

Victor's Strong Mine Showcases Mining History Event

Victor's historic Strong Mine and hard rock mining will be the center of attention on Saturday, Oct. 7. Stories at the Strong: A Day of Tall Tales & Mining History will be held at the 1899 mine site. The event is sponsored by the Victor Lowell Thomas Museum. This is the third year for the event.

The day will begin at 11 a.m. with check in at the gate.

The day will feature demonstrations of hard rock mining equipment and techniques as well as a chance to see the surface plant and hoist house of the Strong Mine. The tour Two Mile High Mining Company owner Jim Watson will provide history and showcase the sawmill and methods of making square set timbers for use in mine shafts. There will also be demonstrations of an operating air-powered mucking machine used to load mine rock into ore cars. Folks will also get a chance to see the mine's hoist operate and visit the hoist house.

Andy Watson will demonstrate hand drilling using a single jack hammer and steel. In the early days of the district, miners used hand drilling to create the holes in which dynamite was placed and charged to break the rock.

During the storytelling some of the mining district's well-seasoned miners will conjure up memories and weave tales about their experiences and the old days underground.

The day will also include gold panning demonstrations, geode breaking, a treasure hunt sand pile for kids, and weather allowing smores can be roasted over a fire.

The Victor Elks will cook and sell hotdogs burgers, and brats on the grill. The proceeds from the lunch go the Elks Lodge.

The cost of the event, benefiting the museum, is \$10 per person with children under 5 free. The entrance fee includes all of the day's events except the lunch.

Tickets can be reserved on line at VictorColorado.com or purchased at the museum or at the gate the day of the event by cash only.

The Strong Mine is located just off Diamond Avenue on Victor's north side. Parking is limited at the Battle Mountain and Independence Millsite Trailheads on the Old American Eagles Road. Attendees are encouraged to park in downtown Victor. A free shuttle sponsored by the Cripple Creek & Victor Gold Mining Company will provide transportation from the trailheads and from the Victor Lowell Thomas Museum to the event and back throughout the day.

Wrapped in tall and grave tales of its own, the Strong Mine is a perfect location for mining history lore. The mine was blown up in the 1894 labor strike, rebuilt and then

operated as a wealthy mine for years. In recent years the mine suffered from weathering and the Watson family has restored the headframe and other structures.

The most famous story about the Strong Mine has to do with its founder. The mine's 1890's owner, Sam Strong, was killed in an argument in the Newport Saloon in Cripple Creek in 1901, his shooting the result of an argument over gambling. As a result of the incident, the mayor at the time outlawed guns and gambling in Cripple Creek. In the August 23 issue of the *Colorado Springs Evening Mail*, Mayor Crane ran a decree on the front page. He publicly denounced Strong and all other gamblers for the common practice of carrying concealed weapons, saying: 'I believe that in a community so well governed as Cripple Creek, where warrants are worth 100 cents on the dollar, any person who carries a gun or other dangerous weapon concealed on his person is either a coward, a bully or an outlaw.' Crane ordered that all gambling houses in Cripple Creek be closed and that 'all persons carrying concealed weapons quit said practice.'

Don't miss more tall tales, true history, and Stories at the Strong on Oct. 7.

For more information, visit VictorColorado.com or call 719-689-5509.