

Newsletter283

## Keith's Corner/McGill News

October 11, 2024

### McGill Construction Miracle

Whenever I look at old photos of McGill, I marvel at how fast the copper company was able to start with a lonely sagebrush covered piece of Nevada and end up with a town and complete copper processing facility. It is a miracle in my book.

Here is a photo taken on July 13, 1907. It was taken from a spot, I would guess, about where the ballpark is now.



The planning that was done prior to building the first structure was enormous.

First of all, there had to be a reason for the project. That would be the large deposit of copper, gold and silver at Ruth. That was quite a project in itself.

Much equipment and materials were needed and the best way to transport it was via railroad. A railroad was built from Cobre, originally Omar, to Ruth and McGill. This was done in 1906 and soon the necessary building supplies were on their way from all over the US.

It was obvious that it wasn't feasible to ship the ore to a mill and smelter out of the area, it must be done locally. The location of the mill and smelter depended on several factors. such as a good source of water for the mill, to carry off the tailings. And a large area was needed to hold the tailings.

The site of McGill seemed to be the logical place to build the facility. The sloping hill would carry the tailings, a lime quarry was close by and a water pipeline was feasible. A railroad junction below McGill would serve to separate the McGill freight before it got to Ely and allow the finished copper to be taken out of the area without going to Ely first. These and other factors led to McGill being where it is today.

As the railroad was being constructed, many civil engineers were on the scene establishing grades and locations for the many buildings that other planners had deemed necessary. The whole copper facility was being built from many different locations and yet they all fit together perfectly. The civil engineers did a fantastic job and with fairly crude instruments. Plus, they didn't have a bunch of gubberment clowns getting in their way.

The speed of the construction can be seen in the following enlargements from different times.



This is from the July 13, 1907 photo. The pipeline is visible.



This is from a June 4, 1908 photo. The stacks are up and much of the smelter is built. That's a lot of building in 11 month.

## Old Photo



Here is the photo taken on June 4, 1908. It shows the mill and the large trestle.

This was all done by people living in tents on wooden platforms. People today have it very easy.