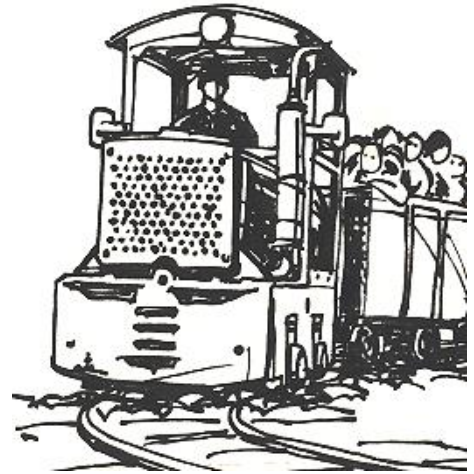


Zinc



This train ran underground a local zinc mine. Now, you can ride on it at The Mining & Rollo Jamison Museums.

Read about zinc mining and then search for the underlined words.

At first, miners ignored zinc ores. The First Nations peoples had no use for zinc ore, and the Americans could not find anyone to buy it. But, in 1860 the first trainload of zinc ore was shipped out. It was smithsonite, a zinc ore nicknamed drybone. Later the miners mostly found sphalerite, another zinc ore. Sphalerite is a mix of zinc and sulfur. At the mine site, the rocks and ores were crushed. Sometimes piles of rock from the mines still had sulfur mixed in the piles. These piles could cause pollution when the sulfur combined with rain and ran into the creeks and streams. The acidic water kills some plants and animals. Many of these piles have been moved or covered to reduce the problem.

Zinc ores were made into zinc oxide which is an important ingredient in paint. The metal was used to make brass which is a mix of copper and zinc. There are many uses for brass: cartridge cases for the military, detonator caps and carbide lamps for the miners, pipe, doorknobs, small pieces for metal toys, and because it takes a shine, jewelry, and decorative items like lamps, brass beds, and vases. Zinc also helps prevent iron from rusting. Objects made from iron or steel like nails, pails, tubs, gutters, parts of a car, and wire are galvanized or dipped into molten zinc. The coating of zinc protects the metal below. Zinc is also important in keeping you healthy. Found in meat, cheese, eggs, beans and whole grains, zinc helps the body grow, boosts brain function, and may help the body fight against certain diseases.