

Newsletter166

Keith's Corner/McGill News

July 15, 2022

Reverb Furnaces

These furnaces were located in the smelter building. They were on the east side of the smelter and one floor above the converters. They were large rooms lined with fire brick on all sides and larger fire brick hanging from the roof structure.



This photo was taken on November 15, 1912. The large fire brick in the curved ceiling are hanging from a lattice above the roof. Each brick has a metal hook extending out the top to hang on the lattice. It is a masterful brick laying job to accomplish. Russell Elliot's, the author of several books on McGill and the copper company, father was brought to McGill to supervise the construction.

The ore from the mill was now called, concentrates, and was put into the reverbs and then heated with large jets of flaming oil. Later, fine coal dust is blown into the end of the reverb to continue the heating and melting of the concentrate. The large coal dust blow tubes went thru an opening in the end of the furnace. The opening was a bit larger than the tube to allow air into the process. These openings would get plugged up and we had to clean them. These openings were about 5 feet above the floor. We could see into the furnace as we cleaned the openings. Every so often the coal dust would build up and cause an explosion that shot thru the windows. We could see and hear it coming. There was no time to run, so we dropped to the ground and let it pass over us. Quite an interesting job.



There were two reverb furnaces. One would be shut down and rebricked. The slag would build up on the floor and had to be removed. It took a while to cool down enough to allow workers to do their job. I remember wearing large wooden slabs on the soles of our boots. They would smoke and sometimes catch on fire. The heat was so bad, we could only be in there for a few minutes. We had to jackhammer the slag into small pieces to be removed. The fellow in the above phot is doing just that and it looks like the furnace has cooled a lot. Sometimes

we would drill some blast holes in the slag. Taly Mellos would come in and place dynamite in the holes and then we would drag a large rubber mat over the charge. There was always the worry that it would go off from the heat. We had to exit thru a small hole in the sidewall. It was rather exciting, not my favorite.



At the back of the furnace were large metal tubes, called the waste heat boiler. The intense waste heat was utilized by heating water for the smelter.

McGill News

Very quiet. Hot and windy. I was out of town over the 4th so don't have any stuff on it.

Oldies

1909—September 26—The Smelterville school students will go to school in McGill.

1915-April 18—Final phase of construction of the Clubhouse has resumed.--

Old Photo



POSING IN FRONT of a 1927 Dodge in McGill, Nevada in 1928 is the Linnell Family. L-R: Leonard, Erling, Inga, Norm, baby Bobby, Andrew and Evelyn. (Courtesy of Norm Linnell)

The Linnell family in 1927. Norm is in the front with the short pants.