

Why Did They Name It That?

by Jimmie Close

Alfie Packer's: I had ordered a Packer Burger at the Alfred Packer Restaurant and Grill of Colorado University several years before I appreciated the significance of eating a sandwich that was dedicated “to serve all mankind”.

Alfred ‘Alfie’ Packer was a mountain guide in western Colorado. In the late nineteenth century, he and five others were stranded by a particularly severe Rocky Mountain snow storm. Only Alfred came off the mountain. After a trial, Alfred was sentenced by the judge to be hanged. The judge was a staunch Democrat, because Alfred had eaten five of the seen Democrats in the county. Two years later, Alfred was retried and sentenced to five consecutive eight-year terms for manslaughter. Alfred was then paroled in 1901.

But the legend lives. I was in Lake City, Colorado, during the celebration of Alfred Packer Days when everyone was encouraged to “have a friend for lunch”. In the 1990’s, the creators of South Park for television released “Cannibal! The Musical”. The Hinsdale County Museum in Lake City has an extensive display of Packer memorabilia. The Alfred Packer Days celebration includes a mystery meat bar-b-que.

