



Frank M. Murphy (1854-1917)

Mining Infrastructure (Railroad, Smelter Developer/Builder)

2017 Inductee from Mining's Past

Railroad Entrepreneur Murphy was born in Maine, grew up in Wisconsin and went to California in 1877, finding employment as a stage driver. He went to Prescott the following year and worked in a haberdashery. Murphy developed an interest in minerals and in 1883 he and Douglas Gray, a mining engineer, took Yavapai ores to exhibits in Denver, Chicago and to the World's Fair in New Orleans in 1884.

He met mine developers "Diamond" Joe Reynolds and Senator William Andrew Clark and acted as Clark's unknown representative in the purchase of the United Verde mine, outbidding Phelps Dodge. The initial investment of \$250,000 realized a return of \$100 million and solidified Murphy's reputation as a mine developer and venture capitalist.

Murphy's next move was to form a partnership with Reynolds in the Congress Gold Mine. When Reynolds died, Murphy bought Reynolds' share. Murphy soon realized that he had to build the Sante Fe, Prescott and Phoenix Railroad (SFP&P) to insure the economic success of the mine. By 1891, Congress was Arizona's largest gold mine, producing nearly \$8 million in gold.

Murphy then built the Prescott and Eastern Railroad, which served mines in the northern Bradshaw Mountains including the Poland Mining Company; numerous other mines from Walker to Crown King; and Arizona Smelting Company's smelter at Humboldt, all of which had Murphy interests.

Other ventures included the Development Corporation of America made-up of mines around Tombstone. Non-mining enterprises included the purchase of the Arizona Republican newspaper and Castle Hot Springs hotel. Murphy was president of the Prescott National Bank until his death.