

## Lake Solitude Avalanche of 1911



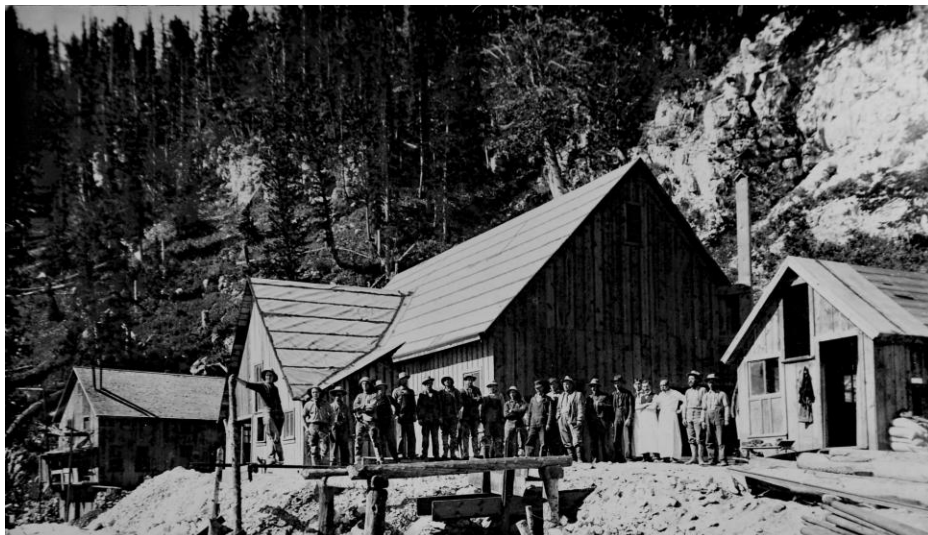
United Mines Coalition workers. Note several Civil War caps.

All photos courtesy of the Utah Historical Society.

On January 30, a hard south wind compacted the snow and rolled came out of the mine about 2 a.m. on January 31, and hunkered down in the warm bunkhouse. Some of the miners didn't like the looks of the weather, so they gathered up their beds and moved into the mine tunnel. Still, the bunkhouse was considered safe because it had been there for years.

Twenty-four miners were working at the United Coalitions Mine near Lake Solitude in the winter of 1911. By the end of January, snow lay nine or ten feet deep on the mountainside.

On January 30, a hard south wind compacted the snow and rolled came out of the



Workers and waiters pose outside the United Mines Coalition Bunkhouse  
Photo courtesy of the Utah Historical Society

Suddenly about 5 a.m. all the snow on the side of the mountain broke loose and came down full force, taking all the mine buildings down to the bottom of the canyon. It smashed the bunkhouse where seventeen men were sleeping. Seven managed to crawl out. Barefooted and dressed only in underwear, they scrambled into the wreckage for shoes and clothing, then set to work digging out seven the other men. Only three were smothered in the snow. The miners who moved into the mine were safe, but had to be dug out because snow was packed into the tunnel. --- From the memoirs of Asa Bowthorpe *Pioneer Sawmills and Canyons of Salt Lake Valley*



Before the Avalanche



After the Avalanche



Tranquil winter scene at the prosperous mine.

The Solitude Tunnel was the UMC's lowest portal to the Michigan Utah group of mines. Most ore was taken out on the Alta side. The mine closed in 1928, but remnants of the Solitude Tunnel are visible today on the south side of Lake Solitude.