

## Way We Were

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### Tank attacks Daly Avenue homes

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On the morning of September 12, 1979, Daly Avenue residents Lauren Weitzman and Jane Singer were getting ready for a camping trip when, Weitzman said, “we heard a sound like a sonic boom that wouldn’t stop. The whole house shook like an earthquake and we ran outside.”

But it was no earthquake. Instead, they found one end of a massive steel water tank lodged in a corner of the miner’s cabin they were renting at 70 Daly Ave.

It turned out that the 40-foot-long tank had been on a flatbed truck en route to a new restaurant under construction at the Park City Ski Area (now Park City Mountain). Rather than drive straight up King Road, the truck driver, Bill Eppley, had elected to take a gentler route, driving up Daly Avenue and then taking the switchback up Ridge Avenue, which crosses the hillside west of Daly. According a story in the *Park City Newspaper* (which merged with *The Park Record* in 1983), the 17-ton tank broke loose when the truck jackknifed as Eppley was making the hairpin turn at the top of Ridge Avenue.

“The tank rolled east down the steep hill to Daly Ave., crushing one house and smashing into the Daly home occupied by Lauren Weitzman and Jane Singer. Singer is leasing the home from Fred Miller,” *The Newspaper* reported the following day.

“Ironically, the house uphill from the Miller home that was totally demolished had, until just recently, been occupied by the newlywed couple of Jim and Anne McMullen,” the story continued. “The McMullens moved to a Heber home earlier this week.”

*The Newspaper* compared the “tank attack” to the much-ballyhooed demise of Skylab two months earlier. Skylab was a U.S. space station that fell out of orbit and broke apart before crashing to earth in Western Australia in July 1979.

A week later, when the runaway water tank had not been removed, *The Newspaper* asked locals how it could be put to good use.

“We should stack four more tanks on top and turn it into a condominium,” said police officer Al Allen. “Or we could turn it into a jail. Park City could use a drunk tank.”

Rich Martinez, Park City's "Ol' Miner," who lived most of his life on Daly Avenue (better known to most old-timers as Empire Canyon), said the house demolished by the tank had once belonged to his family.

"I think my mother said she paid \$300 for it," he recalled in a 2009 interview.

Martinez said he lived in the house from the time he was in the fifth or sixth grade until he graduated from high school in 1953.



Image ID: not cataloged

Credit: Park City Historical Society and Museum, The Newspaper Collection

Caption: Parkites survey the damage of the curious accident in which a water tank demolished a home on Daly Avenue, September 1979.