismantled. The freight house remained in use until 1947 when DR&G abandoned their Park City branch, ending sixty-four years of service. Amazingly the freight house survived, and in 2016 it was incorporated into a new development at 820 Park Ave. Though its connection to the railroad is no longer obvious, the building is now known as Harvest, and is a popular eatery within walking distance of the Town Lift.

As the Lone Survivor amongst the recognizable historic structures that were once associated with Park City's railroad legacy, I realize the tenuousness of my continued existence. I escaped the Great Fire of 1898. I just barely lived through an arson attack in 1985. I want to remain an essential element of our town's historic fabric for generations to come. That is my mission.



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

Caption: An early photo of the Union Pacific Depot taken around the turn of the century. Notice the heavy weight passenger car on the left and the gondolas on the right.