

THE KENNEDY MINE
A NONPROFIT FOUNDATION
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HISTORY:

The history of the Kennedy Mine is traced to January 4, 1860 when Andrew Kennedy, John Fullen, James Fleming, and James Berrigan filed four mining claims, each 120 feet long, in the vicinity of today's Viewpoint along Highway 49/88. Andrew Kennedy had explored the area up to the Oneida Mine boundary line to the North. He is also credited with digging a prospecting shaft to a depth of 100 feet, using a bucket attached to a winch with a handle. This shaft was sunk approximately 400 feet south of the Oneida boundary line beginning perhaps as early as 1855. Andrew's three partners were associated with the Oneida Mine at the time the mining claims were filed.

Andrew sold his one quarter interest in the undeveloped mining claim within a year, on October 4, 1861, for \$5,000.00. The four partners operated sporadically along one whim shaft until 1869. The Mine was sold to eleven Jackson businessmen for \$1.00 on November 22, 1869. Nine of these men formed a corporation named the "Kennedy Mining Company." Peter Reichling, one of the nine corporate members, operated the Mine as superintendent. He operated the Mine periodically for a total of 41 months between 1870 and June 1878. At least three new shafts, which yielded gold, were sunk during this time period. One of these three would later be referred to as the "South Shaft."

The Kennedy Mining Company is credited with recovering \$300,000 in gold value between 1870 and 1878. The amount of gold recovered prior to 1870 by the partnership is unknown, but considered modest compared to the \$300,000.

Several attempts to reopen the Mine by the Kennedy Mining Company after 1878 were unsuccessful. The Mine was sold in 1886 for \$97,500 to fifteen Bay Area investors after prominent mining engineer, J.J. Thomas, had performed extensive ground testing. The lead investor was Francis Reichling, the older brother of Peter. The new investors incorporated under the name of the "Kennedy Mining and Milling Company."

The Kennedy Mining and Milling Company succeeded in operating profitably, whereas the two prior ownerships were greatly challenged in this area. Some of the major factors that brought about this change in profitability were (1) a larger amount of investment capital by the fifteen investors to purchase up-to-date mining machinery, (2) the implementation of effective mining engineering concepts by J.J. Thomas, (3) the availability of sufficient water from the Sierra to

effectively use water power to run the mining machinery, and (4) the discovery of rock at greater depth with a higher quantity of gold.

This corporation operated the Kennedy Mine until the U.S. Government closed all major gold mines in 1942 due to the war effort. The Kennedy was the deepest gold mine in North America when it closed in 1942 at 5,912 vertical feet (meaning as measured straight down below the surface). It had well over 50 miles of underground excavations. Order L-208 was lifted in 1945, which allowed the gold mines to resume operations. Management at the Kennedy chose not to reopen the Mine because of the extensive water that had accumulated in its numerous deep underground excavations after remaining idle for three years. Gold production of the Kennedy by that time had totaled over \$28,000,000.

The property lay idle until Sybil Arata, a ceramics teacher in San Francisco, bought the 152-acre Kennedy Mine at a liquidation sale in 1961 for \$41,600.00. Sybil lived in a house on the mine grounds for many years. She died on May 12, 1994 leaving a will that stipulated two wishes. (1) The Kennedy Mine property is to remain as open space for wildlife habitat; and (2) the Mine is to be maintained for its historical value. The Kennedy Mine Foundation was formed in 1996 to fulfill those wishes.

Thanks to the generosity of many individual and corporate donors, the Kennedy Mine is continuing to make improvements, add to the displays, and preserve California's Gold Rush heritage. If you would like to volunteer or contribute to this worthy cause, or would like more information, please contact the non-profit Kennedy Mine Foundation. Phone (209) 223-9542 or email info@kennedygoldmine.com. Thank you for your support!