



# Julia's Unequivocal Nevada Klampout

#44

*Nevada Copper Belt RR*

clamper year 6028

Brought to you by  
**Julia C. Bulette chapter 1864,**  
**E Clampus Vitus**

Researched and fabricated by  
**Jeffrey D. Johnson XNGH,**  
**Clamphistorian at chapter 1864**

**Noble Grand Humbug Robert Day**

**Dedicated to Prehistoric Cartoon Characters**

2023 c.e.

**ABSURDITY, n.** A statement or belief manifestly inconsistent with one's own  
opinion.

I gave no sign; but I made up my mind that if the auctioneer's brother's funeral  
took place while I was in the Territory I would postpone all other recreations and  
attend it. Sam Clemens

## Mason Valley

By Travis T “Baby Back” Stransky, Clampatriarch

Mason Valley is a valley in western Nevada, between the Singatse and Wassuk mountain ranges in present-day Lyon County, Nevada with the Pine Nut range nearby. The Walker River flows through the Mason Valley from Wilson Canyon and empties into Walker Lake, roughly 50 miles away. For over 1000 years Northern Paiutes settled in the Mason Valley and prospered off the local plants, wildlife, and many other abundant resources that the rich, fertile valley and Walker River had to provide. The Tabussi Dükadü, "Pine nut Eaters", Pogai Dükadü, "[Wild] Onion Eaters" and the A'waggu Dükadü, "Sucker Fish Eaters," shared the Walker drainage with the Aga'idökadö, "Cutthroat trout Eaters"

. In 1859, H.N.A Mason, a cattleman who drove a herd of cattle from California into the Walker River region, became the first white settler after establishing a ranch site giving his name to the valley. Mason and his California partners became large landowners, with holdings in the Quinn River area of Humboldt County as well as in the Mason Valley. At one time, Mason managed 15,000 acres of land and ranged more than 12,000 head of cattle within the Mason Valley area.

Also in 1859, another group of cattle owners from California drove their herds west of Mason Valley past the west fork of the Walker River. Two of these cattlemen were R.B Smith and T.B. Smith, and the area was called Smith Valley in their honor. The ranchers prospered there in the early 1860's as the mining town of Auroa boomed and a freighting station began to function in Wellington. Smith Valley never had a large population but has remained a rich agricultural region for the past century.

In 1870, William Lee homesteaded 160 acres in Mason Valley at the location which would evolve into present-day Yerington and built a two-story boarding house to serve travelers, as several roads passed through the area. Lee convinced men from nearby Pine Grove to come and open new businesses on his homestead, and soon the community of Greenfield, nicknamed "Pizen Switch" or just "The Switch" was established. ("Pizen Switch" was a bold nickname from the time when Yerington was a transfer or switch stop; and the local whiskey served at Jim's Downey's saloon was so bad that it was called "poison". "Poison" came out sounding like "pizen" because of local vernacular, and the name "Pizen Switch" stuck) The following year, the Mason Valley post office was opened and served the surrounding area.

The town of Yerington was founded on August 6, 1871 and by 1894, the name Yerington was chosen to replace the town's name from Greenfield in honor of Henry M. Yerington, the superintendent of the Virginia and Truckee Railroad and president of the Carson & Colorado Railroad with the hopes that he would build a spur line to town from Wabuska. The spur would never materialize, but the town still became known as Yerington anyway. The city of Yerington was incorporated on March 17, 1907, and became the Lyon County seat in 1911 after a fire burned down the courthouse in Dayton, where the Lyon County seat had been originally established. Lyon County, one of Nevada Territory's original nine counties created in 1861. It was named after Nathaniel Lyon, the first Union General to be killed in the Civil War. After Nevada became a territory in 1861 and then a state in 1864, much of Mason Valley was located within Esmeralda County and didn't become a part of present-day Lyon County until the county border expanded southward in 1883.

Copper had been discovered in the Singatse Mountains west of Mason Valley in the 1860s, and only after 1900 did this district become prominent. Speculators built smelters and constructed a railroad to Yerington and from there into the copper-bearing mountains to the west. From 1912-1919, the district produced several million dollars' worth of copper.

Today Mason Valley has remained an important agricultural hub for Nevada. Throughout the last century, Yerington has grown to a population of just over 3000 and is a significant producer of onions and garlic and has earned the nickname "The Onion Capital of the West".

### Singatse Range

The Singatse Range is composed of a series of 53 types of volcanic, plutonic, metamorphic, and sedimentary rocks. In addition, the Jurassic plutonic rocks are also of economic interest for their copper mineralization which is contained in a porphyry dike swarm. Singleleaf Pinyon grows here but, Utah Juniper is rare.

### Wilson Canyon

Wilson Canyon has been occupied by agents of BLM, the Bureau of Land Management, who have created an OHV Recreation Area on the North side of the West Walker River. The motorized trailhead is on the North side of State Route 208. Day use and overnight camping is allowed, and there is a vault toilet on site. Wilson Canyon is a narrow rock passageway in the Singatse Range, which separates Smith Valley from Mason Valley in Western Nevada. Stretching some three miles, the canyon is an unexpected scenic treasure that is also popular with off-road vehicle enthusiasts. The canyon's spectacular reddish-gray-colored volcanic rock walls were

carved by the West Walker River, which runs through the canyon before intersecting with the East Walker River a few miles to the east. Wilson Canyon was named for brothers David and William “Uncle Billy” Wilson, who settled in the area in 1863. In 1866, William struck it rich in the Pine Grove area. David Wilson took in and raised a young northern Paiute boy named Wovoka, who also took the name Jack Wilson. From 1911 to 1947, the Nevada Copper Belt Railroad ran through the canyon. You will find petrified wood stumps, fossils and other natural things in the vicinity on the South side of the river. The Southern Singatse Range is under the jurisdiction of Humboldt Toiyabe National Forest, an agency of the Dept. of Agriculture. Motorized vehicles are forbidden.

### Walker River

The West Walker River begins on the backside of the North slope of Yosemite in the Sierra Nevada Range. It flows around the west side of the Sweetwater Range into Antelope Valley, crosses the State line in Topaz Lake. From there Hoyes Canyon is the next obstacle to Smith Valley. The river is heavily used for irrigation in the ranching valleys along its lower course. Onions and alfalfa are the most common crops. After Wilson Canyon the stream converges with the East fork, 95 miles from the source. Discovered by Joseph Walker in 1834 on his return from Monterey, the Lake and River were named for him by John C Fremont in 1844



Fishing excursion in Wilson Canyon

## Nevada Dept. of Wildlife report for West Walker River 2023

In most locations, the west fork can be categorized as a put-and take fishery. Flow out of Topaz this year will be cool and plentiful providing some thermal relief during summer, and plenty of habitat for carryover into fall 2023. Summertime carryover is typically limited because there are no minimum flow requirements, and the river occasionally will go nearly dry during fall, that will not be the case this year. Stocking Brownies and trout of color typically begins during March (this may be delayed due to flooding conditions) and will continue until summertime water temperatures are too high, usually around late June. Fall stocking occurs as habitat conditions and hatchery fish availability allow. Angling for 10-12" trout from the Topaz Canal downstream to Yerington following stocking events typically produces a few trout and a lot of smiles. Please be mindful of private property throughout the Smith and Mason Valley areas, there are plenty of spots with public access. Wilson Canyon and Douglas County Parks and Recreation at Topaz offer primitive camping opportunities.

### Adrian Valley

The Waters of pluvial Lake Lahontan uniquely flushed both directions through the Adrian Valley, aka. Churchill Narrows as fluctuations in the drainage of the Walker and much larger Carson over the centuries. Of Course, the Aboriginal societies, the Emigrants and the Railroad exploited this low spot in the Divide. Between 50,000 and 45,000 year Before (the) Present, Walker Lake rose to its sill level in Adrian Valley and spilled to the Carson Desert subbasin. By 20,000 yr B.P., lake level in the western Lahontan subbasins had risen to about 4,150' above sea level, where it remained for 3500 yr. By 16,000 yr B.P., lake level in the western Lahontan subbasins had fallen to 4,068'. This recession appears synchronous with a desiccation of Walker Lake; however, whether the Walker Lake desiccation resulted from climate change or from diversion of the Walker River is not known. From about 15,000 to 13,500 yr B.P., lake level rapidly rose, so that Lake Lahontan was a single body of water by 14,000 yr B.P. The lake appears to have reached a maximum highstand altitude of 4,3634' by 13,500 yr B.P., a condition that persisted until about 12,500 yr B.P., at which time lake level fell  $\geq 100$  m. No data exist that indicate the level of lakes in the various subbasins between 12,000 and 10,000 yr B.P. During the Holocene, the Lahontan basin was the site of shallow lakes, with many subbasins being the site of one or more periods of desiccation. The shape of the lake-level curve for the three western subbasins indicates that past changes in the hydrologic balance (and hence climate) of the Lahontan basin were large in magnitude and took place in a rapid step-like manner. The rapid changes in lake level are hypothesized to have resulted from changes in the mean position of the jet stream, as it was forced north or south by the changing size and shape of the continental ice sheet.

The endorheic lake that filled the Great Basin was named for Louis Armand, Baron de Lahontan (9 June 1666 – prior to 1716). He served the French in Canada, exploring Wisconsin and Minnesota and discovered the Missouri River. After fleeing Canada he wrote popular travelogues. He wrote nice things about Native American culture, portraying Indian people as free, rational, and generally admirable.

### Sonora Pass Trail

The first emigrants to cross the Sierra Nevada Mountains into Tuolumne County were the members of the Bidwell-Bartleson Party of 1841. They followed a convoluted route from the headwaters of the Walker River to the San Joaquin Valley. The 1852 Clark-Skidmore Party of emigrants from Ohio and Indiana forced a wagon train up the river and over the 10,000 ft. pass. Agents from Sonora and Columbia conned these poor wayfarers, thus establishing a new trans-Sierra route. It left the main Carson trail at Bucklands Crossing and passed through Adrian Valley, into Mason Valley to Wilson Canyon, Smith Valley to Hoyes Canyon and across Antelope Valley where the real struggles began. The following year more than two thousand emigrants with 20,000 cattle used the new trail to the Southern Mines. By 1854, though, word of the difficulties along the trail had spread and only a trickle of emigrants chose the route. The trail became an important passenger and supply route between the Aurora and Bodie gold regions and Sonora.

### Report of Explorations across the Great Basin in 1859

In May of 1859 the United States Army was occupying Utah Territory. 2,500 troops were isolated from supplies by hundreds of miles of trail and Mormon insurrectionists. Colonel Albert Sidney Johnston ordered Topographical Engineer Capt. James H Simpson to map and explore a route across the Great Basin from Camp Floyd to Genoa in Carson Valley. Among his orders was to reach the bend of the Walker River. From Carson Lake the expedition crossed over Simpson Pass on future Highway 95 between Fallon and Shurz to the North bend of the river, coming back to the Carson near where Fort Churchill was built two years later.

. Excerpts from the report; *At 5 start again, and, still ascending to crest of dividing ridge between Walker's Lake Valley and Saleratus Valley, in 9.4 miles reach summit, 4,595 feet above the sea. reached Walker's River, 6.9 miles distant, and as the night was quite dark, have considered ourselves very fortunate that we got along without accident. We find ourselves on (for this country) a noble river, but will have to await daylight to disclose its features; perceive, however, we are amid good grass and timber and have an abundance of water. Journey to-day a hard one. Country wretchedly sandy and barren, mountainous or hilly. Distance, 31.2 miles. The guide has been a Pi-Ute Indian, hired at Carson Lake. The formations along the route have been trachytic, scoriatic rocks and volcanic tufas. In the pass, just before attaining summit of divide, noticed some hieroglyphics on detached boulders.*

This is the location of Lyon County prehistoric site #7 from Heizer & Baumhoff's book. It is just off US 95. Right on a section of old highway a lone boulder, covered in glyphs, has a hole in it where travelers from the Carson to the Walker have placed talismans for thousands of years.

*June 7, Camp No. 32, Walker's River. Altitude above the sea, 4,072 feet. In consequence of getting- into camp so late last evening, and the teams requiring rest, we lay over at this point till this afternoon. The river we are encamped on (Walker's) is the largest I have yet seen this side of Green River; it is about one hundred yards wide and from six to ten feet deep at its present stage, which seems to be high. It flows quite strongly toward Walker's Lake, in which it sinks. Its color is very much like that of the Missouri (a rather dirty yellow), and in taste is quite soft and palatable. Its banks, which are vertical, are about four feet above the surface of the water. The name Walker, applied to this river and to the lake into which it flows, first appears on Fremont's map of 1848, and was doubtless given by him in honor of Joseph Walker, the leader of the party sent by Colonel Bonneville, in 1835, to explore Great Salt Lake, and also subsequently, on his way to Monterey, Cal., passed by this river. Walker, after this, in 1845, was Fremont's guide along this same river and lake. I have sent Mr. Reese ahead with a few men to construct a raft to enable the party to cross Carson River when we shall reach it. After attending to this, he is to proceed on to Genoa and bring back our mail. Some Pi-Utes from Walker's Lake came into camp to sell or trade salmon-trout, caught in the lake. The largest they brought weighs -about 20 pounds. These Indians talk a little English and dress, some of them, like white people. In condition they are superior to those I've have seen. Raise camp at 3 p. m. Sun scorching hot. Course northwestwardly along the left or north bank of the river, being forced occasionally by the river from the bottom to the sand-bench. River-bottom from one-fourth to one-half mile wide. Soil, a dark loam, very rich. Grass quite abundant and of good quality. Cottonwoods (sparsely) and willows (abundantly) fringe the river. The river-bottom could be readily and copiously irrigated and made very productive. A range of low mountains run parallel to the river on north, and another also on south side, each about eight or ten miles distant. Not a tree or shrub is to be seen on them. The contrast between the perfectly barren, sandy, thirsty-looking country to be seen on every side and the valley of Walker's River, fringed with green cottonwoods and willows, is very refreshing. After marching ten miles, at 7 o'clock encamped again on the river. Road good except on banks of valley, where it was sandy. Pete came in from guide's party, and reports bend of Walker's River six miles ahead, where I expect to camp to-morrow.*

*June 8, Camp No. 33, Walker's River, Longitude, 118° 49' 00"; latitude, 39° 07' 88 altitude above the sea, 4,200 feet; thermometer at 4.45 a. m., 53°. Morning, as usual since we crossed the Se-day-e Mountains, oppressively warm immediately after sunrise. Moved at twenty minutes after 5. Continue 6.3 miles up valley of Walker's River, as far as the North Bend, and, at 8 a. m., encamp in tolerable grass. Road good, except the sandy portion wherever we left the bed of the river. Characteristics of country same as yesterday.*

*June 9, Camp No. 34, North Bend of Walker's River. Elevation above the sea, 4,288 feet; thermometer at 42° 5 am. Morning clear and pleasant. The Mexican, Sanchez, did not come in last night from guide's party to show us the road to next camp. We shall, however, push ahead, a Pi-Ute with us offering himself as guide. Our course lies northwestwardly to Carson River. Just after leaving camp, Sanchez met us and presented a letter from the guide, as follows, "PLEASANT Grove, Carson River, June 8, 1859. " Captain Simpson : "Sir: All is right. Mr. Miller will build a raft that will take the wagons over, for \$30. The logs have to be hauled some*



*three miles. The people here feel pleased that you and your party are so near. It is now 12 o'clock, and I am ready to start for Genoa. I shall be back before you arrive, to ferry on the raft. Mr. Miller says he will have it done to-morrow night. " Yours, "J. Reese." Six miles from camp we pass some hot and cold springs to left of road in valley. Thermometer rose to 165° when immersed in one of the hot springs. One of them is ten by twenty-five feet, and quite a stream flows from it. The water boils up at different points, and while it is of a sort of blue color in the body, along the margin it is a reddish-yellow color, doubtless caused by iron. The blue color is probably due to the sulphur it contains. It is the hottest spring I have seen, not excepting those near Salt Lake City.*

This is Wabuska Hot Springs.

*The valley, ever since we left our camp of this morning, has been exceedingly alkaline. Leaving the valley of Walker's River and striking for Carson River, we cross the point of a low mountain, ascent and descent good and in three and one-half miles more get into an old wagon-road, which we follow.*

Along present day Julian Lane, our heroes have left the river, gone north of the springs, crossing 95A and the site of the smelter. They meet the wagon road from Bucklands to Sonora and turn North into Adrian Valley.

*One mile more brings us to a canyon, which we thread, and in which we find a considerable patch of grass and rushes. In this canon, on left side, fourteen miles from last camp, embowered among wild roses and willows, is a small spring of good, cool water, about which there is a little grass; a plenty of the latter one-half mile south.*

This is Churchill Station Spring, where in 1881 water was piped to Churchill Station 2 miles North for the Carson and Colorado locomotives. In an incident of heavy rain in 1886, this siding became known as Washout.

*Two miles farther, pass over the steepest and roughest hill, or spur, we have seen. We would like to continue down the valley until we strike Carson River, and then turn up its valley to the left, and thus avoid this spur, but the height of the water prevents. At this hill we were detained two and one-half hours. All the teams had to double to get up, except Payte's, which seems thus far to carry off the need of power and good management. Three miles more along and up Carson River upon its bank brought us to a good spot on the river, where we encamp in good grass. Carson River at our camp about 100 yards wide, quite swift; depth, from ten to fifteen feet; color, somewhat whitish or clayey. The river-bottom is about one-fourth of a mile wide, very rich, and can be readily irrigated. At this time the banks are full, and in places overflowing; large cottonwoods, solitary and in groves, along it Journey, 19 miles. Road good, except steep hill three miles back.*

The Carson River was high and filled the lower Adrian Valley forcing the company to climb over the hill South of the river to Miller's ferry. Simpson's Central Route survey was followed immediately by the Pony Express and the telegraph. The Westbound Walker Bend route was a diversion, not part of the final trail.



Workers just finished laying some pipe along the C&C

### Churchill Station

In May of 1880 Virginia & Truckee Railroad Supt. Henry Yerington turned the first shovelful of Moundhouse soil to begin the Carson & Colorado Railroad. Bitter white men complained about the low wages and were dealt with accordingly. Chinese workers were clandestinely routed through Wadsworth to deceive the public and put to work grading the right of way through Adrian Valley, due South of where the Fort once stood. Where the wagon road South crossed the tracks and far enough up the Valley to avoid flood stages in the Carson River, Churchill Station was built. Good spring water for steam engines was piped from the spring two miles South. Passengers and farm stuffs were ferried across the River at Bucklands and loaded here. In 1900, C P Huntington of the Southern Pacific purchased the narrow gauge line from the V&T interests. In 1902 the Tonopah Rush began that created a quagmire at Moundhouse transferring goods from standard to narrow gauge cars. E H Harriman, the new owner of the SP gave up trying to purchase the Virginia and Truckee and just built his own line from Hazen on the new Central Pacific mainline to Churchill Station and Standardized the old C&C line back to Dayton too. Standard gauge came to Wabuska in January 1905. Eventually a track and earthwork was raised directly from the new line across the mouth of Adrian Valley with a gate to accommodate flooding. It still exists in the Cottonwoods by the river. In the 1920s a mixed train, #190 eastbound and #189 westbound, was scheduled on duty at Hazen where there was an enginehouse and interchange with the Mainline. They ran from there between Wabuska and Dayton on the Moundhouse Branch. An extra, unscheduled, local operated between Hazen and Mina when traffic warranted. A San Francisco sleeper,

#24 eastbound and #23 westbound, ran to Mina, where Tonopah & Goldfield RR personnel and locomotives hauled it to Goldfield and back. The line to Dayton was abandoned in 1934.

The Union Pacific Railroad still operates the line to Wabuska and a contractor operates the remaining track to the ammo dump at Hawthorne. In 1905 the railway was incorporated as the Nevada & California Railway Company also a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Southern Pacific with Standard gauge to Mina, dual gauge to Tonopah Jct. and narrow gauge to Keeler Ca. In 1912 the N & C Railway was transferred to the Central Pacific subsidiary of SP. In 1959 the Central Pacific ceased to exist in the name of SP.

### Wabuska Hot Springs

“Wabuska” is the Washoe Indian word for “White Grass”. Chalky white alkali soil, dusts everything, including grasses that grow near the hot springs. The springs are privately owned and have been churning out geothermal power since 1984, Nevada’s first commercial scale binary geothermal power plant. Adjacent to Wabuska Geothermal, Whitegrass No. 1 and 2 are 4 Mega Watt binary plants. The power generated from the project is sold to Southern California Public Power Authority. According to local Indians, the mineral rich, red hills which overlook Wabuska, provided the dye for the red paint used by Wovoka in his Ghost Dance.

## WABUSKA

Edward P. Lovejoy was the son of Elijah Lovejoy, “the first American martyr to the freedom of the press and freedom of the slave”. As a young man, Edward left the Midwest for California where he served as district attorney, judge, and newspaper editor in Weaverville, CA. He relocated to Virginia City, NV, where he operated the American Exchange Hotel. As the Comstock’s economy rapidly declined, Lovejoy’s business soon went bust, spurring him to start over in Wabuska as an employee with the Carson & Colorado Railroad. In 1881 he embarked on his final enterprise, E.P. Lovejoy, General Merchandise and Produce. This location served as hotel, restaurant, bar, grocer, and post office.

Edward Lovejoy died in Wabuska on August 26, 1891 and is buried in the Dayton, NV cemetery. The business was then continued as a bar and mercantile under the proprietorship of J.M. Feeny. In 1937 the property was purchased by Al & Mary Veil. After Al’s death Mary continued to serve libations to thirsty patrons well into her golden years.

Subsequent owners endeavored to revive the bar, but Wabuska proved to be too much of an outpost where patrons are scarce. In keeping with the Silver State tradition, Lovejoy’s behemoth endured its share of boom and bust. Yet still it stands as Mason Valley’s northern sentry.

Dedicated by Copper Queen 1915 Chapter of E. Clampus Vitus  
September 17, 2022 AD (6027 CC)



## Wabuska

The water tower tank foundations remain, one leg of the wye and a functional switching yard. The depot was moved to the State Museum in Carson. Wabuska, at its height, had a school, several saloons, brothels, businesses, and houses. The building housing the Wabuska Bar is a jigsaw puzzle of several different buildings, from different towns, assembled into one. The front section of the bar was moved from some saloon in Virginia City. During prohibition, liquor was hidden in a secret room behind a closet under the stairs. It was, a post office, store, barber shop, hotel and brothel, the original mini-mall. The back section provided living quarters for the proprietors. J M Feeney's legacy is a huge safe that bears his name. Mary Veil is reported to still haunt the facility. The Wabuska Mangler was the name given to a mythical newspaper in 1889 by Sam Davis, then the editor of the Carson Appeal. It was reported to be the biggest liar west of Missouri. Ed Lovejoy was the fictitious editor. Today the Copper Queen Chapter 1915 of E Clampus Vitus uses the Bar as their Headquarters.



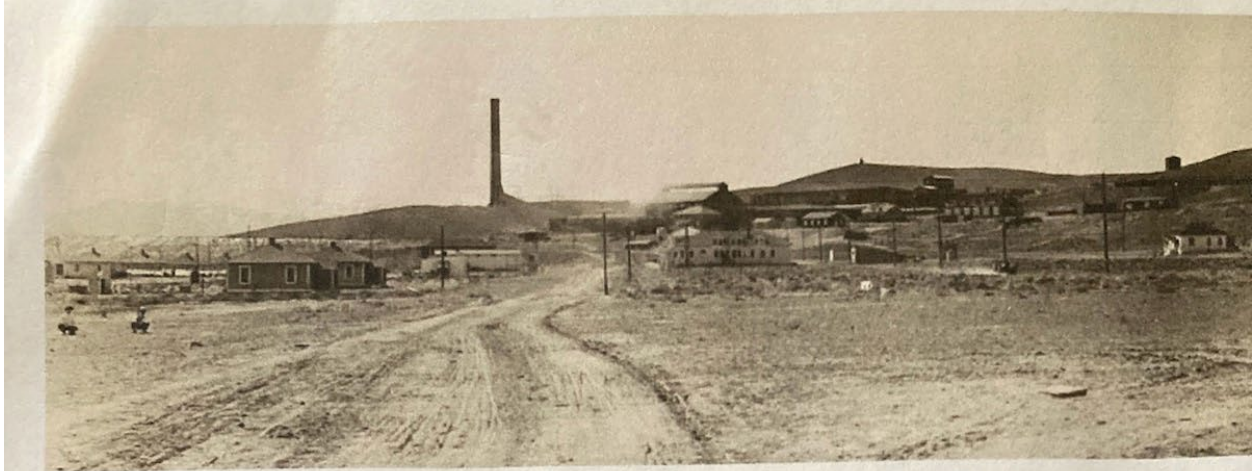
## Thompson Smelter:

By Rob Day, NGH

With the mining boom in Mason and Smith Valleys, a smelter was needed to process copper ore. The location was selected at the north end of Mason Valley to the east of the Singatse Range. Smelting is the process of purifying metal from its ore. Heat and chemical reactions are used to extract the metal leaving behind slag, which is the composite of materials removed. Mason Valley Mines Company began construction in 1910. The first smelter went online in 1912 and could process 700-1000 tons of copper ore per day. A second 500 ton smelter was constructed in 1913-14. The small town of Thompson was developed to house smelter workers. Originally the town consisted of two blocks of houses. It later grew to contain 350 residents and several blocks of stores, homes, saloons and mechanic's shop. A post office was open from June 28, 1911 to June 30, 1920.

Thompson was connected to the mines by railroads. The Carson and Colorado Railway connected Thompson to Wabuska several miles to the south. The Nevada Copper Belt Railroad then connected Wabuska to the Nevada-Douglas Copper Company mine which extended to Ludwig on the west side of the Singatse Range. Starting in 1911, the Nevada Copper Belt Railroad transported 1,000 tons of copper ore per day from Ludwig to Thompson via beautiful Wilson Canyon. On the return trip the rail way carried supplies to the towns of Ludwig, Delphi and Hudson. In 1925 the railroad went into default but it continued to operate until 1929. Copper mining in Ludwig decreased and the Thompson Smelter closed in 1914. The smelters reopened 1917-1919, One smelter was brought back online for the final time in 1926. It was closed in 1928 and dismantled. Today the remains of the Thompson smelter silently watch over Mason Valley. Foundations, concrete pillars and slag are all that remain. Any trace of the town of Thompson has faded into the desert. Now only a flat depression denotes where people once lived.

**AUCTIONEER, n.** The man who proclaims with a hammer that he has picked a pocket with his tongue.



The smelter was named in honor of co-owner, William B. Thompson.



Wabuska Eastbound and Westbound, different years.

## Nevada Copper Belt Railroad.

The Carson & Colorado Railroad, a narrow-gauge line from Moundhouse was long gone and standardized when the Nevada Copper Belt was built. The railroad started in 1910 connecting Nevada-Douglas Copper Company mining facilities to the SP at Wabuska. The railroad was built south from Wabuska to Mason in March. The Copper Belt ran straight across the Southern Pacific tracks at Wabuska and straight up the wye on the north side of the tracks. The lead off the wye extends North, past the present 95A. Ore trains rode a wide 2.7 mile arc curving around to near the top of Thompsons Smelter, a mile and a half away. The Southern Pacific had a spur of their own that quarried slag from the bottom of the complex. The Copper Belt had an interchange track in front of the SP depot. Passenger service was by gasoline motorcoaches, one is preserved at the California Rail Museum. A wye to turn the power at Mason, home of the shops and roundhouse, the wye at Wabuska and a wye at Hudson helped the crews know if their locomotives were coming or going.

In 1910 construction proceeded to Nordyke, Wilson and up the canyon to leave the river at Hudson, reaching the company mine at Ludwig in November 1911. Agricultural products from irrigated ranches along the Walker River provided revenues in addition to the ore traffic. A spur to the Bluestone Copper Co. was installed at Mason in 1917. Traffic volume remained high until the Thompson smelter closed in 1929. Annual fluctuations in the copper market doomed the line. The right of way from Hudson to Ludwig was abandoned when the gypsum plant closed in 1932. The railroad ceased passenger operations in 1945 and abandoned all operations in 1947.

### Hudson

Built on the river for water to satisfy the locomotives, Hudson was Smith Valley's connection to the world. Shipments for Bodie and Aurora were received here.

### Ludwig

First named the Alkali Claims, then Morning Star, mining for copper sulfate used in the 'Washoe Process' began in the 1860s. Named for John Ludwig, a half deaf German, after he built a small smelter and invested heavily. He was an eloquent advocate in the Silver Party. Their politics involved mining and coinage. He sold out to Utah interests before 1903. Gypsum was also mined in the area. Railroad Day arrived with much fanfare, December 29<sup>th</sup>, 1911. The town store burned two days later. Marble forms the footwall vein in the mine. to the North of the copper load, gypsum crops out in an exposed belt about 500' wide and 1,500' long. The underground workings are 8 miles long on 8 levels.



## Weed Heights

The Anaconda Copper Company built Weed Heights in 1952, named for Clyde E Weed, vice president in charge of operations. A post office was established March 16, 1953. The town was owned by Anaconda until the company was taken over by Atlantic Richfield. They sold the property in 1982 to Don Tibbals, a Lyon County Commissioner who subsequently sold the entire property to Arimetco, with the exception of the town of Weed Heights, which is now a rental community and RV park with miniature golf course. Weed Heights has a gorgeous view of Mason Valley, the Wassuck Range and the Anaconda Pit.

### The Anaconda Mine

By Metric Ebert XNGH

Native Americans were likely the first to recognize the presence of copper in the region, as evidenced by ancient mining pits and tools found in the vicinity. However, it wasn't until the late 19th century that serious exploration and mining efforts took place. Copper was discovered by European Americans in the Yerington District in 1865, and operations at the mine site began in 1918 as the Empire Nevada Mine. Anaconda bought the mine in 1941. From approximately 1952 to 1978, Anaconda conducted mining and milling operations at the open-pit, low-grade copper mine.

The Anaconda mine is composed of porphyry copper deposits, which are copper ore bodies formed from hydrothermal fluids that originate from a voluminous magma chamber several kilometers below the deposit itself. The copper was processed from the extracted ore using two processes. Copper oxide ore (from the upper portion of the pit) was processed by heap leaching, either directly with sulfuric acid in vats to produce a copper solution precipitated by passing it over scrap iron, or by leaching successively in acid and kerosene solutions, subsequently electroplating onto stainless steel sheets. Sulfuric acid was made in an on-site sulfuric acid manufacturing plant. Copper sulfide ore from the lower portion of the pit was processed by crushing, and flotation with calcium oxide added to the solution to maintain an alkaline pH. Anaconda mining operations generated approximately 360 million tons of ore and debris from the open pit and 15 million tons of overburden resulting in 400 acres of waste rock placed south of the Pit, 900 acres of contaminated tailings, and 300 acres of disposal ponds.

In 1977, Atlantic Richfield Company (ARCO) bought Anaconda. A decrease in copper prices, lower priced foreign imports, and declining grade and amount of ore available forced the closure of Anaconda's copper mining operations in 1978. All

activities were shut down in 1982. Groundwater pumping out of the pit stopped when Anaconda operations ceased, resulting in the 180-acre Pit Lake. It is about one mile long, 800 feet deep with 500 feet of water, and holds around 40,000 acre-feet of water which increases at the rate of 10 acre-feet/year.

In 1982, the property was sold to Don Tibbals, who refurbished Weed Heights, conducted some operations, and leased portions of the site to various companies. Following Anaconda's sale of the site, portions of the site were used for extracting copper from the tailing and waste rock piles and as a metal salvage and transformer recycling facility. Arimetco bought the mine property from Tibbals in 1988 and pursued leaching operations on the site, eventually building an electrowinning plant and five heap leach pads to produce copper. They used tailings material left by Anaconda and added some new ore resulting in 250 acres of heap leach piles and 12 acres of heap leach solution collection ponds. Arimetco went bankrupt in 1997, abandoning the site in 2000 without properly closing it as required by Nevada law. The Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) became involved in the stabilization of the site's Fluid Management Systems associated with the Heap Leach Pads. In the same year, British Petroleum acquired ARCO, which today is a subsidiary of BP. Since then, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), NDEP and ARCO entered into a consent agreement in which ARCO's remediation responsibility includes the abandoned Arimetco portion of the site.

In 2013, a consortium of neighboring property owners received a \$19.5 million settlement from ARCO and its parent, BP America Inc., who they accused of covering up contamination from the site. The companies acknowledged no wrongdoing under the agreement, which also called for them to pay \$2.6 million in attorney fees to the legal team that represented about 700 past and present neighbors of the Anaconda mine. Residents said in a class action lawsuit filed in 2011 that the companies had "intentionally and negligently" concealed the extent of uranium, arsenic and other pollutants leaking into their drinking water wells from the mine.

The Anaconda Copper Mine site covers more than 3,400 acres in the Mason Valley, near the city of Yerington, in Lyon County, central Nevada, about 65 miles southeast of Reno. The Singatse Range and the town of Weed Heights lie to the west, open agricultural fields and homes to the north, U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) managed public land to the south, the Walker River and the city of Yerington to the east. Portions of the site formerly owned by Arimetco were acquired by Singatse Peak Services and portions are BLM managed public lands. Proposals to transfer public property to Singatse Peak Services to expedite remediation are still under consideration.



Clyde E. Weed

By Metric Ebert XNGH

Clyde Evarts Weed was born in 1890 in Moorestown, Michigan, and graduated from Michigan College of Mining and Technology in 1911. Weed started his engineering career as a miner and quickly moved into supervisory positions with several Michigan companies. Then, in 1921, he became manager of the Live Oak division of Inspiration Consolidated in Arizona. In 1930 he became general manager of Cananea Consolidated Copper Company in Mexico, becoming president in 1935. There, he developed a process for taking molybdenum out of copper ores. Weed became general manager of mines for Anaconda in 1938.

His fellow professionals in the American Institute of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers, of which he had been director from 1945 to 1950, awarded Weed the Saunders Medal in 1951 for having brought the industry "a new concept of technological and operating efficiency." Among his innovations was the supervision he gave to the beginning of open-pit mining. In 1952, the community of Weed Heights was established near the Anaconda Mine, named for Weed when he was vice-president of operations.

When Weed was elected president of Anaconda in 1956, he was the first mining engineer since 1915 to hold the post, otherwise held throughout that time by lawyers or financiers. Weed was awarded the "Order of Merit General Bernardo O'Higgins" in the rank of Knight Commander, by the Chilean Government in 1957. This is the highest honor a foreigner can receive in Chile. Weed was selected as the first "Copper Man of the Year" by The Copper Club in 1962, for service to the industry beyond normal duties. After 54 years in the mining industry, 44 of them with Anaconda, he retired in May, 1965. Clyde E. Weed died in Phoenix, Arizona, on May 6, 1973.

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Wilson Canyon January 2023

### Julia's Unequivical Nevada Klampout

By Myron G Oliver XNGH, (PXP)

"With a "k", the first JUNK trek and chartering was August 30 and 31, 1980, at Star City with a plaque dedication to that mining camp. At the little park in Unionville another plaque dedication took place, two of the last four markers erected before the state program was deleted. This trek was referred to as 1st Julia Junkett,

On the last full weekend in August, we have a Klampout at a historical place. A ghost town, military fort, emigrant road or trail, mining camp or some other area of historic value.

It is a two night camp out with the historic tour on Saturday. You bring your own food, booze and you can participate in the cooking contest Saturday night, Trophy's will be awarded for first, second, and third place winners for best cuisine on JUNK. The current humbug will pick a place of his choice with historical interest for his JUNK trek. He will help with the history and research for the upcoming trek. At the camp site, with camaraderie, history talks, storytelling and lies, Saturday night is the Auction starring the infamous Brent 'Shortround' Stockwell. Articles are of historic value, or not, the money received from this auction goes into the Moran Building Fund to fund the work and maintenance on the ECV building in Virginia City.

First time new members receive a sheepskin certificate with their name, the place and the date, a JUNK badge with place name hanger bar. Everybody receives the JUNK book on the historical area we are at, written by the Clamphistorian and his accomplices. Previous junkies receive the event place hanger bar. The price is 20 dollars for first time trek members and 10 dollars for old junk trek members. The money stays in the junk trek fund. It pays for the metal place hanger bars, the books, sheepskins and trophies. This is a break even endeavor, a nonprofit project. The following is a list of all the JUNK treks to date.

Blasts in the Past + "Gone to Silver Hills"

1980 MYRON G OLIVER,+ STAR CITY-UNIONVILLE  
1981 SKIP PENNINGTON+, MANHATTEN  
1982 BILL KENNEDY, KENNEDY  
1983 JIM CRONN+, PINEGROVE  
1984 GEORGE COURSON,+ LEADVILLE  
1985 DOUG WALLING, BERLIN  
1986 DAVID WOOD, ROCHESTER  
1987 JOE LEPORI, AURORA  
1988 BILL SAWYER+, SULPHUR  
1989 MIKE MILLER, MILLER'S STATION  
1990 RED BEACH+, SHAMROCK  
1991 BOB RODGERS+, COMO  
1992 RON WALSH, SEVEN TROUGHS  
1993 DANNY COSTELLO, THE REAL NATIONAL  
1994 JIM GROWS+, DESERT WELLS  
1995 DANIEL BOWERS, HIGH ROCK CANYON  
1996 PETER VAN ALSTYNE+, FAIRVIEW  
1997 EDDY GONZALES, GRANTSVILLE  
1998 JOHN DORNSTAUDER, HUMBOLDT CITY  
1999 KEN MOSER, BELMONT  
2000 VAL COLLIER+, PEPPER SPRINGS  
2001 CHUCK MURRAY, NIGHTENGALE  
2002 MARC BEBOUT, +NEW PASS MINE  
2003 AL NICHOLSON, IONE  
2004 RON THORNTON, FLETCHER STATION  
2005 J D PATERSON, APPELATE-LASSEN TRAIL  
2006 WALT SIMMEROTH, NEVADA CENTRAL R. W.  
2007 JEFF JOHNSON, ADELAIDE  
2008 OWEN RICHIE+, TYBO  
2009 KARL SMALL,+ DUN GLEN  
2010 DAN WESTON, KINGSTON  
2011 RUSS BREAM, SMOKE CREEK  
2012 JESS DAVIS, + FREMONT'S CASTLE  
2013 CLIFF McCAIN, KNOTT CREEK  
2014 BOB STRANSKY, JARBIDGE  
2015 TIM PIERCE, WHISKEY FLAT  
2016 KEVIN BRECKINRIDGE, COMSTOCK  
2017 REID SLAYDEN, WONDER  
2018 DOC ASHER, SILVER PEAK  
2019 VIC MENA, SILVER PEAK II  
2020 MATTHEW Q EBERT, 120 EAST BY 42 NORTH  
2021 FRED ELDRED, SPRING CITY  
2022 TRAVIS T. STRANSKY UNIONVILLE II #69

