

Uranium Frenzy: Saga of the Nuclear West

Raye Ringholz



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Now expanded to include the story of nuclear testing and its consequences, Uranium Frenzy has become the classic account of the uranium rush that gripped the Colorado Plateau region in the 1950s. Instigated by the U.S. government's need for uranium to fuel its growing atomic weapons program, stimulated by Charlie Steen's lucrative Mi Vida strike in 1952, manned by rookie prospectors from all walks of life, and driven to a fever pitch by penny stock promotions, the boom created a colorful era in the Four Corners region and Salt Lake City (where the stock frenzy was centered) but ultimately went bust. The thrill of those exciting times and the good fortune of some of the miners were countered by the darker aspects of uranium and its uses. Miners were not well informed regarding the dangers of radioactive decay products. Neither the government nor anyone else expended much effort educating them or protecting their health and safety. The effects of exposure to radiation in poorly ventilated mines appeared over time.

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