

Tomboy Mine

Two groups totaling twenty-six members of the San Juan Basin Archaeological Society each spent a day with guide Rudy Davison. During this exciting trip each group visited many locations in the Telluride Basin on the dates of Aug 3 and Aug 4, 2010. One of our earlier stops was the Social Tunnel where miners met with ladies from town during the earlier days, since women were considered bad luck in the mines. We then continued on to visit the Shamrock Mine, the Sheridan Mine, the Bullion Tunnel, the Smugglers Tunnel, the Tom Boy Tunnel and many more. There was also the Liberty Bell Tram and Mill and many, many more interesting sites. The collapsed buildings at many sites would not reveal their story to the casual observer but by having a knowledgeable guide we learned which were the boarding houses, the bowling alley, the retort oven, the mills, etc. There were stories about the tense relations between the mine managements and the union miners. One of the many true pleasures was to have a guide along that not only could tell you the names and locations of so many sites but also tell a humanized story about each area. These stories added a personal touch to each site making it seem as though you were standing there watching the event unfold.

J.B. Ingram after inspecting the many claim markers realized that the Sheridan and Union claims were greater in size than the 300 by 1500 ft allowed and then quickly staked his own claims in this high yield area. His claims were to me known as the "Smuggler Mine."

There were also many trip extras such as unmatched scenery, the colors of the mountains, the waterfalls, the flowers and the lack of traffic. The morning of Aug 3 the weather was quite marginal causing many other tourists to stay away, leaving the area mostly to ourselves. Many of us intended to proceed over Imogene Pass and return via Quray but no one did there just was not enough daylight in the day. The "roads" up there can be quite narrow and the real challenge is when two meet going in opposite directions. Hopefully Rudy will take us on more mining trips!