

— OUTDOOR —
MINING MUSEUM
WALKING TOUR
Silverton, British Columbia

Welcome! This self-guided walking tour takes you through Silverton's Outdoor Mining Museum. Follow the numbered exhibits at your own pace and discover the equipment, ingenuity, and hard work that helped build our mining community.

You'll see a few mining terms along the way — don't worry, there's a short glossary at the end of this document.

1. 360 Cubic Foot Steam-Driven Air Compressor

Ivanhoe Mine, Sandon, BC

This steam-powered machine supplied compressed air for drills and ventilation, making underground mining safer and more efficient.

2. Tripod-Mounted Drill

Galena Farm Mine, Silverton, BC

Used in flat stopes or quarry work, this sturdy drill helped miners break through solid rock.

3. 744 Cubic Foot Water-Driven Compressor

Standard Silver Lead Mining Company, Silverton Creek (1913), BC

Powered by rushing water from Silverton Creek, this compressor supplied compressed air to the Mammoth and Standard Mines. A similar unit was installed here as early as 1906.

4. Bar-Mounted Drifting Machine

Van Roi Mine, Silverton, BC

A compressed-air drill used to carve horizontal tunnels, known as drifts, as miners followed veins of ore underground.

5. Rock Drilling Tools

Hand Steel Drilling Competitions

These tools were used both in working mines and in drilling competitions, where speed, accuracy, and strength were put to the test.

5a. Prototype Diamond Drill

Boyles Bros.

An early version of the modern diamond drill, used to explore underground rock and locate ore before full mining began.

6. Mine Ventilation Blower

This blower helped move fresh air underground and remove dust and fumes, improving working conditions for miners.

7. Compressed Air Mine Hoist

Ruth Mine, Sandon, BC

Powered by compressed air, this hoist raised and lowered ore, tools, and supplies inside the mine.

8. Mine Hoist Engine

Ivanhoe Mine, Sandon, BC

Likely fueled by kerosene, this engine features an early ignition system used before spark plugs became common.

9. Water-Driven Pulley

Standard Mining Company, Silverton Creek (1906), BC

This pulley system powered the first 744 cubic foot air compressor installed on Silverton Creek, using the force of moving water instead of electricity or fuel.

10. Fresh Air Blower

Hewitt Mine, Silverton (1926), BC

Powered by a diesel engine, this blower pushed fresh air into the Number Ten Tunnel, making underground work safer for miners.

11. 4 Horsepower Gas Engine

Manufactured in 1920

A small but powerful engine like this could run equipment in remote areas where electricity wasn't available.

12. Compressed Air-Driven Engine

Van Roi Mine, Silverton (1910), BC

This engine ran on compressed air, a common and reliable power source in early mining operations.

13. 32-Volt Gasoline Generator

This generator provided electricity for lights and equipment before modern power grids reached the mines.

14. Pelton Wheel

Van Roi Mill, Silverton Creek, BC

This water wheel converted fast-moving water into mechanical power and helped run part of the Van Roi Mill.

15. Fire Hydrant

Sandon (1897), BC

Installed during Sandon's boom years, this hydrant reflects the importance of fire protection in tightly packed wooden towns. It was donated by Mrs. J.M. Johnny Harris.

16. Propeller from the S.S. Rosebery

Slocan Lake, BC

The S.S. Rosebery was the last steamboat on Slocan Lake. Her captain was Otto Estabrook, whose father also captained an earlier lake steamer.

17. Propeller from the S.S. William Hunter

Slocan Lake, BC

This propeller came from the first steamboat on Slocan Lake, captained by George Estabrook, and represents the beginning of lake transportation in the region.

18. Hand-Powered Rock Drill

Donated by Adrian Kessler, Silverton

Before machines, miners relied on muscle power and teamwork to drill holes for blasting.

19. Tire Shrinking Machine

Used to heat and shrink steel tires so they would fit tightly onto ore wagon wheels, improving braking and safety.

20. Water-Powered Washing Machine

All Grandma had to do was hook up a hose and turn on the water. This clever device shows how water power was used even for everyday household chores.

21. Early Gasoline Pump

Western Exploration Mill, BC

Similar pumps were used at Silverton's first service station, operated by Chas. Schmidt.

22. Belt Splicing Machine

This tool joined the ends of drive belts used to power mine and mill machinery.

23. Ore Specimen

Wonderful Mine, Sandon, BC

Donated by Peter Leonowicz of Hills, BC. The display case was built and donated by Dick Hambly of Silverton.

24. Water Pump

Used in diamond drilling operations, this pump helped manage water underground during exploration work.

25. Hand-Powered Water Pump

Before electricity or engines, pumps like this were operated by hand to move water where it was needed.

26. Diaphragm Water Pump

Donated by Fred Vanin, Hills, BC

This style of pump was commonly used in mining to handle muddy or debris-filled water underground.

27. Double-Handled Water Pump

Donated by Syd Berisoff, Silverton

Designed for two people to operate together, this pump reflects the teamwork required in early mining operations.

28. Gas Engine

From Ben Miller's farm above Silverton

Engines like this were used both on farms and in mining, showing how equipment was shared across industries in small communities.

29. Cordwood Sawing Machine

From Jack Price's farm, across Slocan Lake from Silverton

Likely powered by a gas engine, this machine made cutting firewood faster and less physically demanding.

30 & 31. Air-Driven Hammers

Converted from old rock drills, these hammers show how miners adapted worn equipment for new uses.

32. Air-Driven Rock Drill (Plugger)

Used for driving tunnels, this drill helped miners advance underground workings through hard rock.

33. Stoper

A stoper is a drill used to work upward in underground openings called stopes. See the attached plaque for more detail.

34. Atlas Copco Jack-Leg Drill

A more modern tunnel-driving drill, showing how drilling technology improved over time.

35. Stoper Display

This display compares early stopers with later models, illustrating the evolution of mining tools.

36. Tunnel Driving Drills

From early designs to more modern examples, these drills show how miners continued to refine underground work.

37. Shaft Bucket

Galena Farm Mine, Silverton, BC

Used for vertical hoisting, this bucket carried ore and materials up and down mine shafts.

38. Winze Bucket

Galena Farm Mine, Silverton, BC

Used for internal hoisting between underground levels, winze buckets helped move material deeper within the mine.

39. Ore Car

Fisher Maiden Mine, Silverton Creek, BC

This ore car carried rock from underground workings to the surface. It was donated by S. Dewis and F. Mills.

40. Air Compressor

Donated by Hope Geore, Nelson, BC

This compressor supplied compressed air for mining equipment, a vital power source in underground operations.

41. Tram Line, Ore Bucket, and Timber Hood

These components were part of an aerial tram system used to carry ore from high-elevation mines down to mills below. See the attached plaque for additional details.

42. 105 Cubic Foot Air Compressor

Donated by Bruce Strong, Perry Siding, BC

A smaller air compressor used to power drills and other equipment in mining operations.

43. Mine Cage

Galena Farm Mine, Silverton, BC

Installed in 1894, this cage was used to safely hoist and lower miners and supplies. The ore car beside it is from the Standard Mine.

44. Adams Grader

Western Exploration Company

Pulled by a caterpillar tractor, this grader was used in the 1950s to build and maintain mining roads for the Enterprise, Standard, and Mammoth Mines.

45. Driving Wheel

Comstock Mine, BC

This wheel came from the first concentrator built in the Silverton Mining Camp, where ore was mechanically separated.

46. Belt Drive Shifter

Used much like a clutch, this device shifted belts to engage or disengage machinery in mills and workshops.

47. Two-Stamp Mill

King Jack Mine, Lemon Creek (1915–1918), BC

This small gold mill crushed ore as part of the milling process. It was donated by Bob Mackenzie of Nelson.

48. Steel Sharpeners

Hewitt Mine, BC

These sharpeners were used to maintain drill steel for blasting, an essential part of daily mining work.

49. Mobile Water-Driven Diaphragm Pump

From Hills, BC

This portable pump used water power and included a power take-off for additional equipment.

50. Compressed Air-Driven Hoist

This hoist used compressed air to lift ore and materials. (See Exhibit).

51. Belt-Driven Drill

Found in a birch thicket, this drill is displayed with a piece of birch wood grown around it, showing how nature reclaimed unused equipment.

52. Horse-Drawn Road Scraper

Used to build roads and clear slides, this scraper was found on the L.H. Mine Road in the mountains south of Silverton.

53. Aerial Tram Terminal Bull Wheel

Van Roi Mine, BC

This upper terminal wheel turned the aerial tram line that carried ore from the mine down to the mill on Silverton Creek.

54. Vertical Shaft Hoist

Mammoth Mine, BC

A compressed air-driven hoist used for vertical shaft work, helping move ore and materials deep underground.

55. Vertical Shaft Hoist

Standard Mine, BC

Includes a surface hoist.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS:

Stope

An underground space where ore has been removed. Miners worked in stopes to extract valuable rock.

Stoper

A type of drill used in stopes, designed to drill upward into rock.

Drift

A horizontal tunnel driven along a vein of ore or through rock underground.

Crosscut

A tunnel driven across rock to reach a vein of ore rather than following it.

Winze

An internal shaft or opening driven downward to connect different underground levels in a mine.

Raise

Similar to a winze, but driven upward from a lower level.

Shaft

A vertical tunnel from the surface used to move people, ore, and supplies between underground levels.

Hoist

A machine used to raise and lower ore, equipment, or miners in a shaft.

Compressed Air

Pressurized air used to power drills, hoists, and other mining equipment before electricity was common.

Stamp Mill

A machine that crushed ore using heavy stamps to separate valuable minerals from rock.

Pelton Wheel

A type of water wheel designed to capture fast-moving water and convert it into mechanical power.



THANK YOU