

## Kingston in Myth and Memory

by Craig Springer

To see the old photos, you can tell that Kingston was a busy place for a time. But that time didn't last.

Set on the east flank of the Black Range in western Sierra County, Kingston is today a relic of the distant past. On some maps, it's a ghost town. But everyone living there is alive--engaged in business, creating art, active in retirement. It's an old mining town at the head of the Middle Percha Creek. From a distance, the Black Range looks the part of a long purple armada. The 10,000-foot Hillsboro Peak stands like a silent sentinel above.

Vision through the gray distant haze over steep folded mountainsides becomes clearer as you get closer. And so it is with the myth of Kingston being New Mexico's largest territorial town.

Kingston had its start with the discovery of silver. In the early 1880s, prospectors from nearby Hillsboro, Lake Valley, and Georgetown worked under the continual threat of Apache depredations as they scratched dirt for signs of precious metal. Like most of the Black Range, the surface is more rock than soil. It's the rock that drew attention; it was rich with silver ore. In October 1882, James Porter Parker, a civil engineer and former Confederate Lt. Colonel and General George Custer's roommate at West Point platted a townsite. The portly fellow became Sierra County's first Assessor two years later.

Kingston was to get bigger. A Methodist minister in January 1888 reported on the progress of a stone church to serve Kingston's 1,000 residents. There was work to do: "If I could take the reader along the main street on our way to a school-house for evening service, he would see the typical mining town in all its wickedness." The minister lamented the gambling, smoking, drinking and a woman singing in soprano at the back of a hall.

The town grew bigger yet — but only in myth. In travel guides, state tourism office promotions, and academic writings by professional historians, you will see a phrase repeated so often that a myth has turned to "memory," that Kingston once exceeded 7,000 residents and was the largest town in New Mexico. It's even on Forest Service signs. Seven thousand is about as big as Truth or Consequences is today. And it's a bogus number, usually attended by an equally bogus count of the number of newspapers that kept shop in town: three.

One is led to think that three publications competed for readers and advertisers. Actually, 10 newspapers published in Kingston from 1883-1893, but all were very short-lived titles except the Weekly Shaft. From April 1885 to March 1886 during Kingston's supposed prime the town lacked a newspaper. *The Mines of Kingston*, a March 1883 prospectus on the then five-month-old town of Kingston, was published by the weekly Tribune. Editor and publisher Charles W. Greene would pull up stakes and move the newspaper to Deming by Kingston's first birthday.

The 1890 census counted 1,449 people in Kingston; 3,785 lived in Albuquerque--more than all of Sierra County's 1890 population. A Territorial Bureau of Immigration publication printed in 1894 reported on the condition and prospects of the territory stating that, "The town itself is well situated, has a public water service, churches and schools, two good hotels, and a pushing, go-ahead population of about 1,000 persons."

Those prospects may have already changed by the time the Bureau publication hit the streets. The economic Panic of 1893 and with silver prices going south, Kingston was all but abandoned.

How such a myth got started is a bit of a mystery. The earliest writing on an inflated town size, a purported 5,000 people, that I found was in Log of a Timber Cruiser, published 22 years after Kingston was abandoned.

Then, in August 1936, WPA writer Clay Vaden interviewed Sadie Orchard in Hillsboro. Orchard told Vaden that Kingston thronged with 5,000 residents in 1886. You can read what Vaden documented from Orchard in the Library of Congress holdings.

## "On the Bench" ~ The History of Miramonte, Arizona 1912-1921

### A Record of the Mormon Refugees and other Homesteaders

By Marcella Martineau McCord Roe  
("Marti") of Redding, California

### Miramonte, Arizona

Ever heard of it? Not many have. Discover the pioneers that helped to settle the west, when no one else would try.

Miramonte was just west of Benson. The pioneers there had "typical" hardships, but they were not "typical" people. Had they been, the west would have stayed wilderness until the invention of air-conditioners and good health care. This is the biggest compilation of Miramonte history known to exist.

This book would be an invaluable addition to the libraries of anyone who is a Miramonte descendant, and for history buffs ... detailing the trials and hardships faced by the homesteaders.

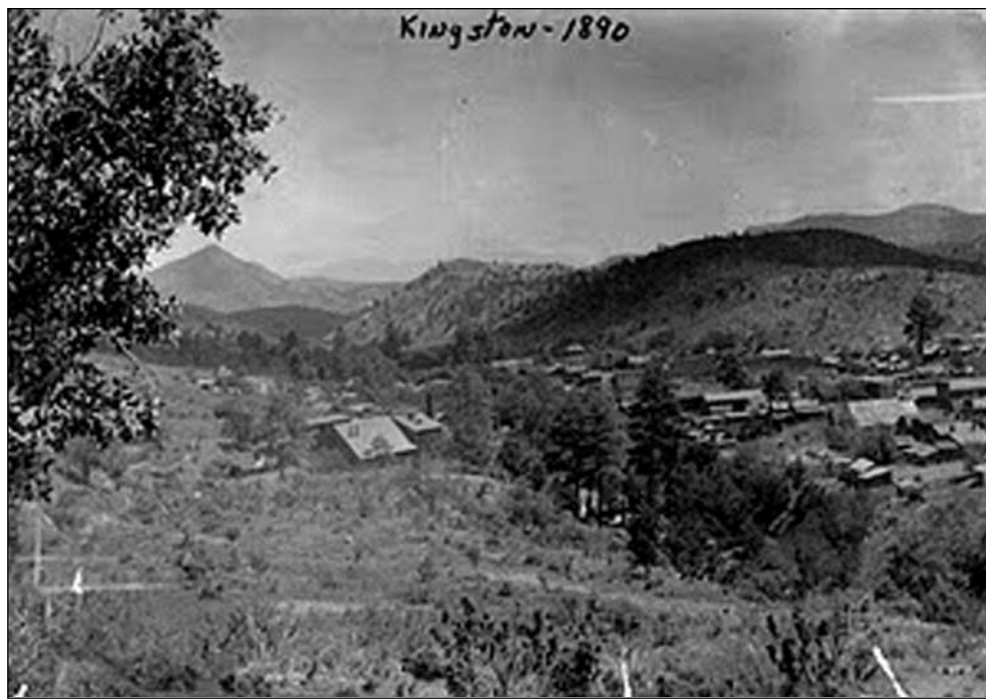
For more information, check out this website ...  
[www.miramontearizonahistory.org](http://www.miramontearizonahistory.org).

To order this book, contact the author at ...  
[martiroe@pacbell.net](mailto:martiroe@pacbell.net).

That same year Sierra County pioneer, James McKenna published *Black Range Tales* and upped the Kingston population by 2,000.

And so it's become gospel since, that Kingston was New Mexico's largest town.

The entire population of Sierra County didn't reach 7,000 until 1950, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.



Sierra County Courthouse

## Westerners Meeting in February

### "Made in New Mexico Westerns"

At the next meeting of the Westerner's International in Silver City, Las Cruces based film historian and freelance writer Jeff Berg will be the guest. The meeting will be held on Tuesday, **February 21** at 6:30 p.m. at the Glad Tidings Church Fellowship Hall.

Glad Tidings Church is located at 11600 Highway 180 East, 1.1 miles east of the Walmart entrance on the south side of the highway. The new location will easily accommodate the group and a full dinner will be catered.

Berg's film related presentation is called **Made in New Mexico Westerns, Part I**, and features scenes from a number of long forgotten films, along with some that viewers might remember. The show is designed to be fun and informative, too!

In doing research on movies made in New Mexico, Berg discovered that of the over 500 films shot at least in part within the state, approximately 150 of them are westerns. He has compiled a DVD with clips of about 20 of them, in chronological order, with the help of photographer Bob Peticolas. The presentation begins in 1898, with what is thought to be the first piece of film ever shot in New Mexico, by Thomas Edison at Isleta Pueblo, and continues to present time. Each clip lasts 2-5 minutes, after which Berg does live narration, offering information on where the film was shot, trivia about the movie itself and bits of New Mexico history. The presentation will last at least an hour, but can go longer, up to 90 minutes, if so requested by the audience.

Audience participation is encouraged and the DVD is a blend of action, drama, and humor from locales all over New Mexico from Gallup to Carlsbad. Thusfar, Berg has compiled 6 disks for the Made in NM series and has screened them in Las Cruces, El Paso, Hobbs, Carlsbad, Santa Fe, Albuquerque, Raton, and is very pleased to finally bring them to Silver City.

Filmmaking has played an intricate part of New Mexico history, and enjoyed three very vigorous eras of production, with the first being in the late 1940's and early 50's, the second in the late 60's and the early 70's, and present day, thanks to the states film incentive program.

Westerners International is a worldwide group dedicated to sharing and preserving the history of the American West. The local chapter typically meets on the third Tuesday of every other month throughout the year. Dinner is served at the meeting, and the cost is \$12.00 per person.

The public is invited to attend the meeting, and should make reservations with Mary Margaret Soule at 575 538-2888 by Sunday, February 19.

Kingston topped out at about 1,500 residents ca. 1893. Starr Peak and the Caballo Mountain are seen in the distance. The stone church stands in the right margin of the photo.

Photo Black Range Museum

Thank you to Craig Springer of the Hillsboro Historical Society in Hillsboro, New Mexico for allowing the Gazette to republish this history.

Craig Springer and his wife Felicia own the historic George T. and Ninette Stocker Miller home in Hillsboro. He's a professional writer in Santa Fe County.

Be sure to check out the wonderful blogspot ...  
<http://hillsborohistory.blogspot.com/2012/01/kingston-in-myth-and-memory.html>

The Hillsboro Historical Society of Sierra County, NM is a non-profit 501c3 charitable organization that seeks to preserve the rich history around Hillsboro.

## Grant County Rolling Stones Gem and Mineral Society

### February Meeting February 9

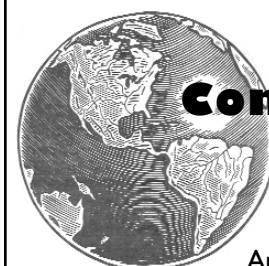
The monthly meeting is held on the second Thursday of the month at the Silver City Senior Center, located on Victoria St. This month's meeting will be on February 9. We begin with a Potluck Dinner at 6:00pm. Everyone brings their own plate (don't forget one for dessert too), utensils, napkins, a beverage and a dish to share. Also, bring your own drinking glasses, as we are not allowed to use the plastic glasses belonging to the Senior Center. There are lots of great dishes brought by others, so don't forget your appetite. At 6:45 we have our meeting, a rock draw and program. Our speaker will be announced at the meeting.

We would love to have you join this wonderful club. To join the Rolling Stones, send your information to the Grant County Rolling Stones Gem and Mineral Society, P.O. Box 1555, Silver City, NM 88062-1555. To request a copy of the Rolling Stones Beacon, the monthly newsletter, which contains a membership form, contact Ginger Coombs at [bearpaw14@yahoo.com](mailto:bearpaw14@yahoo.com) or 575-534-1393. The Club website is <http://rollingstonesgms.blogspot.com/>

### February Field Trip February 18

The monthly field trip is held on the third Saturday of the month. Our February 18th field trip will be announced at our meeting on February 9th and in the monthly Beacon newsletter.

For questions you may contact Ansel Walters at 575-388-2010. You must be a member or guest of a member to come along. All persons who come on our field trips must have a signed waiver of liability in our files. Members of the club must witness the waivers signed by their guests. The Club website is <http://rollingstonesgms.blogspot.com/>



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- ☆ **ALMA:** Alma Grill & Store
- ☆ **MOGOLLON:** (MAY-OCTOBER) Mogollon Artisans Gallery & Gift Shop, Purple Onion Cafe, Mogollon Museum, Mogollon Antiques
- ☆ **PLEASANTON:** Running Horse Gallery & Southern Catron County Visitors' Center
- ☆ **CLIFF:** Action Realty, Chuck's Folly
- ☆ **GILA:** Valley Market & Supply, Gila Senior Center, Casitas de Gila Guesthouses
- ☆ **BUCKHORN:** JS Saddlery, Last Chance Liquor & Pizza Pro
- ☆ **MULE CREEK:** Post Office
- ☆ **RESERVE AREA:** Adobe Cafe, Catron County Visitors Center, Black Gold Store, Jake's General Merchandise, Catron Medical Center, Frisco Stables, Ella's Cafe, Wild West Coffee
- ☆ **LUNA:** Luna Community Center, Luna Service Station
- ☆ **APACHE CREEK:** Apache Creek Store
- ☆ **CRUZVILLE:** Apache RV Park
- ☆ **QUEMADO:** J & Y Auto Service, Country Market, Largo Café & Motel, Alegre Motel
- ☆ **QUEMADO LAKE:** Snuffy's
- ☆ **PIE TOWN:** Pie-O-Near Cafe, Pie Town Cafe
- ☆ **DATIL:** Eagle Guest Ranch, Datil Well Campground, Baldwin Cabin Public Library
- ☆ **MAGDALENA:** The MarketPlace, Mary Mac's Cafe, Bear Mountain Coffeehouse, Trails End Market
- ☆ **GRANTS:** Northwest New Mexico Visitors Center, El Malpais & El Morro National Monuments
- ☆ **SILVER CITY AREA:** Western Bank, Hilltop Service, Silver City Chamber of Commerce, Silver Imaging, Java the Hut, Alotta Gelato, Curious Kumquat, Silver City Food Co-Op, Silver Cafe, Bear Creek Herbs, Heckler Company, Single Socks, The Marketplace, Hester House, AmBank, Silver City Museum, Gila Regional Medical Center, Rose Valley RV Park, Silver Spirit Gallery, Senior Center, Werner Tires, Lowry's RV, A Better Chimney, Aunt Judy's Attic, Melinda's Medical, First New Mexico Bank, Thunder Creek Quilt Shop, A Bead or Two, Gila Hot Springs (Doc Campbell's) Trading Post, Burro Mountain Homestead, Silver City RV Park, and many more ~
- ☆ **PINOS ALTOS:** Bear Creek Cabins, Gold Rush Cafe, The Buckhorn
- ☆ **THE MIMBRES:** Mimbres Store, San Lorenzo Post Office, Mountain Spirits RV Park, Elk Crossing Cafe
- ☆ **DEMING:** Luna County Visitors' Center, Campos Cafe, El Rey Market, Peppers, Deming Arts Council, Deming-Luna-Mimbres Museum, Pancho Villa & Rockhound State Parks, others ~
- ☆ **LAS CRUCES:** Las Cruces Convention & Visitors' Center, Enchanted Gardens, AAA, Spirit Winds
- ☆ **MESILLA:** Mesilla Visitors' Center, The Double Eagle, La Posta Restaurant, Vintage Wines, Josefina's Old Gate
- ☆ **ANTHONY:** New Mexico Welcome Center
- ☆ **LORDBURG:** Southwestern New Mexico Welcome Center, Western Bank, Lordsburg Chamber of Commerce, Hidalgo County Museum, Hidalgo Library, El Charro Cafe, Shakespeare Ghost Town, Kranberry's
- ☆ **RODEO & PORTAL:** Rodeo Grocery & Cafe, Chiricahua Desert Museum, Portal Store, Myrtle Kraft Library, etc
- ☆ **KINGSTON:** Black Range Lodge, Percha Bank
- ☆ **HILLSBORO:** Hillsboro Cafe & General Store
- ☆ **TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES AREA:** Geronimo Springs Museum & Visitors Center
- ☆ **SOCORRO:** Chamber of Commerce, Heritage Visitors Center, Security Title Company, Very Large Array
- ☆ **SOUTH CENTRAL NEW MEXICO:** White Sands National Monument (Alamogordo), Eagle Ranch Pistachios (Tularosa), Ruidoso Visitors Center

### ARIZONA

- ☆ **NUTRIOSO:** Post Office, Bistro Escudilla
- ☆ **ALPINE:** Alpine Country Store, Sportsman's Lodge, Alpine Library, Tackle Shop & Gas
- ☆ **SPRINGVILLE-EAGAR:** Spur Feeds, Reed's Lodge, Springville-Eagar Visitors' Center, White Mountains Quilt Shop, Western Drug, BlueBird Antiques, Java Blues
- ☆ **PINETOP/LAKESIDE:** Visitors' Center, Pinetop Office & Art
- ☆ **WILLCOX:** Cochise County Visitors Center, Bucko's Coffee, Rex Allen Museum, Friends of Marty Robbins, Western Bank, Carlson Creek Vineyards
- ☆ **DRAGOON:** The Amerind Foundation Museum
- ☆ **BENSON:** Benson Visitors Center
- ☆ **DUNCAN:** Duncan Visitors' Center, Big River Saddle Shop, Simpson Hotel, Chaparral Gas & Mini Mart, The OutPost Convenience, Stage Stop Gas & Mini-Mart, Double G Grocery, Hilda's Meat Market, Kitchen & Grocery
- ☆ **CLIFTON:** Chase Creek shops, Greenlee County/Clifton & Morenci Visitors Center
- ☆ **SAFFORD:** Visitors' Center, BLM offices
- ☆ **PATAGONIA:** Visitors' Center, Patagonia Lake State Park
- ☆ **TUBAC:** Tubac Chamber of Commerce
- ☆ **BISBEE:** Bisbee Visitors Center, Optimo Hatworks

### TEXAS

- ☆ **EL PASO:** PDX Printing, El Paso Museum Archaeology, Tom Lea Institute
- ☆ **WEST TEXAS:** Fort Davis and Marfa

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## Silver City's Murray Hotel To Open Phase One Soon!

The vintage Murray Hotel on Broadway, built in 1938, has been undergoing a massive renovation for the past few years.

Owners Kurt and Julianna Albershardt are now preparing to open the first phase to the public . . . including the lobby and 48 guest rooms.

**Anyone who has vintage photographs of The Murray is encouraged to contact Julianna Albershardt at 575-388-2201.**

### Chocolate Truffles

- 16 tbsp. unsalted butter, softened
- 1/2 cup superfine sugar
- 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 2 oz. bittersweet chocolate, melted
- 6 tbsp. unsweetened natural cocoa powder
- 2 tbsp. brewed espresso or dark coffee, at room temperature
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 2 1/2 cups rolled oats
- 1 cup unsweetened finely shredded dried coconut

Combine the butter, sugar, and salt in a large bowl and use a handheld mixer set to medium speed to beat the mixture until pale and fluffy, 1-2 minutes. Add the chocolate, cocoa powder, espresso, and vanilla and continue beating until combined, about 1 minute more.?

Place the oats in the bowl of a food processor and pulse until roughly chopped, about 5 pulses. Add the oats to the chocolate-butter mixture and mix until combined; refrigerate until chilled, about 1 hour.

Divide the chilled chocolate mixture into 36 portions using a tablespoon-size measuring spoon; roll each portion into a 1" ball. Place coconut in a shallow dish and roll each ball thoroughly in coconut; transfer balls to a baking sheet. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours before serving. Makes 26 balls

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	6.5" x 4"	180
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**March Gazette Closing ~ February 21**



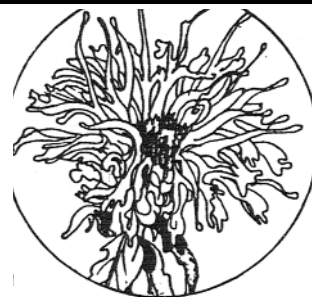
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