

# JUNK TRIP 96

NO. 17



## FAIRVIEW

## JULIA'S UNEQUIVICAL NEVADA KLAMPOUTS

NO	YEAR	LEADER	LOCATION
1	1980	GENO OLIVER (CHARTER)	STAR CITY-UNIONVILLE
2	1981	SKIP PENNINGTON	MANHATTEN
3	1982	BILL KENNEDY	KENNEDY
4	1983	JIM CRONN*	PINEGROVE
5	1984	GEORGE COURSON	LEADVILLE
6	1985	DOUG WALLING	BERLIN
7	1986	DAVID WOOD	ROCHESTER
8	1987	JOE LEOPRI*	AURORA
9	1988	BILL SAWYER	SULPHUR
10	1989	MIKE MILLER	MILLER'S STATION
11	1990	RED BEACH	SHAMROCK
12	1991	BOB RODGERS	COMO
13	1992	RON WALSH	SEVEN TROUGHS
14	1993	DANNY COSTELLA	NATIONAL
15	1994	JIM GROWS	DESERT WELLS
16	1995	DANIEL BOWERS	HIGH ROCK CANYON
17	1996	PETER VAN ALSTYNE	FAIRVIEW

\* GONE TO THE SILVER HILLS

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Nevada Ghost Towns & Mining Camps	Stanley Paher
Wonder	Hugh A. Shamberger
Fairview	Hugh A. Shamberger
History of Nevada	Thompson and West
Mining Districts of Nevada	F. C. Lincoln
Nevada Place Names	H. S. Carlson
Postal History of Nevada	H. P. Harris

### ARTICLES

Fairview Station, Mule Mail and the Drunk, Nevada Camels and the Pony Express, The Lincoln Highway	Geno Oliver
La Plata	Doug Walling
Fairview, Wonder	Peter Van Alstyne
Chairman of the most important committee and HUMBUG for 1996	H.M.F.I.C. Peter Van Alstyne

**E CLAMPUS VITUS  
AND SO RECORDED**

## FAIRVIEW

F.O. Norton could easily be called the father of Fairview. It was Norton, who made the first early discoveries in the district. The Fairview News was to say the following: . . . For be it known that the "rock-ribbed and ancient" hills lying at the base of Fairview Peak might yet be but a landmark of the overland road to Virginia City had not F.O. Norton, while riding from Austin to Fort Churchill eight years ago, exercised sufficient curiosity to dismount from his horse and pick up an insignificant little stone lying in the sand on that stretch of roadway known as "Labou Flat", a stretch of the overland route that was cursed by every freighter who followed the oxen that way from 49 to 70. The stone looked like quartz, and the finder put it in his pocket, where it remained until his arrival at Goldfield and eventually found its way to an assay office.

The article continued by stating that the certificate of assay from that specimen became the "Open Sesame" of the Fairview District. The assay showed \$ 14 in silver and gold. For seven long years that assay certificate, and the vistas it opened up to the seasoned prospector, remained with Norton, to feed his burning desire to return to the scene of his quartz find. During that period he knew no rest until the opportunity presented itself.

In January 1906, the Fairview Mining District was organized, with George Bertschy as District Recorder. During March, April and May 1906, the boom was really on. The townsite was recorded, and by April 26, 1906, a post office had been established. Hundreds of people prospectors, businessmen, gamblers, and saloon men, flocked into the district, and by late spring of 1906 the camp took on the appearance of a real town.

Norton, along with his partner sold their claims to several parties for a reputed price of \$285,000. In all of Nortons quest for rich claims, he was to miss out on the richest claim the "Boulder" and the "Boulder No. One". He did however do well for himself by investing his money in Reno property rather than in additional risky mining ventures.

Fairview was generally considered a silver camp, although the gold values were substantial. Silver values amounted to about seventy-four percent of the camp's total mineral production.

The Fairview District was organized in January 1906, with George Bertschy being elected District Recorder. The district covered the Fairview Range of mountains, of which Fairview Peak is the highest point. On the east it extended to Bell Flat, and about ten miles south of the Fairview townsite, covering a part of Slate Mountain. Chalk Mountain, six miles northeast of Fairview, is sometimes considered as a separate district, but in this story it will be referred to as the Chalk Mountain Section of the Fairview Mining District. The most important part of the Fairview District was centered in an area of about two square miles, but during the boom period, 1906-1908, activity extended several miles northward and eight miles southward. The south extension was then referred to as South Fairview. Considerable development work was carried on in the South Fairview area, particularly at the Mizpah Mine, three miles south of the Nevada Hills Mine; the Nevada Fairview Mine, six miles south of the Nevada Hills Mine; and the Nevada Crown Mine, -eight miles south, on the north side of the Downeyville Pass Road.

Of the estimated \$4,204,000 produced in the Fairview Section, probably as much as \$4 million came from approximately fifty acres comprising a part of the holdings of the Nevada Hills Mining Company.

Vanderburg included the ore production from Chalk Mountain in the Fairview District production records. He showed the total ore production from the Fairview District from 1906 to and including 1937 as \$4,171,005. This figure includes lead production, \$ 167,000, and copper, \$4,400, most of which came from Chalk Mountain. The Nevada Bureau of Mines shows an additional production of \$248,000 between 1938 and 1942, inclusive, which practically all came from the Fairview section; that is, south of U.S. Highway 50. All these statistics indicate total production from the Fairview District for the years 1906-1942, inclusive, of about \$4,420,000.

## Wonder

The first ore discovery at Wonder was made by Tom J. Stroud on or about March 18, 1906. It was at this time he located the Lost Claim, which later became a part of the Stray Horse Group. This claim was about one and one-quarter miles north of Wonder Mountains.

Stroud had been grubstaked by Nicholas A. D'Arcy of Rhyolite, who later became a dominate figure in the district.

When Stroud returned and reported to D'Arcy of his find, he was sent back to Wonder with two burros and a camp outfit. On this trip in early April, Stroud staked out a group of 14 claims, including the Jack Pot, and returned with samples of ore which he had assayed at Fallon.

Toward the later part of April, Stroud went out to his claims again for more samples. On this trip he was accompanied by his grubstaker D'Arcy, and also by D'Arcy's brother, along with a John Horgan. All these men, together with Stroud, became partners.

It was during this trip that the four men located a number of claims, including the Jack Pot and Grand View, the two claims making up the Jack Pot group. High-grade ore was discovered at the grass roots on both claims, and for the next few months, the Jack Pot workings vied with the Nevada Wonder Mine in importance. The value of the ore mined equaled that from the Nevada Wonder. The GOLDFIELD DAILY TRIBUNE of November 3, 1906, noted that the ores of the Jack Pot carried one ounce of gold to 200 ounces of silver. Ore values ranged from \$350 to \$500 a ton, with silver at 65 cents per ounce. At this time, the shaft was down 30 feet, the returns being \$300 per foot of depth. The property was incorporated in October 1906, with N.A. D'Arcy as president and general manager; the company was named the Wonder Jack Pot Mining Company. The Nevada Mining Investor, under date of October 15, 1906, advised that at that time there were about 150 sacks of rich ore piled up ready for shipment, and that a good road had been built up to the Jack Pot property from Hercules, which was only half a mile distant.

The rush from Fairview to Wonder started May 31<sup>st</sup>, 1906. A regular stampede to Wonder occurred. On May 31<sup>st</sup>, 1906 C.C. Higgins was returning to Fairview from a prospecting trip, as he looked out over the valley toward Chalk Mountain he saw a long line of dust. Soon he was able to determine that the dust was caused by horse-drawn wagons, burros, men walking, and a number of buggies. Without going in Fairview, he started for the head of the line of people.

In the history of the mining camps of Nevada, the Wonder Mining District stands out as being unique in several respects: (1) within nine days after the boom started the townsite of Wonder was laid out, and lots were sold rapidly at good prices; (2) within seven months four more townsites had been recorded; (3) within ten months from the start of the boom, a water supply for the town of Wonder had been piped in from Bench Creek, over six miles to the east.

During 1907, N.A. D'Arcy, T.J. Stroud and associates sold the Wonder Jack Pot Mining Company to Marvin E. Ish and his brother. It was reported that a total sum of \$750,000 was paid, with the first payment being \$50,000.

The Ish brothers' operation of the Jack Pot property didn't work out to well. It seems that a group of San Francisco stockholders purchased 90,000 shares of stock at \$1.50 per share, under the impression that it was treasury stock, controlled by the Ish brothers and associates, and that the money derived from its sale went to swell personal bank accounts.

The San Francisco stockholders appointed a Mr. Fred McMillan to represent them, and to try and obtain control of the Jack Pot. After more money was contributed and numerous obstacles surmounted, this was accomplished. Control of the Hercules and Globe Wonder was also obtained and efforts were being made to obtain control of the National Wonder.

It was reported that the merger of the Jack Pot group with the National Wonder, Hercules, and Globe Mining companies would become effective September 19, 1908. The new company organized under this merger was known as the Jack Pot Consolidated Mining Company. In August 1910, this company was succeeded by the Atlas Wonder Mining Company, which greatly improved the property and carried on aggressive operations until work was abandoned in 1914.

#### Decline and Rejuvenation years

In May 1907 the district had a population of 1,500, but by the end of August the number of people had decreased to 800. While the financial stringency of 1907 caused many miners and businessmen to leave Wonder, mining operations were still being carried on at a number of other places over the district. By 1908 the Nevada Wonder, Jack Pot, Spider and Wasp, Vulture, June Wonder and Capitol Wonder companies were working in good ore.

However, during 1908, when it was found that on many of the seemingly rich prospects the ore did not extend to any depth, most of the work in the district ceased to a great extent. The Nevada Wonder Mining Company carried on desultory mining operations during the 1908-1911 period. The company was convinced that in its case the ore bodies did go deeper, and that a large mining and milling operation would be justified. Accordingly the company planned to bide its time until a power and water supply was assured. The Jack Pot and Vulture mining work was carried on during the 1908-1910 period in an effort to get ore at depth. The work of these two companies was often interrupted by litigation and disagreement among their respective directorates.

It was not until the large Nevada Wonder Mill started operating during August 1911 that the final resurgence in the affairs of Wonder developed. During the time the mine and mill operated, 1911-1919, an average of 150 men were employed, and the population doubtless remained fairly stable.

#### Statistical Summary

First discovery of ore	March 18, 1908
Start of mining boom	May 30, 1906
Height of mining boom	Spring 1907
Mineral Production	
1907 to and including 1940	\$5,951,000
1907 to and including 1942	6,343,000
	(Silver \$4,760,000; Gold \$1,580,000)

#### LA PLATA CITY

La Plata City, Nevada was a silver mining town founded during 1862 in the Mountain Wells District on the eastern slope of the Stillwater Range and fronting on Fairview Valley. It was 13 miles north of U.S. 50 at a point just west of its junction with SR31.

La Plata means "the place of silver", and was known as a "Chloride Camp"; the ore being a silver chloride compound.

Eastern (the other side of windover), capitalists, through 1865 bought a large number of claims, and carried on extensive prospecting, development work with discouraging results. What ore was found was first hauled to a smelter in the Bernice Mining District, about 35 miles northeast of the camp.

The Silver Wave Mining Company, which owned the townsite, and an adjacent 15,000 acre pine and cedar wood ranch, built a 10 stamp mill: the largest in the district.

By the mid 1860's the camp was the counties largest and on April 2<sup>nd</sup> 1864, by order of Governor Nye became the 2<sup>nd</sup> seat of Churchill County. The first seat was at Buckland's Station, but when the west boundary was moved east, Bucklands lay in Lyon County.

A post office was granted and opened the 13<sup>th</sup> of April, 1865.

The ore supply was exhausted during 1867, about the time of the White Pine County silver rush, leaving the district deserted. The post office was closed November 25<sup>th</sup>, 1867, and the seat of the county was again moved in December of 1868 to Stillwater. Discoveries in the spring of 1906 sent a few miners back to the camp and a little ore was shipped in 1919 and 1920. The only remnants left of the camp are of the Court House. During the 1940's the walls were knocked down by the 7<sup>th</sup> Day Adventist Church and the stones taken to Fallon to be used for a new church.

This camp had everything but paying ore in quantity, and was nearly forgotten in time, until this trek.



*Bank Vault, Lower Fairview, looking north toward Pony Express & overland mail routes*

*Courtesy: Geno Oliver collection*

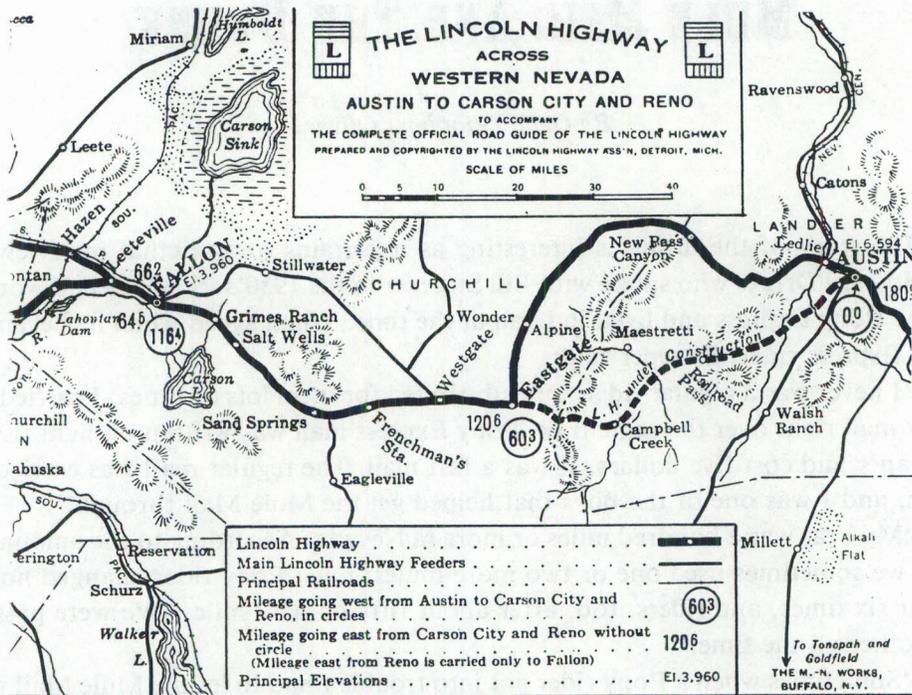
*Last out houses at Frenchman  
Rod Stock and Geno Oliver  
Courtesy Geno Oliver collection*



The Lincoln Highway passed through this area, following mostly, the Stage and Pony Express route. In 1913, the most direct route from New York to San Francisco started construction and by 1924, the cars were zooming by here, fifteen to twenty-five a week.

The control mileage and water stops are; Eastgate, 9.5 natural dirt to Westgate; 11.4 good gravel to Frenchman's Station, 8.2 natural gravel to Sand Springs, 11.3 gravel to Salt Wells, 5.2 gravel to Grimes Ranch, 10.5 Macadam to Fallon.

Frenchman's Station was originally a freighters stop. Proprietor, M. Bermond (the Frenchman) fitted up and built rooms and served meals compared to Fifth Avenue in New York. There was a charge for water. There is nothing left at Frenchman's today.





## MULE MAIL AND THE DRUNK

*By Geno (Vinoless) Oliver*

The story of the drunk is interesting as it pertains to an actual interview by Dr. Howard Driggs who spoke with Bill Streeper in the 1930's. Streeper had worked for the Pony Express and lived in Utah at the time. When asked when he became a Pony Express rider, Streeper said:

"I never was a regular rider, but substituted for them lots of times. I carried the heavy mail right over the same trail. Pony Express mail was written on light tissue-like paper and cost five dollars. It was a fast mail. The regular mail was carried on mules, and I was one of the boys that helped get the Mule Mail through."

"My beat was a hundred miles or more in Nevada. According to the amount of mail, we sometimes used one or two more mules. Each Pony rider changed horses five or six times, and riders, too, after about fifty or sixty miles. We were passing each other all the time."

"Sometimes when a Pony rider got into trouble I had to let the Mule Mail wait and put the Pony Mail through. Pony Mail had the right of way over the Mule Mail. We didn't have much trouble though, except when the blamed injuns got to cutting up thier mischief out in the desert. Wouldn't have had that if some dang fool hadn't stirred it up for us. Injuns were all right if they were treated right. I remember once when I took the Mule Mail and the Pony Mail together."

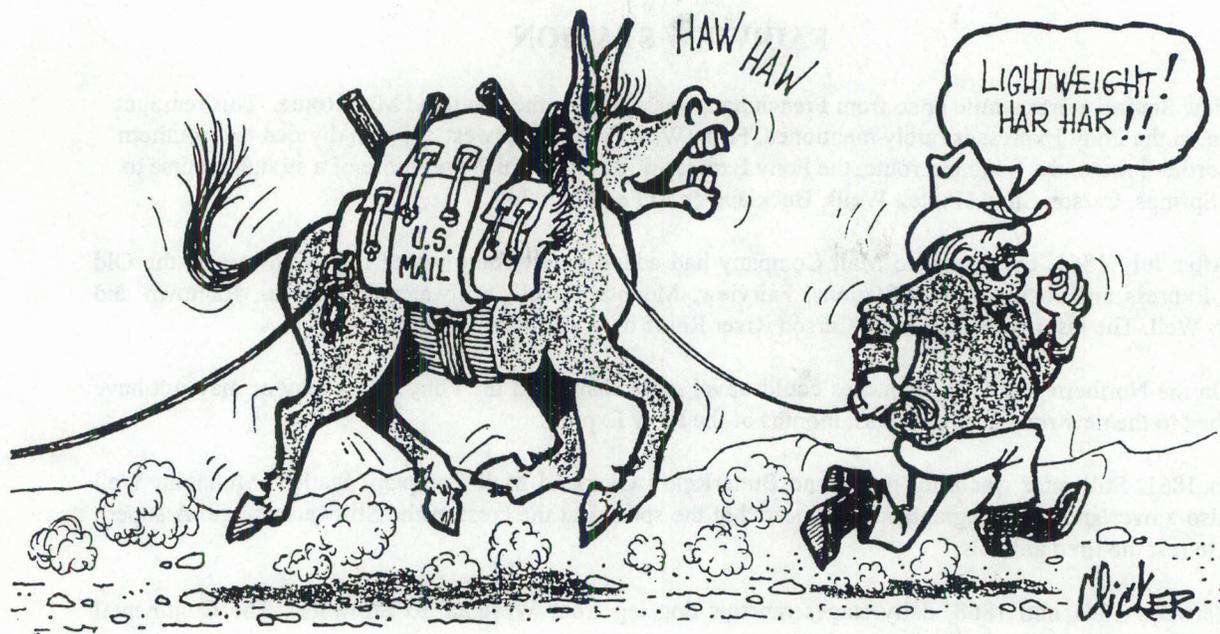
Streeper tells this story in the interview, which kind of sounds like a Clamper tale:

Carrying both Pony Mail and Mule Mail came about because of "whiskey, a bad dose of it. Well, out there in Nevada some fellow set up a saloon near one of the stations. One day I noticed the horse of a Pony rider tied in front, so I stopped and went in."

" 'Hello, Bill, Old Boy,' the rider kind of slurred. 'Come have a drink.' "

"Now mail carrying and whiskey don't mix. I tried to get him to leave. He insisted, 'Oh, come on, take a drink.' "

"I answered, 'It's not my drinking day. You better come on with me.' "



“The Pony rider says, ‘Set ’em up for the whole crowd. Bill, have a drink.’ ”

“I shook him off and said ’twasn’t my drinking day. I tried my best to get him out of the place, but finally I gave up and left.”

“ ‘Here’s to you, Bill,’ he said. ‘I’ll ketch up with your ole mules for you get a mile.’ ”

“I had been on the trail about three or four miles when I heard him whoopin’ and hollerin’ behind me. A minute later he shot past me on a dead run, yellin’ some drunken remark about eatin’ his dust. About half an hour later, as I turned a bend of the trail, I caught sight of the Pony rider stretched out full length on the trail with his horse standin’ still right by him. The thought flashed over me that the Injuns’ got him and he was dead, but I soon found out the only dead he was was dead drunk.”

“It was certainly a tough problem for me. I couldn’t leave him there in that dangerous spot. It was up to me to get him and the Pony Mail as well as my Mule Mail through. I shook him, pinched him, kicked him, but he just lay there like a log. I took my lariat and looped it under his arms, and after a lot of tough work I finally got him across his saddle and lashed him there, tyin’ him tight. Leadin’ the horse with my pack mule, we went on down the trail.”

“About an hour or so later, and about a mile from the next Pony Station, he began to wake up. Soon as he got enough sense to take in the situation, he began to beg me to untie him.”

“ ‘No you darned cuss! I’ve had enough trouble with you for one day. You’re goin into the station just the way you are,’ and I jolted him harder than ever.”

“He was cryin’ and pleadin’ all the time to be let loose. Well, finally I felt that I had given him punishment enough, so I stopped and untied him from his horse. He had a lot of explainin’ to do, and why he was so behind schedule. They let him carry the mail on, that time, there bein’ no other rider to take it, but it was the last time I ever saw him on the Pony Express!”

## FAIRVIEW STATION

Fairview Station, north a mile or so from Frenchman, was a stop on the Overland Mail Route. This remount station on the Pony Express is rarely mentioned. From West Gate, going west, the trail divided to a southern and northern route, the Southern route, the Pony Express riders used which was more of a straight course to Sand Springs, Carson Sink, Hooten Wells, Buckland's and Fort Churchill.

After July 1861, the Overland Mail Company had added a new route which ran northwest of the Old Pony Express and included new Stations, Fairview, Mountain Well, Stillwater, Old River, Ragtown and Desert Well. The last two being on the Carson River Route of the Emigrant Trail.

On the Northern route, stagecoaches could travel more easily and the Pony riders may or may not have switched to the new road during the last months of the Pony Express.

In 1861, Stillwater was a telegraph and Butterfield's Overland Mail Company Station, Mountain Well was also a overland and telegraph station located at the springs at the crest of the Stillwater range. A superb place to rest the tired animals.

Between 1861 and 1868, daily stages ran this dog leg from Westgate to Stillwater. The Continental Telegraph Company also used this route.

## NEVADA CAMELS AND THE PONY EXPRESS

By Gen. Geno Vino Oliver

Camels in Nevada accommodated service to several of the towns and stations in which the Pony Express had offices.

In 1854, soon after money had been appropriated by an Act of Congress to bring camels to the American Southwest, an editorial appeared in the Los Angeles Star envisioning a camel express (not pony express) from Missouri to Los Angeles in 17 days.

In 1856, Lt. Ed Beale was given the assignment of organizing a camel express from Ft. Mojave, Arizona Territory, across the southern tip of what is now Nevada, to Ft. Tejon, California, and on to Los Angeles.

In early February, 1861, the Owen's Nevada-California border survey and reconnaissance expedition was formed. Three camels were used in this exploring trek which ended in Visalia, California, on March 29, 1861. This expedition was unique in two respects: it was the first to apply the name "Death Valley" in print, and the first to name camels "Appropriate Beasts of Burden".

On March 2, 1861, Nevada became a U.S. Territory. Later that year camels were used to carry salt from the marshes southeast of Walker Lake. They traveled north past Fort Churchill, then paralleled the Pony Express trail to Ponderer's Rest, or Hall's Station, or Gold Creek Station, or Me Marlin's Station, or Chinatown, or Dayton, then up the canyon to Virginia City.

Salt was an important substance used in some of the refining of silver ore.

By the late 1860's a new salt was discovered a short distance from San Springs on the old Pony Express trail. This site was much closer to Virginia City, thus prompting the creation of a new camel trail.

In 1866 camels were hauling great amounts of freight from Virginia City to Austin along the old Pony Express trail. Later they were also used to carry coal to Virginia City and supplies to the new camp at Belmont.

There were many camel trails in this area: from California to Genoa to Empire and the Carson River stamp mills and on the Silver City, Gold Hill and Virginia City to Fort Churchill, San Springs and on to Austin; and south of Walker Lake to Rhodes Salt Marsh and further yet to Columbus Salt Marsh.

Camels played an important part in the history of Nevada in the 1860's and 1870's, and to this day in the Dead Camel Mountains, on a bright moon-lit night, a camel can still be heard to bray-WOOooo.



