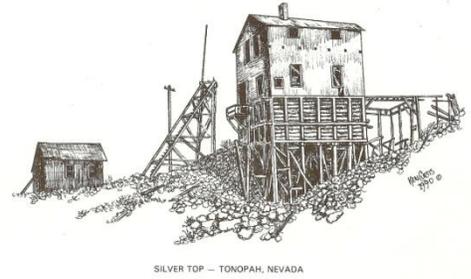


# Tailings



## Park's first bat-compatible grate



It's no secret that Nevada's rich history is filled with tales of gold strikes and silver lodes – and for every deposit worthy of being mined, there may be hundreds that weren't. In a short century-and-a-half the mountains, ranges and basins throughout the state were scoured for hints of valuable minerals; dynamite and steel carved necessary doorways into the earth for the miner and explorationist alike. This was a typical way of life for many early Nevadans, and the inherent dangers of mines and mining was known by most, if not all.

Fast forward to today. Mining still plays a vast and important role in the Nevada economy, creating thousands of well-paying, stable jobs for its citizens, and producing the mineral resources vital to the economy of our state and country. As important as this role is, many Nevadans today aren't as familiar with our deep mining heritage, and as such don't realize the potential risks associated with derelict and abandoned mines. I heard many stories from children and young adults about their adventures "exploring caves" with family or friends. After a question or two I understand that these weren't some guided tours, but rather these kids were out playing in and around abandoned mines -- right here in our backyard! Hearing this makes me cringe.

The good news is the state takes these hazards seriously, and since 1987 the Nevada Division of Minerals has actively worked to mitigate them, both through physical means (barriers, backfilling, etc.) and public awareness. Further, minimizing the inherent danger, while of the utmost importance, is not the only consideration when determining how to remedy an abandoned mine hazard. Many mines have biological and archaeological significance; it wouldn't be right to backfill a historic mine which is culturally significant, nor would it be to foam-close a mine which has an active bat colony. The best course of action isn't always cut-and-dried.



A fantastic example of a unique mine with more than just safety as a consideration is at the Tonopah Historic Mining Park (THMP). Just off the Park's main entry road, about fifty feet to the southeast, lies a forty-foot-deep vertical shaft that connects to workings under the Park, and is home to some native bat species. The shaft is approximately forty-foot deep, has a fifteen-by-twenty-foot wide collar and connects with workings beneath the Park. After discussions between the Park and the Division, a decision was made to construct a bat-compatible grate covering

the shaft; this grate would render the shaft harmless, while preserving the cultural aspects and wildlife habitat within. The grates are very sturdy, and may even afford Park visitors the opportunity to stand next to the grate and look into the shaft itself – something which would have not been possible without its construction.

In July of 2017, the Division's Chief of the Abandoned Mine Land program, Rob Ghiglieri, and Southern Nevada Chief, Garrett Wake met with Brian Breiter, owner of Environmental Protection Services (EPS) at the THMP. Brian, a Nevada native has contracted for the Division for several years, and has constructed several bat-compatible closures, and completed many more polyurethane-expansive-foam closures (also viewable at the THMP) and backfills. A skilled craftsman and altruist, Brian selflessly volunteered to donate his time, his crew and what materials he had to complete this job, pro bono, as a gift to the Mining Park. This is no small contribution, as these bat-compatible features can cost several thousand dollars depending on size and scope of work.



Work began on the afternoon of May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2017 with the procurement of the steel bars necessary for the construction of the bat grate. Finding suitable materials isn't always easy, but the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, who also works with the Division to secure hazards on open-BLM land, has a lay-down yard in Tonopah. It just so happened that there were some left-over materials from a previous bat-grate, and that the correct amount of steel bars needed for

this particular job were available. After loading up all of the materials and equipment, Brian and his crew travelled to the worksite and unloaded what was necessary for the next day's work.

The following day was nearly overcast, and the weather was cold and windy with some light rain on-and-off. After about eight hours of hauling steel bars, measuring and welding, the grate was completed. A testament to Brian's skill, the roughly 15' by 20' grate fit perfectly over the shaft, and was emplaced firmly above. This grate will soon be showcased at the Mining Park, representing the crossroads historical of preservation and public safety.

I'd like to personally thank Brian Breiter and his crew for their generous contributions, as well as Ken Maas and the U.S. Forest Service for donating materials, the Nevada Department of Wildlife for their time conducting bat surveys, and the Tonopah Historic Mining Park for their many years of assistance and cooperation with the Division.



Brian Breiter, owner of Environmental Protection Services, and his co-worker, beginning construction on a bat-compatible steel grate covering a historic abandoned mine shaft. This grate will protect the public from accidental injury or death, while preserving the cultural and biological aspects of the feature.

*Garrett Wake*  
*Chief of Southern Nevada,*  
*Nevada Division of Minerals*  
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The Nevada Society Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) have once again honored the Tonopah Historic Mining Park (THMP) with a visitation and presentation of a new American flag. Previously DAR have funded our new flag pole, given flags, paid for interpretive or descriptive signs for exhibits both in the Livermore Visitor's Center and outside on the one-hundred and thirteen acres which make up the Park. They have been meeting at the Park for

several years and have been faithful members, donating funds, as well as supporting special projects. The establishment of the Tonopah Historic Mining Park from its beginning, the ongoing head frames restoration, the memorial placement of bricks, the "Blacksmithing as an Art" classes, annual Butler Days, the receipt of a national award for Historic Preservation and appropriate medal. The National Society awarded the Park a grant of \$10,000.00 for its leadership in preservation and education. The large directional THMP signs lead to the Park.



DAR's July meeting was a huge success. Jeff Martin, our Host and Tour Guide gave a well-rounded history of the Park's development. DAR members and guests from all over Nevada were present. Many questions were asked of Jeff about the Central Nevada history of mining and the goals and future of THMP. Following Jeff's presentation, the group spoke with Jeff, asked questions and shared information.

Membership forms were available, as well as special projects: Restoration of the Head Frames, the placement of the Memorial Bricks, the "Blacksmithing as an Art" classes and the general maintenance and operation of the Park. Mining Park friends may purchase a small 4" x 8" engraved brick with up to three lines of 200 characters for \$100.00 per brick or a large 8" x 8" engraved brick with up to 6 lines with 20 characters for \$500.00 per brick. Engraved bricks are placed around the periphery of the recently restored Mizpah Head Frame. One member purchased a \$500.00 memorial brick and others also made generous contributions to the Park.

Groups are encouraged to consider the Park for their gatherings. Remembering its central Nevada location,

plenty of things to see and do including Star Gazing and visiting near-by historic sites. Come and enjoy a glimpse of Central Nevada mining history and always a warm welcome from Tonopah.

*"The (Daughters of the American Revolution) (DAR) organization was founded in 1890 with the mission of promoting historic preservation, education and patriotism. These timeless, overarching principles keep the DAR strong and vitally relevant in this ever-changing world."*



Nevada Daughters of the American Revolution present Jeff Martin, Tonopah Historic Mining Park Tour Guide and Host with a new American flag.



Buy a Brick Placement around restored Mizpah Headframe.

# Head Frame Restoration/Stabilization Donations And “Buy a Brick” Program

The Tonopah Historic Mining Park Foundation continues to raise funds to restore and stabilize the badly deteriorated Silver Top and Desert Queen head frames. Donations may be mailed to:

**Tonopah Historic Mining Park  
Head Frame Restoration Project**

**PO Box 965**

**Tonopah, NV 89049**

[www.TonopahHistoricMiningPark.com](http://www.TonopahHistoricMiningPark.com)

Engraved bricks may also be purchased using PayPal with a credit or debit card. Order forms are available on the Tonopah Historic Mining Park’s website. Special thanks to Foundation Member, John Terras and Park Host, Jeff Martin for placing the engraved bricks around the Mizpah Head Frame.

*“As an IRS-approved 501(c)3 tax-exempt charity, your donation to the Tonopah Historic Mining Park of Tonopah, Nevada may be tax-deductible.”*

## Blacksmithing Classes

were held in June, July and August. We had a lot of new and returning students. Special thanks to our Certified Instructors: Mike Barth, John McLellan and Mike Mumford.

Our 2018 Summer blacksmithing classes will be on *April 28 & 29, May 19 & 20 and June 23 & 24*. Class fees are \$80.00 for the weekend. Registration forms will be posted on the mining park’s website.

The mining park gift shop sells the book *The Art of Blacksmithing*, 50 lb. bags of coke or coal and open-ended blacksmithing class gift certificates. (Think Christmas!) Park members receive a ten percent discount on their purchases. All funds derived from blacksmithing purchases go into the blacksmithing account to further our program.

Mining Park member Phil Luchetta attends his first class.



Looking down the Mining Park's new bat-grate donated by Brian Breiter, owner of Environmental Protection Services



### Mission Statement

"The Tonopah Historic Mining Park preserves the mining heritage of Nevada and related regions through acquisitions and preservation of collections and presentation of quality exhibits and educational activities."

*"As an IRS-approved 501(c)3 tax-exempt charity, your donation to the Tonopah Historic Mining Park of Tonopah, Nevada may be tax-deductible."*

### Membership Benefits

Park members receive a ten percent discount on all store purchases, blacksmithing classes and coal.

The Mining Park is open seven days a week excluding Federal holidays. Our winter hours are 8 am – 4 pm.

Editor: Mimi Rodden

Production Coordinator: Marti Barth

Photo Credit: Marti Barth, Stanley Paher, Terry Rubenstein, Don Southwick and Garrett Wake

Find us on  and  Youtube

"Tonopah Historic Mining Park"

"Blacksmithing at the Tonopah Historic Mining Park"

## Mining Park Membership

Park Supporter:

\$35 – \$249

Sustaining Copper Member:

\$250 – \$499

Sustaining Silver Member:

\$500-\$999

Sustaining Gold Member:

\$1,000-\$4,999

Sustaining Platinum:

Member: \$5,000 – \$9,999

Distinguished Prospector:

+ \$10,000

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Tonopah Historic Mining Park

PO Box 965

Tonopah, NV 89049

# Gus Wurdinger story

## part two

*In part one of this story Gus Wurdinger travels from Los Angeles in 1906, passes through one-year old Las Vegas and ultimately winds up 30 miles south of Beatty at the mining camp of Lee which straddled the Nevada-California state line and thrived because of the Lee mine. Comparable to what might happen today, the California side had a few business buildings, hotel, stores and dwellings, while the Nevada side had saloons with gaming, a brothel and a dance hall.*

*The story continues as Gus relocates to Beatty in the summer of 1906 where soon the focus of his attention was a promotional banquet in Beatty and the newly platted town site of Gold Center, two miles to the south. As the northbound modern traveler nears Beatty, Gold Center is located immediately to the left of the paved highway as it makes its last bend to the right before entering Beatty itself. —Stanley Paher, author*



What I regard was the grand-daddy of all promotions reached a climax late in the spring of 1906. The town of Gold Center was to be located just outside of Beatty to temporarily serve as the terminus of the Las Vegas & Tonopah Railroad, where there was plenty of flat land around and plenty of water was available just below the surface of the underground Amargosa River.

The slogan of the new town site was to make Beatty the "Pittsburgh of the West." It was planned to tap and haul in coal and iron ore from nearby Utah. A gigantic steel mill was to be erected, and with the

existing railroad another to be built [the Tonopah & Tidewater] and with a third one reported past the planning stage [the Bullfrog-Goldfield] how could one lose?

A big advertising campaign was started in the Eastern newspapers, and offices were established in most large cities to line up prospects to take the trip West. A certain percentage of one's investment was to be refunded, which would help with the expenses. If one invested enough the trip would be "for free."

When the big day was near, Pullmans loaded with potential investors were attached to regular trains out of Boston, New York, and the other large cities, en route to Omaha or Kansas City, where one or more special trains were made up. Now the salesman on board got to work, explaining how simple it was to become, well perhaps not another Andrew Carnegie or Charles Schwab, his successor as head of the biggest steel mills of the country, but at least rather wealthy.

The L. V. & T., the only railroad into Beatty as yet, had track crews laying sidings for the Pullmans, which would be used for sleeping purposes after the guests arrived. More telegraph wires were strung into town and merchants laid in extra stock and supplies.

The Miner's Hall, the largest structure in town, was rented for the big free banquet. Carpenters were busy building tables and benches to accommodate the crowds expected that night. Desert rats and visitors, some from as far away as Reno, flocked into town, pitched tents and this helped out the town's appearance when the arriving train guests got their first view of the new bonanza town.

Besides the usual western desert sports such as rock drilling, burro races, outdoor camp fire cooking against time and such like, other greater and bigger events were scheduled.

Imagine talk of yacht and gasoline boat races on the Amargosa River! But it was then and still is just an underground stream. Exhibition by the local fire department, climaxed by foreman jumping into nets from the roof of the new Beatty six-story hotel, was still another item of gossip which of course never materialized. The building was just another paper dream.

Finally, the guests arrived about noon, and for the rest of the day they were hauled out to look at the new town to be—Gold Center. Many horse-drawn vehicles with impromptu seating were used, for there were more visitors than available transportation. It took the rest of the day to get them all out there. A few "for rent" autos showed up and were kept busy.

But the big event was the banquet at the hall that night. Three of us bartenders at first did little but open and serve champagne and there was case after case of the stuff. And when that was all used up, we started mixing and serving other kinds of drinks. Remember this was all free and the prospectors flocked in from miles around, many getting the "wrinkles out," for the first time in months. Baked ham and turkey with all the trimmings was served and they seemed to have an endless supply of food ready, as the plates never got empty.

The next day was bedlam. The entire town seemed to go crazy with optimism. Opinion was that only lack of cash or bank credits could prevent anyone from becoming rich. Makeshift offices were all over, but all transactions were completed in the rear of the hall, officially that is. The free feed was continued into the next two days, but was now served buffet style, where one could make sandwiches of cold cuts of smoked meats, salami, bologna, cheese and the like. Only coffee, tea and lemonade were served now.



The promotion hysteria continued almost unabated and why not, with all the promises of the promoters filling the air. The Montgomery-Shoshone mine, already a producer, should, according to them and in a matter of months, be turning out large quantities of gold and silver from the large ore bodies already blocked out. Perhaps a thousand or more miners would be employed there.

Rumor had it that Charles Schwab was interested in buying the Montgomery-Shoshone mine, which he did later. Many remember reading about Gary, Indiana which had sprung up almost overnight into a full-grown city, after the steel mills were erected in the sand dunes on the south end of Lake Michigan, under Schwab's orders. About the only ones not sharing these ideas were the old desert rats who packed their burros and went on their wandering ways, daydreaming of a big strike that was coming sooner or later.

Things finally quieted down, but Schwab later hired an engineer to make a survey of the mine and its ore bodies. Then the town got another surprise. His report stated that although there was lot of ore available, it was of such low grade that the cost of mining and milling it would be prohibitive. This put the quietus on any further development. The engineer's name was Herbert Hoover, and later he became President of the United States.

Way back in those days fraternal organizations flourished, and attendance at meetings was a must. Lodge night was a man's one night a week out. Initiation was rough and rugged. Hand generated electricity was used in "wired" wooden shoes and chair bottoms to give the candidate something to remember about his joining night.

I was an Eagle in those days, and this happened at an Eagle's lodge meeting in Goldfield, where I was visiting. What occurred that night was shockingly realistic. It seems that "Diamondfield" Jack and Tex Rickard, two well-known Nevada citizens, had been buddies over the years up in the Klondike and other gold camps before coming to Goldfield. They had been business partners there, but a short time before this had split up, and rumor had it that there was bad blood between them. Both had reputations for being gunslingers and were considered the kind of guys not to mess with.

Tex owned the Northern Saloon and promoted the Gans-Nelson fight in Goldfield on July fourth, 1906. Four years later he helped out on the Jeffries-John fight in Reno, again on a Fourth of July. In time he moved to New York, where he staged many events at old Madison Square Garden.

At this night at the lodge, there was a jam-packed audience and extra seats had to be installed all around the hall. It was one of the biggest crowds in months and the Eagles initiated a large "class" of thirty or more. Tex came in, and since he was an old-time member and a past officer, he was escorted to a seat on the rostrum by the presiding officer.

The lodge meeting was just about over when a call came in from the main door: "Member wants in."

"Who is the member?" another voice shouted.

"Brother Davis."

Then came the cry, "Don't let him in."

Someone else spoke up, "If he's paid up you can't keep him out."

Tex shifted around in his seat, then placed a couple of guns on his lap.

He exclaimed, "Let him in. I'm ready."

As Davis started blazing away with two guns, the lights suddenly went out and hell broke loose. Those who were on the edge of the building were using their guns too, but for the rest of us it was something we hoped that we would live through. The lights finally came on again and a scene of wild disorder followed. Me? During the entire time, I was lying flat on the floor behind a row of chairs.

Unknown to practically all of us at the lodge was that Jack and Tex had reconciled a few days earlier through the effort of mutual friends. They shook hands and joined in a drink together. They agreed to bury the hatchet, be friends again and let bygones be bygones. This reuniting had been kept a strict secret not to be disclosed before the next lodge meeting.

As the lights came on and I slowly got oriented again, I could not help noticing the ways various members had reacted to the gunplay. I thought, "What saps some folks are thinking that their cane-bottom [wicker] chairs would stop bullets." It really was funny to see what some men would do in the dark to hide. Funny it was until I happened to notice that I was still holding my derby hat in front of my face for protection!



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**Putting the finishing touches on the bat-grate**

