

Newsletter207

## Keith's Corner/McGill News

April 28, 2023

### Highway 50 In White Pine County

There seems to be a lot of confusion about just how did Highway 50 get here to McGill from Utah. Some folks maintain that it came from Wendover and others say it came from Tooele. What is the answer??

Basically the purpose of Highway 50 was to link the East and West coasts of the USA.

In 1913, Henry B. Joy, a member of the Lincoln Highway Association, had outlined a plan that would take the Highway south from Salt Lake City to avoid the costly job of building a road across the 'salt flats'. The road would pass thru Tooele, Gold Hill, Ibadah and Schellbourne and into McGill

Other members of the Lincoln Highway were more inclined to go west out of Salt Lake City and thru Elko to Reno. The California delegation wanted to go this route, because they were afraid that if travelers could go from Salt Lake to Ely, then they could head south to Vegas and LA. The California delegation at that time was controlled by delegates from the San Francisco area. They favored the northern Nevada route to Reno.

With all of this bickering, construction of the road from Tooele wasn't completed until June of 1925.

With the building of the road west across the 'salt flats' White Pine County was cut off from the main route to California.

This caused a lot of concern as most westerly traffic from Salt Lake took the northern route.

This led to a petition to the Nevada Highway Dept. to build a road from the Schellbourne road to Wendover. This was completed on April 17, 1930. The section

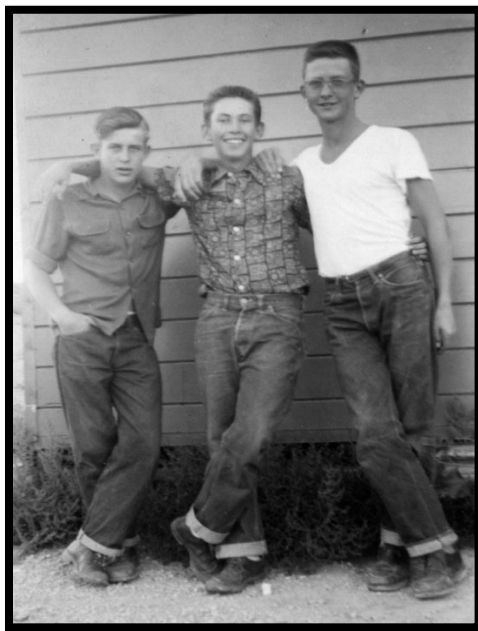
of the road from Schellbourne to Lages (Stage Stop ) was called US93/50. The road from Lages to Wendover was called Alternate US93.

There was a huge celebration in Ely on June 4-7, 1930. The Franco-Marco Circus Company put on quite a show. There were military Aviators from California to thrill the huge crowds.

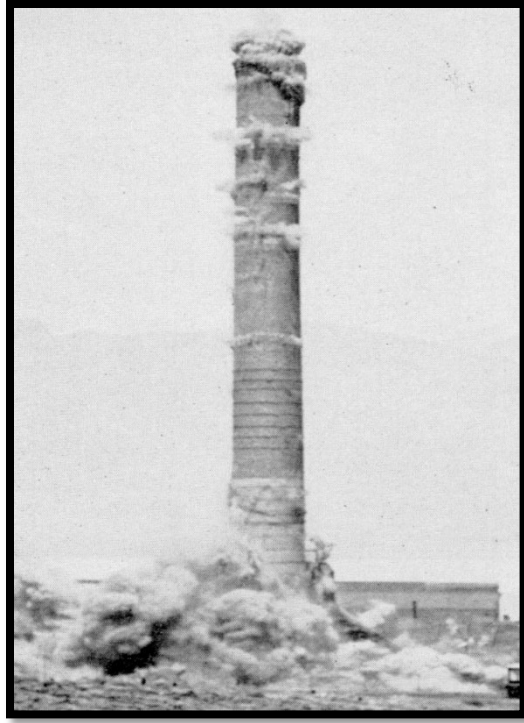
On June 6<sup>th</sup> in McGill, the large smokestack that serviced the old roaster ovens, was knocked over by a large dynamite blast. The event was filmed by the Fox Movietone News Cinema Corp. A large parade in Ely featured the first auto brought into WP County. It was a 3 cylinder Chase Model O. There was a flyover by the Military planes to end the festivities.

The “old road” out of McGill was used for many years until the late 1940s when the existing road was completer.

Various sections of the old road were replaced from time to time. In 1953, David Robb, Bill Schroeder and myself went to work for Isbell Construction on a new section by Ferguson Springs. We stayed at the springs and in company trailers. We had a cookhouse that furnished some of the best food I ever had the pleasure of enjoying. We had many great experiences there that summer.



Keith, Dave, Bill—World Class 1953 Road builders



## Roaster Stack Demolition

I have photos of the military planes and the Circus, but can't find them right now. Instead here are some flood photos, or how to clean Ely's main street.





I don't know what years these floods took place. I do remember some flooding in the late 40s and early 50s. One year Isbell piled dirt on both sides of Aultman and I remember helping to fill sand bags to place in front of my uncle Dr. Reed Anderson's office. Let us hope we don't see these floods again.