

Bulldog Silver Mine

Al Winters

After reading Wendell's excellent publication on bullion bars from various old time mines and companies, I thought it appropriate to record the history of the first bullion bar produced at Homestake's Bulldog Silver Mine in Creede, Colorado. Today, most mine operations commemorate specific events by producing silver rounds with the company logo or other on the face rather than the bullion bars of the past. The small 4 oz silver bar shown below represents a portion of the first silver bullion produced from the Bulldog mine's Carbon-in-Pulp Plant completed in 1976. The plant, the world's first of its kind using the carbon-in-pulp process for silver, treated 400 tons per day of floatation mill tailings. The tailings were derived from the mill's daily production and from an abandoned tailings pond from past production. The tailings grade ran between 2-3 ounces of silver per ton.



As originally poured, the first bullion bar assayed approximately 70 percent silver with the main impurity being lead. The bar was shipped to Homestake's gold operation in Lead, South Dakota where it was upgraded to a fineness of approximately 970.

Homestake's seal was stamped on several small 4 ounce presentation bars and these were symbols of the plants first melt produced on December 20th, 1976. The number 1-3 on the small bar shown represents the third small bar from the first pour. The number 1-1 bar was presented to Mr. Paul Henshaw, President of Homestake Mining Company. Number 1-2 was presented to Mr. Don Delicate, Vice president of Operations and number 1-3 (the bar shown) was presented to myself , Al Winters, Manager of the Bulldog Silver mine.

Other small bars were sometimes produced for specific purposes and these were upgraded to 999 purity at Homestake's refinery in Lead, SD. Shown is one of these 10 oz bars produced in 1977. Also shown is a bullion sample for assay. This sample was taken from the 23rd pour at the Bulldog mine in 1977 and weighs 6.06 ounces. In general, the mine produced bars weighing 400 +/- ounces and shipped them through the US Postal Service at Creede.

The mine produced over 25 million ounces of silver principally in flotation concentrates during its 18 year life.

