

2960 0023

(240)
Item 23

Location Number: NY 015

Location: Manhattan
Coordinates: 38°32' / 117°05' T8N R44E S19
Elevation: 6905'
Map Sources: 1:250,000 Tonopah; Toiyabe National Forest Map; Clason 1906;
Nevada Map Atlas; Erickson County Map
References: Carlson; Paher; Mordy; Angel; Elliott; Historic Markers; URS/
Blume Files; Site Investigation 7/28/77
Photographs: KR64-JMC#1: 35-36; PlusX-JW#7: 0-10
Status: Potential National Register Site

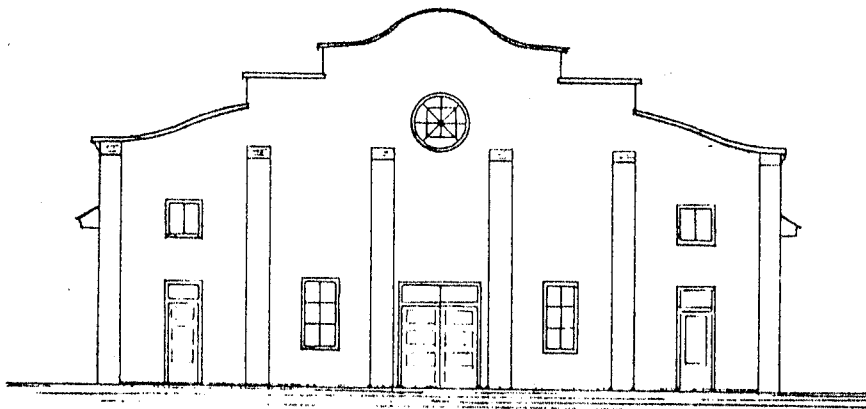
Manhattan is a partially abandoned mining community in Manhattan Gulch, which extends from the west-facing slope of the Toquima Range into Big Smoky Valley. In early times, Shoshone from the valley and nearby areas held autumn festivals in this canyon. Alluvial gravels are deposited on its floor to depths between 20 and 100 feet; it now averages approximately 300 feet in width.

The first mining activity, in silver, lasted only from 1866 to 1869. Gold was discovered in 1905, and by early 1906 the camp had a bank, schools, electricity and water, telephone and telegraph service, and stage and automobile connections to Tonopah. Wood-frame commercial buildings built on the canyon floor were soon surrounded by tents and wood-frame residential structures that spread up the hillsides. The town suffered several reversals, but mining was active during the Depression years and continued to be so until the mid-1940s.

Mining was carried out in two ways: by dredging the canyon (from the west end of the town site to the east edge of Big Smoky Valley, beyond the canyon mouth) and, in placer mining, by sinking shafts at about 300-foot centers along the canyon bottom through the gravel deposits to the underlying bedrock and then excavating drifts between the shafts, along the gravel-bedrock contact, to recover the gold concentrates in the foot or so of gravel above the rock. In general, mine and mill structures were built on the hard rock of the canyon walls west of the town, although some placer excavations are found beneath the town site itself.

The Manhattan area once contained approximately 150 structures, most of them 1- or 1-1/2-story wood-frame buildings more than 20 years old; nearly one-third were built before 1935. More than one-third of these structures are now in ruin; most of those that remain standing are in poor repair. Fewer than 10% of the standing structures are commercial buildings; more than 30% are residential. There are two institutional buildings, now abandoned: a 1-story rock post office and the 1-story steel and concrete substation of the Edison Power Company.

The Edison Substation is a 55' x 34' structure resting on a concrete floor slab constructed over alluvial sandy loam. Its long axis runs north-south. A high-pitched roof extends 16 feet above 14-foot-high concrete walls. Parapets on the east and west elevations conceal the gables and curve at the top to form an arch

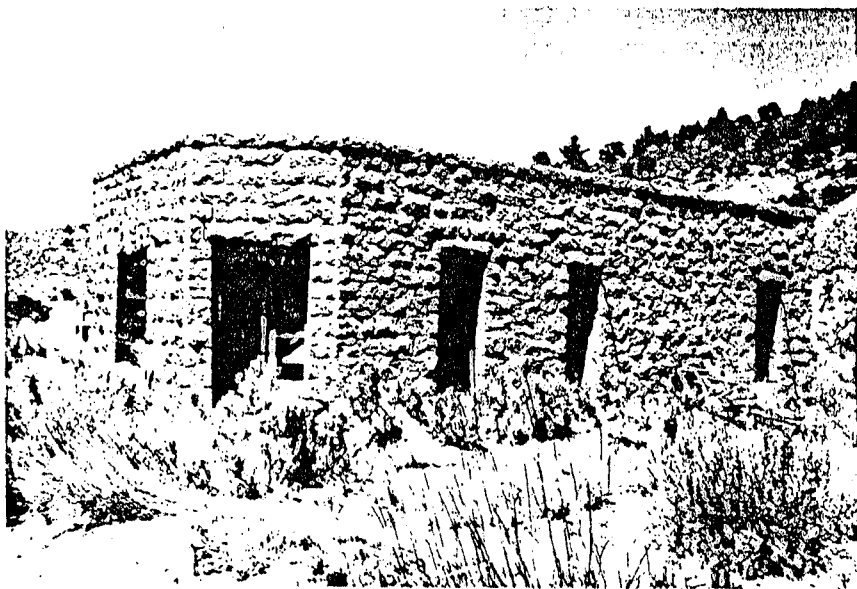


Edison Substation

at the ridge level. On the east elevation, six engaged columns reach to a level about 8 feet above the base of the roof; on the west elevation are five similar columns, four of which reach to the full height of the parapet. A circular window about 4 feet in diameter is set below the arch of the parapet in each elevation. The west elevation has a central column with three windows about 3-1/2 feet square placed side by side above it. Three other windows in this elevation are about 4' x 7'; above the one at the south end are three circular windows about 2 feet in diameter. A small wood-frame structure with a lean-to roof has been added to the north end of this elevation. Fenestration is about 15%. Double doors, each 3'-7" x 7', are set in the center of the east elevation; on either side are windows like the taller ones in the west elevation. At the north and south ends, windows about 3 feet square

are set at roof level above windows about 3' x 7' placed on grade. Fenestration is 15%. A door and three windows in the north elevation provide 20% fenestration; double doors and two windows in the south elevation provide 30%. An engaged column in the center of each of these elevations reaches to the roof. All doors and windows are framed with wood; the doors are of wood. The 30-foot ceiling is braced with steel. Both the concrete walls and their plastered interior surfaces exhibit severe cracking.

In the center of the town site, several buildings are standing, some still in use. On the north side of the main road is the abandoned Manhattan Country Store. Directly across from the bank building is a split-level residence of two and three stories that has been remodeled from an older building by the use of wood exterior siding. A new telephone substation has been placed among these structures.



The Manhattan Bank building is about 50' x 26' and 17 feet high, its long axis running north-south. The exterior walls, of cut stone and mortar, rest on a concrete foundation and are 20 inches thick. The south and east walls have dressed stone. The

interior surfaces of the walls are plastered. Both the ceiling and the floors are of 1" x 3" hardwood of tongue-and-groove construction. The roof has 2" x 4" joists and 1" x 6" tongue-and-groove sheathing covered with corrugated metal, sloped about a foot from south to north, and draining through scuppers at either end of the north elevation. A foot-high stone parapet conceals the slope of the roof. Fenestration of 20% in the east elevation and 15% in the south elevation is provided by a double door 5' x 9'-11", a single door

2'-6" x 7'-8", a double window 7'-8" x 7'-2", and a single window 2'-10" x 8'. The ceiling of this structure has partially collapsed; vertical cracks in the stone walls extend to the full height of the north and west elevations.