

LUTZ CANYON

Lutz Canyon leads into one of the most heavily mined areas of the Huachuca Range. The Lutz Canyon Trail follows an old mining road for much of its length as it climbs into a canyon, which reputedly has been the site of prospecting activity since Spanish explorers visited the area in the mid-16th century. The road was originally made to accommodate two wheel bull wagons. Bull Wagons were used to haul heavy loads and were pulled by oxen. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, mining activity in Lutz Canyon reached a peak. It then tapered off and came to an end, for all practical purposes, by the 1950's.

There were six major mines that were worked in the Black Bear Springs area of Lutz Canyon. The mines were operated by the Lutz Mine Company. One of the owners of the company was Anton Lutz. The largest mine was the Lutz Tunnel or Black Bear Mine which had an adit 4 feet wide by 7 feet high and 1086 feet long. Two mines had adits 200 feet long while the other three mines were only 20 to 45 feet long. Silver and copper were the primary minerals obtained with a ton of ore being about 6% copper and also yielding about 14 ounces of silver. All of the mines have been abandoned.

The remains of a processing facility are located on the north side of the trail about a half mile up from the trailhead. Approximately 2 ½ miles up the trail are the remains of two large pieces of mining equipment, a 75 HP engine and an air compressor. The air compressor was manufactured by the Rand Drill Company at their Painted Post, New York facility. Albert Rand started the company in 1872 when he formed the Rand and Waring Drill and Compressor Company. The company name was changed to the Rand Drill Company in 1879. Later that same year, the first Rand air compressor was produced. Rand Drill merged with the Ingersoll-Sergeant Drill Company to form Ingersoll-Rand in 1905. In 1987, Dresser Industries and Ingersoll-Rand formed a joint venture now known as Dresser-Rand. The air compressor has a manufacture date of 1898. The engine that powered the compressor was a 75HP engine manufactured by the Bruce-Marion-Abbot Company of Cleveland Ohio. It could operate on gasoline, natural or artificial gas, or producer gas (made from coal or possibly wood). The engine was ordered for use at the site in 1907.



Two Cylinder Air Compressor



75HP Engine to Drive Compressor

Summarized in April 2004 by T. Johnson from various web sites and the Miller Peak and Huachuca Peak Quadrangle Volume of the Hazardous Abandoned Mine Finders series of books. The article was updated in January 2011 from information on the engine provided by Leonard Taylor