

# South Park City

Railroad's Past Brought to Life

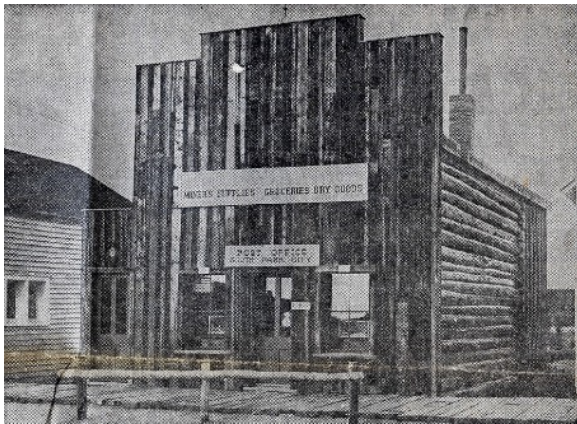
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Rocky Mountain News Southern  
Colorado Correspondent

June 19, 1966

SOUTH PARK CITY, Colo., June 18 — South Park City, that restored old mining camp at the western edge of Fairplay, is acquiring a narrow gauge locomotive to go with its growing list of railroad relics.

Purchased in Guatemala the U.S. and will be in place on 500 feet of narrow gauge track July 1.



*Simpkin's Store served old mining camp.  
Historic Masonic Lodge is upstairs*

Its purchase in Guatemala from the United Fruit Co. has ended a 6-year search for a steam locomotive comparable to those that ran over the Denver, South Fork & Pacific Railroad, one of Colorado's most colorful narrow gauge lines.

Frank Burgess of Fairplay, president of the non-profit association that operates South Park City, classed the 52-year-old engine as "the nearest thing we could find to one of the old mountain locomotives that used to operate through here."



*Frank Burgess*

## Rolling Stock

At South Park City, the locomotive will join an old narrow gauge caboose, stock car and ore car, acquired from the Rio Grande Railroad. The cars were part of the Rio Grande's rolling stock that operated out of Alamosa.

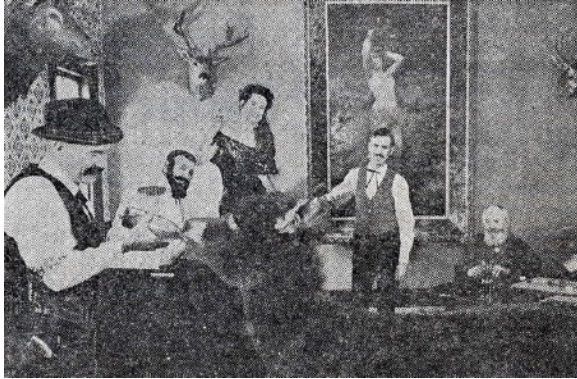
The old town also has a restored narrow gauge depot similar to those found in Colorado's mining camps in the 1880s.

Burgess said there is no plan at the present to put the locomotive into operation, but rather to display it as one of the feature attractions of the old town.

Two years ago, Leon Snyder, Colorado Springs attorney and secretary of the South Park City Co., heard of two narrow gauge locomotives that might be purchased. He made a trip there, but turned down the equipment because it was not similar to the old Colorado narrow gauge engines.

The one purchased in Guatemala was made in the U.S., following specifications designed for Colorado narrow gauge

lines, which in 1914 were in full operation through the state's mining and mountain areas. The engine will be painted with the Denver, South Park & Pacific insignia.



*Rachel's Place at South Park City is a restored gambling and dance hall*

### **Many Visitors**

Thousands of visitors to its authentic pioneer and frontier buildings and furnishings. They range from Rachel's Place, a gambling and dance hall that flourished at nearby Alma at the turn of the century, to the old Stage Coach Inn that was brought down from Mosquito Pass where it served as a stage station from 1879 to 1890.

On South Park City's streets will be found the Simpkins General Store, trucked in from the ghost town of Dudley. It contains a full line of merchandise dating back to the early Colorado mining period.

Upstairs above the store, Colorado Masonic lodges have furnished a lodge room with early-day articles given by Masonic groups.

At the Bank of Alma, hundreds of thousands of dollars crossed the counters in its long history. And, in 1935, an attempted stickup failed. The bank now holds forth in the old restored camp with its original furnishings and a display of old money.

Old blacksmith shop, morgue, 1879 school house from Garo, a pioneer newspaper plant, frontier 2-chair and 2-tub barber shop and doctor's office with old instruments and equipment are part of the town.



*Merriman's Drug Store dates from 1880. Furnishings are original.*

### **Livery Stable**

Fairplay's first livery stable, the Star Livery, houses many vehicles including a horse-drawn hearse from Garo. A

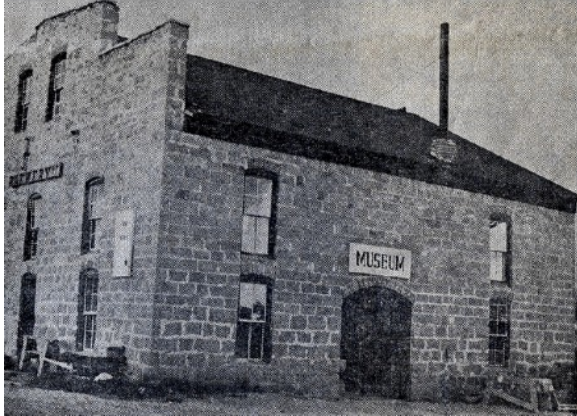
Mosquito Pass route to Leadville is a part of the display of carriages and wagons.

In its early days, Fairplay had a large colony of Chinese miners. One of their Tong Houses with original furniture occupies a spot at the west end of Main st. Nearby is a fine exhibit of mining machinery, much of it hauled down from mines high in the mountains.

From Westcliffe was brought intact the 1880 J. A. Merriam Drug Store, its shelves and cases filled with drugs and remedies of a bygone era.

One of Park Country's landmarks is the Leonhard Summer South Park Brewery, built more than 90 years ago. The solid, stone building has been turned into a museum, crammed with period furniture and many displays from the long-gone

frontier and early mining period For those with a flair for Colorado history, South Park City offers a travel into the romantic past.



*Brewery slacked miner's thirsts 90 years ago. It is now a museum*

### **No Commercialism**

In this day of tourist commercialism, the attraction is a happy haven for it has no hawkers trying to sell cheap souvenirs at inflated prices. It has a set admission price, and that is the only charge.

An old soda fountain dating to the Gay '90s does provide soft drinks, but otherwise, South

Park City has nothing to sell except its history—and that is fully authentic.

Miss Marilyn Smith, curator, expects this to be the biggest season since the first buildings were opened in 1959. The town is open daily through Oct. 15. Hours from now until Sept. 1 are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and from Sept. 1 to Oct. 16 from 10 am to 4 p.m.

From Denver, it is reached via U.S. 285. From Colorado Springs, the route is U.S. 24 and Colorado