

Way We Were
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Upper Main and Daly Avenue
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When silver was first discovered in Summit County in the late 1860s, miners lived near the original claims in a small settlement known as Lake Flat (near where Silver Lake is today). By the 1880s, several developments prompted new settlements further west. More silver ore was discovered in what became the Ontario mine and surroundings. In 1886, John Daly, after whom Daly Avenue was named, began construction of a 6,000 foot drain tunnel for the Anchor Mine in Empire Canyon. The tunnel, in addition to discharging large quantities of water, provided access to and from the mines for those who worked underground. Four years later, John Judge completed the Alliance drain tunnel about a mile above Daly Avenue. Also in 1890, a custom concentrator was built on Daly Avenue by the Union Company that provided jobs near the growing town center. With these increased opportunities, many miners moved from Lake Flat to the mouths of Empire, Ontario, and Woodside Canyons and the site of modern day Park City. As miners' families joined them and more settlers arrived, Park City transformed from a shantytown to a bustling city. But despite its growth, the upper Main Street and Daly Avenue area was far from free of troubles.

Avalanches were common. Heavy snows rumbled down bare mountainsides, taking structures and lives alike. One January day in 1892 saw three slides in a span of just a few hours. In May 1893, warm weather caused floods and mudslides. The *Park Record* reported that a creek had flooded a reservoir and if the reservoir had "given way under the strain...death and destruction" would have been carried down Empire Canyon. Perhaps not that year, but death and destruction did indeed occur. Elsie Bagnell drowned in the creek in 1903, just one of several children lost to the waters. Her death prompted her father, John G. Bagnell, to sue the city for \$20,000 charging "negligence in allowing the creek to remain uncovered and a menace to the safety of the public."

Not all disasters in Empire Canyon were natural. A smallpox outbreak in March 1901 prompted the quarantine of a section of Daly Avenue. December 1908 saw a fire at Margaret Moir's house on Daly Avenue, luckily extinguished before causing much damage. In 1901, an irate City Marshal published a public notice to those who persisted in polluting the creek with trash from "tin cans" to "old mattresses." They must "cease immediately," he said, or face prosecution to "the full extent of the law."

To learn more about this neighborhood, its houses and families, check back here each Wednesday for the next three weeks, then join the Park City Historical Society and Museum for the annual Historic Home Tour on Saturday, June 13th from 10am to 3pm. Tickets are \$15.00 for members and \$20.00 for non-members. This year's tour features houses from historic upper Main Street, Daly Avenue, and Hillside Avenue. For more information, please 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, J.H. Crockwell Photo Collection

Caption: The view down Empire Canyon and into Park City circa 1889. The road on the left led to the Union Concentrator and on the right is the reservoir that so constantly posed a flood danger to those on Daly Ave.

Sources:

Thompson, George A. and Fraser Buck. *Treasure Mountain Home: A Centennial History of Park City, Utah*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Books, 1968.

Park Record, January 1, 1892; May 20, 1893; March 9, 1901; April 27, 1901; May 16, 1903; May 14 and December 17, 1904; December 26, 1908.