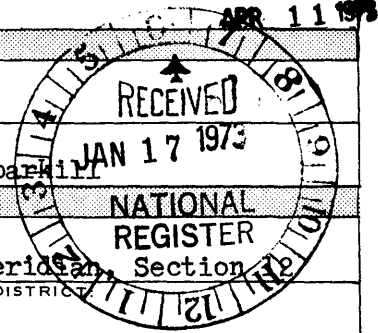


PH0087408

STATE: Colorado
COUNTY: Pitkin
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)



1. NAME	
COMMON: Independence and Independence Mill Site	APR 11 1973
AND/OR HISTORIC: Chipeta, Mammoth City, Mount Hope, Farwell, or Sparkill	

2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: Township 11 South, Range 83 West, 6th Principal Meridian, Section			
CITY OR TOWN: Ghost Town		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT	
STATE Colorado	CODE 08	COUNTY: Pitkin	CODE 097

3. CLASSIFICATION				
CATEGORY (Check One) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	OWNERSHIP <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both	PUBLIC ACQUISITION: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	STATUS <input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments In White
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	River Nat'l Forest
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY			
OWNER'S NAME: FOREST SERVICE U.S. Government and Patented Mining Claim Owners			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE	

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION			
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Pitkin County Courthouse			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN: Aspen	STATE: Colorado	CODE 08	

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS			
TITLE OF SURVEY: Independence Pass, Colorado; U.S.G.S. Topographical Map			
DATE OF SURVEY: 1960	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> State	<input type="checkbox"/> County
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: U.S. Department of the Interior, Geological Survey Office			
STREET AND NUMBER: Federal Office Building, 19th and Stout			
CITY OR TOWN: Denver	STATE: Colorado	CODE 08	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Colorado
COUNTY: Pitkin
ENTRY NUMBER: APR 11 1973
DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The ruins of Independence lie in a meadow in the valley of the Roaring Fork River at the western foot of Independence Pass. The ghost town is alongside of Colorado Highway 82 and is at an elevation of 10,880 feet. Its eastern edge is 4.1 miles from the summit of Independence Pass and its western edge is 16.4 miles from the Pitkin County Court House in Aspen.

The Independence ruins are composed of two distinct sites, the one the town and the other the mill. The old mill is about 0.3 of a mile northwest of the old townsite. The townsite occupies approximately 17.1 acres, the millsite about 4.3. With the land in between, the entire site encompasses about 40 acres. Some of the acreage lies in patented mining claims.

There are 19 structures still standing at the townsite and 7 at the millsite, all in various stages of dilapidation. There are also 9 collapsed structures in the old town. The main street of the town is easily discernible. Ten remaining structures front on the main street of which 7 were obviously business establishments of one sort or another. The buildings at the millsite are in a better state of preservation. The stamp mill, mill office, boarding house and ore storage bins are easily distinguishable.

Historical photographs of early Independence are quite rare.

The Independence site is marked with a U.S. Forst Service historical sign. The site is also part of a six-mile "scenic highway" area, so designated by the Colorado legislature.

Today the ghost town of Independence is somewhat unique. It is one of the very few significant mining camps in the state, and particularly the Roaring Fork Valley, where any standing ruins are left. Time, the severe winter weather, souvenir hunters and vandalism have taken their toll. But Independence can still offer the interested a glimpse into the past.

S E E I N S T R U C T I O N S



B. SIGNIFICANCE

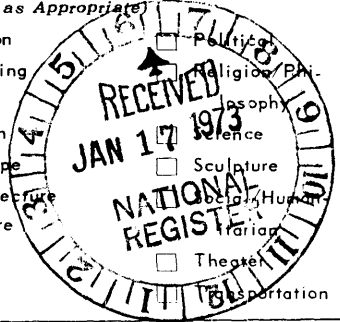
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>Mining</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Military		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		_____



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Independence is generally considered to have been the first mining camp in the Aspen country and the start of the Aspen mining boom. The town took its name from the gold lode struck nearby, called the Independence for its discovery on July 4, 1879. The identity of the actual discoverer is somewhat clouded. Some say that it was Billy Belden who was leading a group of prospectors to the Aspen area, others claim that it was Charles Bennett, while still other sources point to the peripatetic Dick Irwin. Immediately following the discovery, a tent city sprung up, followed by a few cabins. The first cabin in the camp is thought to have been erected by J. B. Connor.

By 1880 around 300 people were living in the camp. By 1881 the population had grown to 500 souls and a business directory listed 11 firms (4 grocery stores, 4 boarding houses and 3 saloons). The camp reached its peak activity in 1882 with over 40 business establishments listed in the local directory. The population probably reached a peak somewhere between 1000 and 2000. It is said that the camp was on the wild side with many saloons, gambling halls and brothels.

The town had its own newspaper called the Independence Miner which was established in October 1881, but apparently it was very short-lived. Some of the more prominent business establishments during the peak of activity included the Connor House, the "finest boarding house in Independence," the New England House on the east end of Main Street run by a Mrs. Briggs, the Independence House where a miner would get room and board for \$2 per day, the Grand Hotel, and the Langstaff Bros. General Store which carried all manner of groceries, wine and liquor. It also had a bank even before Aspen or Ashcroft.

Mining activity waned after 1882 and by 1888 fewer than 100 residents remained in the camp. Most business firms had closed or moved to Aspen.

By the turn of the century Independence was practically a ghost town. The town had its hermit, now deceased, called the Mayor of Independence and thought to be an old-timer in the area named Jack Williams.

Mining Activity

Independence was primarily a gold camp. The first good strike was called the Independence following its discovery on July 4. It was also called the Last Dollar by some.

The Farwell Mining Co. was incorporated in 1879, and by 1880 had acquired most of the better mining claims in the area. These included the Independence No's. 1, 2 & 3, the Last Dollar, the Legal Tender, the

(continued)

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. Roaring Fork Valley, L. Shoemaker, 1958, Sage.
2. Pioneers of the Roaring Fork, L. Shoemaker, 1965, Sage
3. Aspen on the Roaring Fork, F. L. Wentworth & F. B. Rizzari, 1950.
4. A Guide to Colorado Ghost Towns & Mining Camps, P. Eberhart.
5. Stampede to Timberline, M. Wollé.
6. Early Days on the Roaring Fork, J. W. Deane, Commonwealth Mag., p. 102.
7. Picture, Rocky Mountain Life Mag., August 1949, p. 10.
8. The Colorado Magazine, State Historical Society, March 1933.

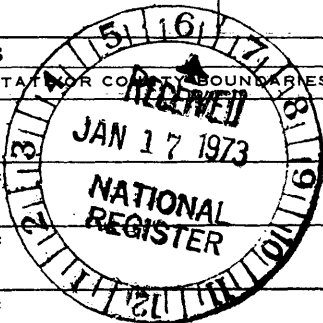
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	39° 06' 32"	106° 36' 18"		0	0	
NE	39° 06' 32"	106° 36' 09"				
SE	39° 06' 18"	106° 36' 09"				
SW	39° 06' 18"	106° 36' 18"				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 40 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Mark S. Bonomo

ORGANIZATION: Ghost Town Club of Colorado DATE: Dec. 26, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Denver STATE: Colorado CODE: 08

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: Stephen H. Hart
Title: Colo. State Liaison Officer
Date: January 5, 1973

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Robert M. Utley
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
Date: 4/11/73

ATTEST:
[Signature]
Keeper of the National Register
Date: 4/4/73

4329000 / 361450 / 360490 / 560500
 4329400 / 4329400 / 4329900

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Colorado	
COUNTY Pitkin	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	APR 11 1973

(Number all entries)

8. Statement of Significance: (continued)

Mammoth, the Mount Hope, the Champion, the Sheba, the Friday and the Dolly Varden. The Farwell mines, particularly the Independence, were the most productive mines and were worked intermittently till around 1900. Peak activity periods were 1880-1882 and 1898-1900. There was another spurt of mining interest in 1907-08, and since then even to the present, an occasional prospector can be found trying his skill and luck.

The Farwell stamp mill was erected in 1880 and began operations in 1881. It was originally constructed with 15 stamps but was enlarged in late 1881 to 30. Power was provided by steam and water. In 1881 the mill produced \$100,000 worth of gold. The mill closed in January 1883 after mining waned in 1882. The mill operated sporadically for the next 40 years until it was finally torn down in the early 1920s. The Farwell interests also had a large sawmill associated with the mining operations.

Names

As was true for so many Colorado mining camps, Independence went by other names at various times. Other names it was called included Chipeta, Mammoth City, Mount Hope, Farwell and Sparkill. In July 1881 the camp was renamed Chipeta in honor of the great Ute Chief Ouray's wife and duly incorporated. However, in September 1881 the people voted to determine whether Chipeta or Mammoth City should be the name of the camp. In February 1882 the name was changed again to Sparkill, also the name of the local Post Office. It remained Sparkill from 1882 to 1887 when it apparently reverted to Independence. As was also true for many Colorado mining camps, the name of the local Post Office wasn't necessarily the same as the camp. In fact, Independence once had 3 different post offices with 3 different names at nearly the same time during 1881.

