

Virginia City hangs onto its roots

By Adam Kealoha Causey, Las Vegas Review-Journal

VIRGINIA CITY – Mining may not get top billing anymore, but this town built high on Northern Nevada hillsides still packs that history into its punch.

Today tourism is big business, and there's something here for everybody who likes tales of yesteryear, whether rooted in fact or fiction. There are signs of life from the actual boom days that drew thousands to mine the Comstock Lode starting in the 1850s, and also the made-for-TV version from "Bonanza" that started its 14-season run a hundred years later.

You can find markers and a museum commemorating Mark Twain's newspapering days. He reported for the Territorial Enterprise in the early 1860s. Piper's Opera House, whose current location dates back to 1885, still houses performances in the same spot where traveling shows stopped to make some cash back in the day.

Even this town's name, according to legend, is a throwback. Miner James Finney, whose nickname was "Old Virginia" or "Old Virginny," christened it Virginia City to honor his home state.

Read the whole story