

COLLECTOR'S FOCUS

By Steve Rush

Joe Elizondo

Let it never be said that Joe Elizondo has allowed moss to gather upon the north side of his upper years. At an age that we all dream of attaining in a somewhat ambulatory fashion, Joe is presently employed as an enthusiastic greeter at the Bergen Park, Colorado Wal-Mart.

When he isn't cheerfully showing customers where their buying power is best spent, Joe and his wife Peggy catalogue, categorize and sell mineral specimens and mining artifacts from their beautiful Evergreen,

Colorado home.

The previous fifty years were spent in pursuit of paying ore and its extraction from the earth. Joe and Peggy lived for several years in the high Andes of Peru where he worked as a geologist in the underground mines owned by the Cerro Corporation.

From the cold Peruvian weather, Joe and Peggy moved up to the Tri-State district of Oklahoma and Kansas. Joe was placed in charge as the Division Mine Superintendent and General Superintendent of Mines for a group of underground mines which produced about five thousand tons per day of lead-zinc ore. Fantastic mineral specimens collected from here adorn their home.

White Pine, Michigan and the White Pine Copper Company was their next stop, where Joe served successively as Mine Planning Engineer, Mine Manager and Director of Mine Engineering and Research. These mines produced as much as sixteen thousand tons of ore per day, using room and pillar methods of extraction.

During his stay at the White Pine Mine, Joe continued to develop

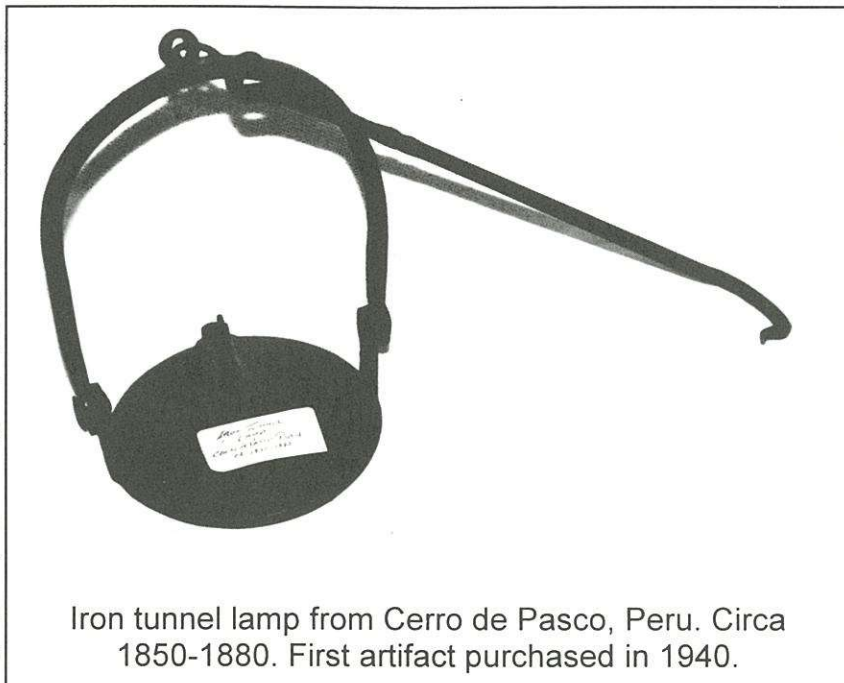


underground mining skills involving drilling with a Jumbo, shaft sinking and mucking. Massive specimens of native copper occurred in this mine and Joe returned to Michigan in later years to collect these as found.

Joe went on to work the next thirty four years with AMAX-Homestake Mining Company in southwest Missouri, then into the AMAX-Exploration Mine Evaluation Department. He was based out of Denver and worked as well from AMAX's New York office, during which time Joe evaluated potential and on-going mining operations and performed as an advisor on mine engineering and operations problems in underground mines.

Joe went on to a well deserved retirement in 1982 and began to spend time developing the assets of his mineral and mining artifact collections. His first mining artifact, which he still has on display, was a Peruvian Tunnel Lamp which Peggy wrapped as a Christmas gift in 1940.

The artifact collection has



Iron tunnel lamp from Cerro de Pasco, Peru. Circa 1850-1880. First artifact purchased in 1940.

since grown to include such jewels as a mint folding Varney candlestick, a Curtiss patented stick and a patented Mead Bernier folding combined knife and candlestick. These sticks were obtained in a package deal some twenty years ago and Joe hasn't looked back since.

Mixed among the extremely rare candlesticks lie twenty nine different oil wicks, many Justrite lamp variances, almost every known Autolite patent, and an Arnold Carbide Candle in extremely good shape.

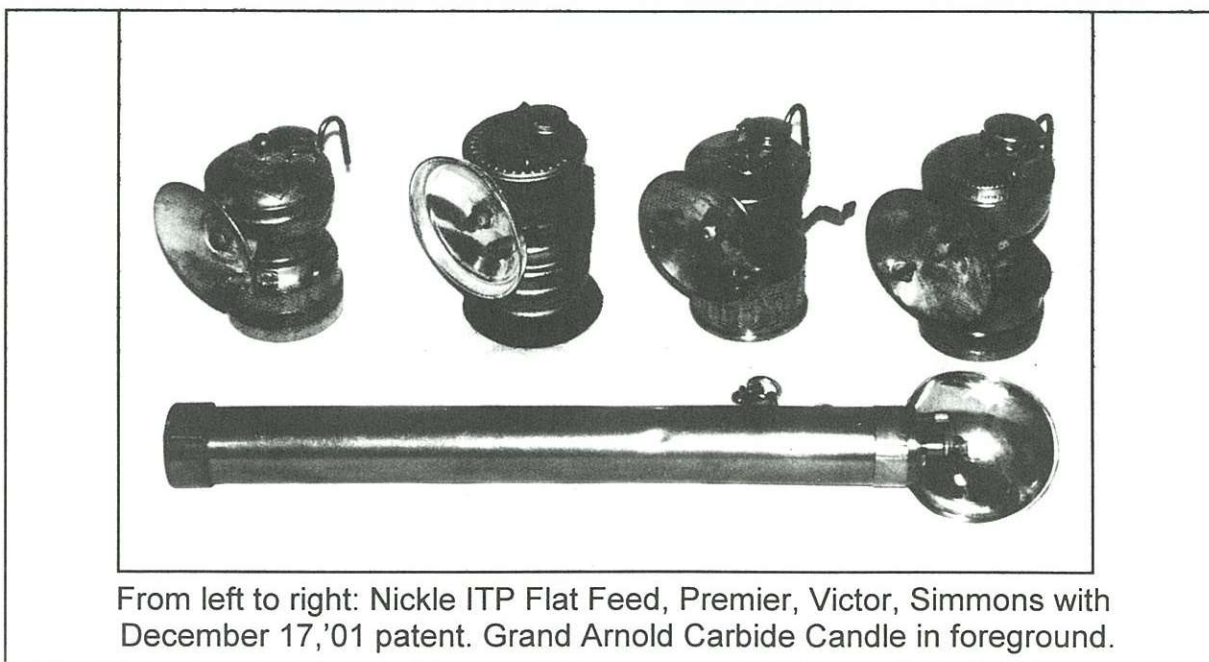
Several rare carbide lamps, including an X-Ray with accompanying box, a Victor and an early patent Simmons, also adorn the shelves of Joe's cases.

Peggy hasn't been resting on her laurels either, as is evidenced by her extensive collection of mineral eggs. Inclusive here are beautiful specimens of Chalcopyrite, Lapis, Malachite, Peruvian minerals and Waterford Crystal eggs. Several display cases and tables proudly show her efforts to balance mining artifacts with minerals.

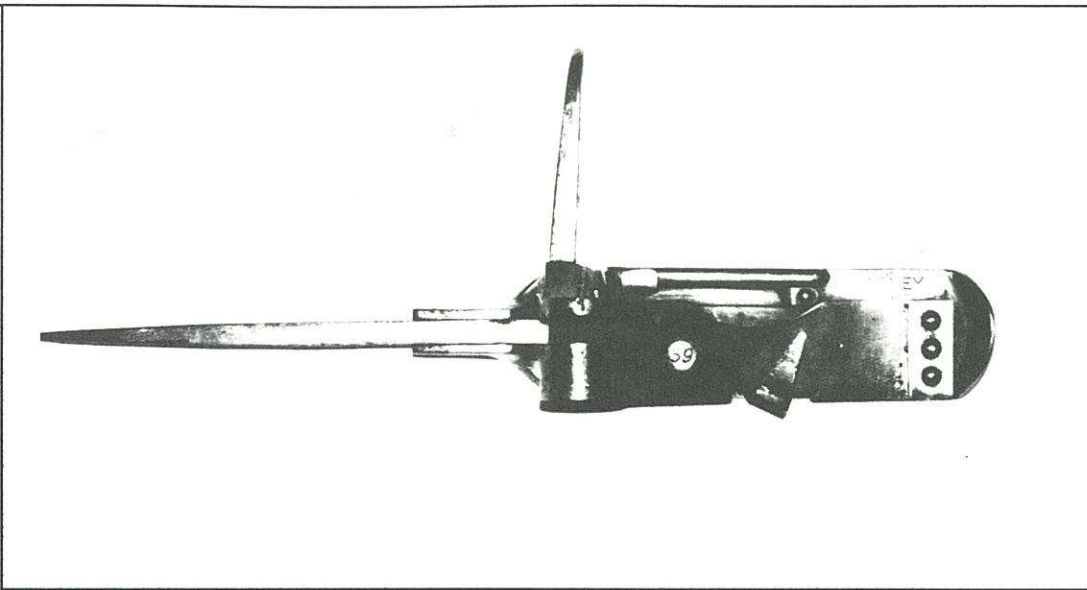
A visit with Joe and Peggy and a tour among their life's work collecting both minerals and mining artifacts is a lesson in geology, mining history and good living. Joe's side business as Colorado Minerals and Mining Artifacts is a successful enterprise, and you can contact Joe and Peggy for your own viewing when next in Colorado at (303) 674-3417.



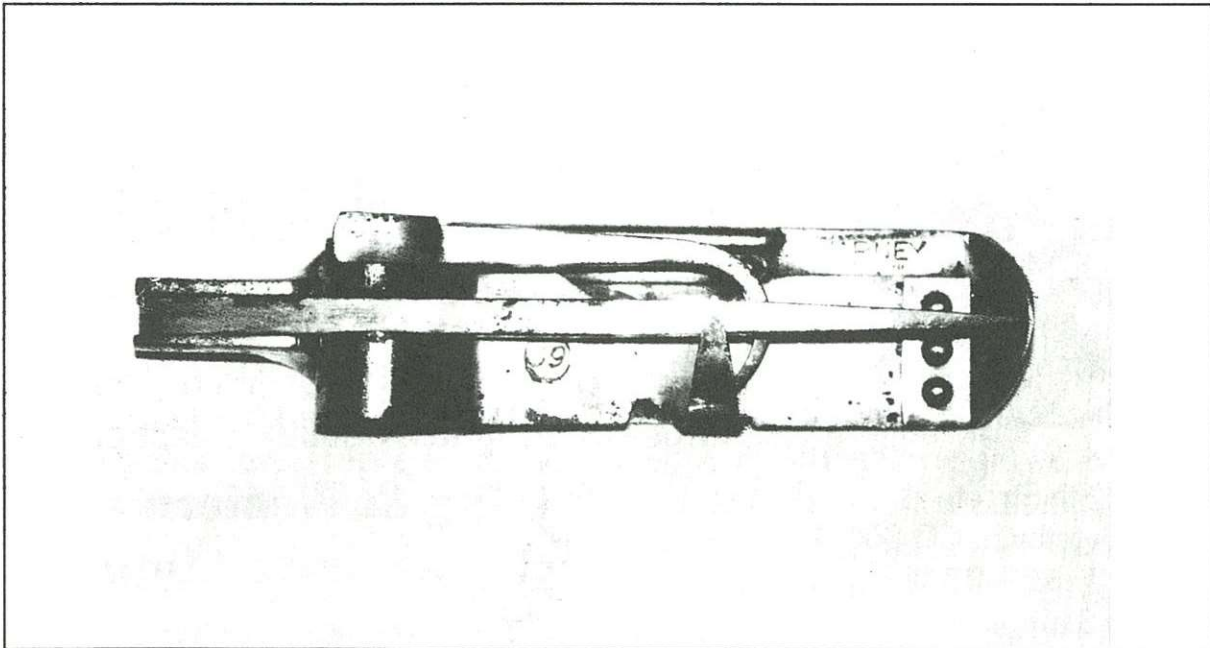
Woodcarving of miner setting rock bolts. Titled "Little Joe" and made for Joe by a talented friend.



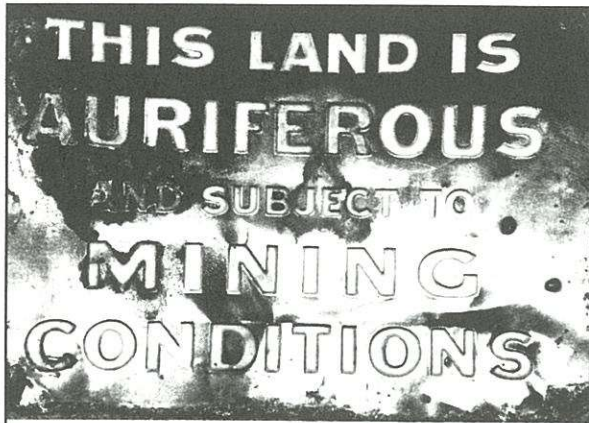
From left to right: Nickle ITP Flat Feed, Premier, Victor, Simmons with December 17,'01 patent. Grand Arnold Carbide Candle in foreground.



Folding Varney Candlestick. Near mint condition.

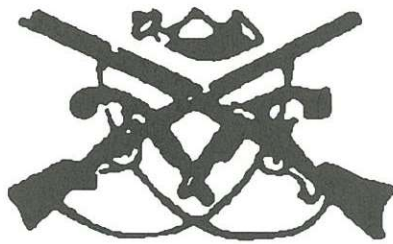
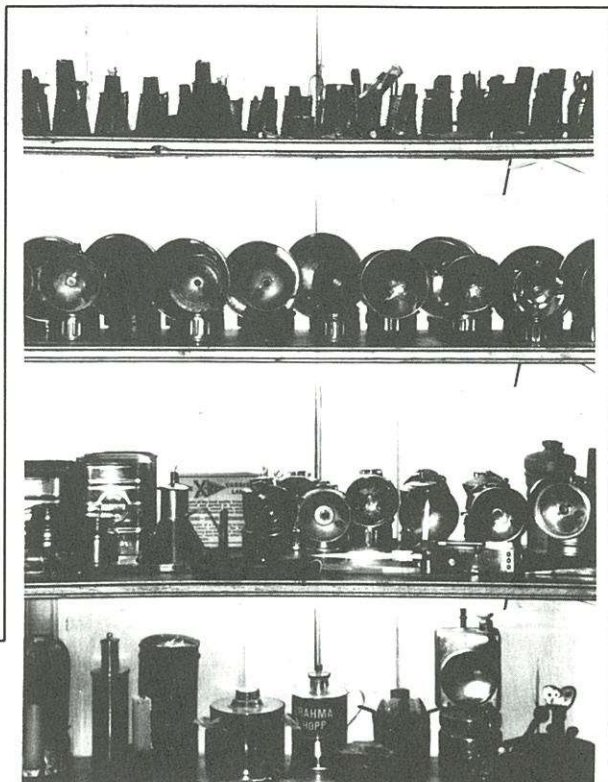


Folding Varney in folded position.



Excellent tin sign from the Melbourne, Australia, Gold District.

Oil wicks, carbide cap lamps, rare sticks and miscellaneous mining artifacts adorn the shelves.



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