

DANIELS MINE

Daniels Mine is located in the Madera Canyon area of the Santa Rita Mountains of southern Arizona and is named for Benjamin Franklin Daniels, the colorful Arizona pioneer who developed the mine. After the Spanish American War of 1898 and the demobilization of Teddy Roosevelt's "Rough Riders", Ben Daniels had migrated to southern Arizona, first to Yuma and then to Nogales where he got involved in mining activities. In conjunction with John Tremaine, another "Rough Rider", he formed the Elephant Head Mining Company (also known as the Tremaine-Daniels Group). Tremaine established a mining camp in the Elephant Head Area and Daniels established one in Madera Canyon in 1899 that was known as Camp Ben Daniels.

Daniels' laid mining claims to 11 separate areas in the Old Baldy Mining District that consisted of over 100 acres of Madera Canyon. These claims were eventually consolidated into a single patented claim in 1921 in accordance with U. S. Mineral Survey No. 3747. For more information pertaining to this patented claim click [here](#). Of all the lodes in this claim, there is only one that is still readily identifiable and accessible. This mine is located on the edge of a wash to the east of the Kent Springs Road. Today we call this mine Daniels Mine but at one time it was also called the Sun Lode Molybdenum Mine. The primary minerals extracted from the mine were molybdenum and copper. The mine is located on the rim of a wash and the site today consists primarily of tailings residue (See Figure 1). The mine was an underground operation but the portals have collapsed and are no longer in evidence. The remains of an unusual structure are still in evidence at the site. There was a metal column standing at one end of the structure that this writer has no idea of its purpose (see Figure 2). This column eventually became unstable and collapsed into the remains of the structure.



Figure 1. Tailings, Daniels Mine



Figure 2. Structure with Metal Column

Daniels built three cabins on the property. His first residence was a small cabin a short distance from the current Kent Springs Cabin and all that remains of it is the chimney (See Figure 3). His second residence, built about 1903, was significantly larger. Click [here](#) for details on this cabin that would eventually evolve into the Kent Springs Center of today. There is no information available on a third cabin that Ben Daniels supposedly built.

There is another stone structure associated with Daniels Mine that is located in the wash about 100 yards northwest of the mine (See Figure 4). It is not known for sure what the purpose of that structure was but the design indicates that it was probably used for explosives storage. The configuration of the stone walls would direct any blast wave away from the mining activity.



Figure 3. Ben's First Cabin Site



Figure 4. Potential Explosives Storage Site

The opening paragraph of this article identified Ben Daniels as a “colorful Arizona pioneer”. That is an understatement. Click [here](#) for a detailed summary of Ben Daniels life.

Summarized by T. Johnson from several articles prepared by the Friends of Madera Canyon, and the following web sites: Wikipedia.org and Mindat.org. The article was revised and updated in February 2024. All photographs were taken by T. Johnson.