

COUDERSPORT'S ICE MINE

Good day everyone...it's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania.

About four miles east of Coudersport in the heart of Potter County, the "God's Country" of Pennsylvania tourism, there is a ring of the Allegheny Mountains, which encircles the little village of Sweden Valley. You can't miss the village if you're driving Route 6--the Roosevelt Highway. One of these mountains which circle the village is covered with the dense forest, (in which ferns, moss and other vegetation thrive in great abundance) is called Ice Mountain, and it's a freak mountain, named because of the location of the famous Coudersport Ice Mine, a freak of nature. Actually, this strange phenomenon is a vertical shaft about forty feet deep, eight feet wide and ten feet long. During the summer months, you can see many fantastic and beautiful ice formations. They appear in various ways, gigantic icicles, ten to twenty feet long and two to three feet thick. But as winter approaches the ice in the mine begins to melt. Usually the melting process is complete by the middle of November. And that's it--ice formations in the heat of summer, which disappear in the cold of winter! It's one of nature's real odd-balls, the Coudersport Ice Mine, but it's been there since its discovery by a Cattarougus Indian and an Irishman named Billy O'Neill. One day in 1894 out of the mountain area, came an Indian; he walked through town showing samples of silver ore. And then he disappeared in the area of Ice Mountain. The owner of Ice Mountain

asked Billy O'Neill, who had a diving rod, to find silver. The rod made a sudden lurch; the men dug at the spot under huge masses of moss but they found no silver--instead, they discovered a thin layer of solid ice. They continued digging and had discovered the Ice Mine. And this continuing annual phenomenon has perplexed and puzzled scientists--many of them scoffers until they visited it--ever since. Ice in the summertime in the shaft; dry and free of ice in the colds of winter! Almost unbelievable, but it exists! The beautiful and fantastic formations of ice begin forming in the spring and continue through the heat of summer melting as winter approaches. It's an oddity of nature and one of Pennsylvania's oddball tourist attractions, but it is worthwhile seeing when you're in our northern tier country. The Coudersport Ice Mine is located four miles east of Coudersport on the Roosevelt Trail, --Route 6--at the entrance to Black Forest. Don't miss this one! It has baffled scientists--it'll baffle you. You'll enjoy visiting there! And it's a good way to keep cool in the summertime--at the Coudersport Ice Mine.

This is Pete Wambach. It's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania.