

GHOST TOWNS OF NEW MEXICO

By Lucien A. File

Don't shed any tears for the ghost towns of New Mexico.

Many have reached the depths of their depression and are on their way up again.

People like to visit old towns with boarded up windows and gaping hallows where buildings once stood. But today you might be greeted at the site of an expired town by a bar or restaurant, more or less authentically restored, and the beginnings of a minor parking problem. Nor are they all supported by tourist trade, for these places develop a clientele of people who eat out and enjoy the spooky atmosphere.

Another type of economic boom is taking place in the ghost towns. An Episcopal minister and a business man teamed up recently to buy an old house in White Oaks. Their families spend week-ends in this quiet spot remodeling their "summer home" as a do-it-yourself project. An inquiry on November 15, 1963 revealed only two empty houses in White Oaks, and these were both expected to be sold before the end of the month. Mogollon is also becoming a retirement spot, and Hillsboro and Kingston have long since become substantial retirement towns.

In Hondo Valley, an ex-trading post serves drinks from an old-time bar and offers an excellent cuisine. The adjoining country store has authentic furnishings even to a hand coffee-grinder and a coal oil dispensary.

Some ghost towns, like Shakespeare, are run as museums with a charge for admission, and art studios and antique dealers are frequently the heart of other ghost towns.

On October 20, 1963, Governor Jack M. Campbell directed the State Planning Office to prepare an inventory of the State's historical and archaeological resources to learn the potentials of these sites as a part of the State's economic, educational, recreational, and tourism program.

Those ghost towns near the White Sands Missile Testing Range are on the verge of another kind of boom. Organ, in southern New Mexico, which has a population of about 100, will get a telephone system which will handle an estimated 1,500 phones, and is expected to grow sufficiently in connection with NASA project Apollo manned moon shot.

Commercializing ghost towns will preserve some of the authentic atmosphere of old New Mexico for posterity and will protect old historic ruins from vandalism.

Many factors can cause a thriving community to become a ghost town. Water sources may fail and the agriculture may fail to support the population. It is hard to believe that the Puerco River Valley was a great agricultural valley at one time, supplying much of the produce which fed cities such as Albuquerque. Railroads and highways can bypass a town and industries have to move on. Some, like San Marcial, are victims of floods. In New Mexico, abandoned mines have been the leading cause of ghost towns. The ore vein may have pinched out, or the cost of processing the ore may have become too great.

Some towns are completely leveled, others show traces of foundations and still others have spectacular monuments to a past greatness. Entering New Mexico from the northeast, we come across the Raton Pass and enter the beautiful and prosperous city of Raton. But surrounding Raton are the ghost towns of Sugarite, Brilliant, Gardiner, Koehler,

Van Houten, Dawson, Colfax, and French. All but Colfax and French were booming coal towns at one time. Colfax was on a little railroad siding that once ran from Dawson to Tucumcari, now abandoned.

Once a railroad headed out to the southwest of Raton passing through Cimarron to Ute Park. The train line was abandoned about 1930, and the little town of Ute Park folded, but tourist trade along Route 64 in recent years has brought more than 30 inhabitants back to the town.

One of New Mexico's most famous ghost towns is Elizabethtown, northwest of Ute Park on Route 38. Started in 1866, it cut a wide swath in mining history for 30 years. At its height, Elizabethtown claimed a couple of thousand people, and was renowned for its toughness and its large collection of army deserters. Visitors to Elizabethtown before the early 1930's remember the old dredge "Eleanor" which was put in service about 1868 and began working upstream into Moreno district as a gold dredge; but after the 1930's the Eleanor settled down into the mud and disappeared.

Visitors to the Taos ski area will be told about the old gold camp of Twining; today only a forestry sign announces the site of this old town.

About 12 miles north of Pecos on Route 63 is the old copper mining village of Tererro. The mines employed many people and endured into the middle of the 1930's. When profitable ore was mined out and people left, the machines were sold off for scrap metal. One would not suspect Tererro as being a camp of considerable size, but in the 1920's and early 30's the big baseball leagues from New Mexico consisted of teams from Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Dawson, Tererro, Madrid, and Gamerco. The last four of these have been ghost towns for many years.

Going on south, 14 miles to the west of Lamy, is the village of Cerrillos, which in the 1870's was several times larger than it is now. There was coal mining close to Cerrillos. Zinc and lead mining began only a few miles to the north, and the old turquoise mines there were worked for a short time in the 1870's and 1880's about halfway between Cerrillos and Santa Fe. In 1917, a zinc oxide plant started up on the railroad ten miles west at Waldo Sitting. Waldo employed 20 men and a prosperous little settlement grew up there. After the Zinc mines to the north of Cerrillos folded, zinc was shipped in from Magdalena and from Grants County. Waldo was located about where Henry Kaiser's gypsum wallboard factory is today.

Nine miles south and slightly east of Cerrillos is Dolores, which was the site of the first big gold strike in what is now the United States. The original discovery of the gold was made by sheepherder named Ortiz in 1828. This is regarded as the first important discovery of gold west of the Mississippi, and it took three months for the news to reach the banks of the Missouri River 800 miles away.

Ten miles northeast of Carrizozo in Lincoln County is White Oaks. Vigorous mining was conducted here during the 80's and 90's and several mills were erected to treat the ore. Production for the year 1904 was valued at \$2,860,000, but the district has been idle since 1941. White Oaks in 1880 boasted about 8,000 people, claiming to be larger than Santa Fe, which was then the largest town in the territory. A few substantial buildings remain in White Oaks, among them a school house and the old Hoyle House.

Northwest of Truth or Consequences, about twenty-eight miles, is the ghost town of Chloride, the result of a gold discovery in 1879, and some production came from the district continually up until 1957.

Catron County contains several famous mining districts, the most famous of which are probably Mogollon and Cooney. The ghost town of Mogollon today looks more like a typical wild western town than any of the towns created for movies or TV sets. It was a gold camp from 1875 until about 1900. Cooney Mausoleum is located near what was the village of Cooney and is where the founder of the Cooney Mining District is buried, a victim of Indian violence.

Grant County, in the southwestern part of the State, was the banner mining county, and it contains such famous ghost towns as Tyrone, and Pinos Altos. Elaborate but empty buildings at Tyrone have been kept in a good state of repair, and the railroad station patterned after San Diego's beautiful station has marble drinking fountains, tile floors, and elaborate chandeliers, and tooled ceiling beams. It is, however, boarded up and there is no railroad track to bring in a train.

The area around Lordsburg in Hidalgo County contributed its share to the State's output of precious metals, as well as to the ghost town history. Just south of Lordsburg is the ghost town of Shakespeare, once a way station on one of the old stage lines.

Silver was discovered in Kingston in 1880, and had a large production for the next 15 years. But in 1904 the camps in the district became inactive, as did the other silver camps of the country. Kingston once had a population of 6,000 people, and investors rejected the idea of investing money in Albuquerque and chose the livelier, and in those days, more likely-to-succeed town of Kingston. One such investor was a

man named Doheny, who was a pal of a young New Mexico lawyer named Albert Fall. Doheny and Fall lost their shirts in Kingston and departed for California, landing in that state, it is said, with \$.25 between them. In later life, both men gained wealth and notoriety. Doheny became a multimillionaire, chiefly through oil; and Fall became a U. S. Senator from New Mexico and became involved in the Teapot Dome scandal of the twenties.

To the southeast of Hillsboro is the ghost town of Lake Valley, famous for its production of silver during the 80's and 90's. Silver ore was discovered here in 1878, and the famous "Bridal Chamber" was one of the largest single bodies of ore ever discovered. Mines were closed in 1893, but in the short period from 1878 and 1893, over five million ounces of silver were recovered, about half of it coming from the famous Bridal Chamber. The Chamber was a room several times as large as an ordinary dwelling parlor and some of the pure horn silver chunks taken from it were so heavy they had to be cut into several pieces before they could be handled by the hoist. One story about the Bridal Chamber is that its owner turned down an offer of \$50,000 from Governor Safford, who for this sum wanted to take out all the silver he could gather in one day with a pick and wheelbarrow. The offer was refused and a single piece of ore was taken out the next day, valued at \$80,000.

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This ghost town, Shakespeare, in southwestern New Mexico, was once a main stop on the stage coach line to California. It died when the railroad bypassed it.

THE DANIEL BOONE FESTIVAL AT BARBOURVILLE

By Lee Heiman

Time was, if one of these United States took up arms against another they called it Civil War. Nowadays, Kentucky and Pennsylvania square off with loaded rifles every year, and the little town of Barbourville, in southern Kentucky, builds a three-day celebration around it. This is its Daniel Boone Festival.

Barbourville is an ordinarily quiet community. It is 35 miles north of Cumberland Gap, the mountain pass through which Boone brought civilization into the new land of Kentucky. Barbourville was right along the settlers' way to the bluegrass country.

The town bulges with visitors once a year, in October, when its men dress in buckskins and its maids in calico. Real Indians walk the streets, feasts of maize and sweet potatoes load the groaning boards, and a lot of noise and smoke blows from the barrels of ancient, muzzle-loading guns. Somewhere in his happy hunting ground, old Daniel must smile benignly over all the ruckus.

Oddly enough, these proceedings take little note of another explorer who not only spent the night just five miles away but built a cabin there -- and all this twenty years ahead of Daniel Boone! He was Dr. Thomas Walker, the first white man to enter Kentucky. Walker named both the Cumberland River and Cumberland Mountains (Barbourville's neighbors) and built the first white man's house in Kentucky.

The site of his cabin is preserved by the Commonwealth of Kentucky as a historic shrine. But while Barbourville respects Dr. Walker, apparently it loves Daniel Boone and he's the one their festival is all about.

Another contradiction the festival fosters is its treaty with the Cherokee Indians. White men never, but never, asked an Indian to sign a contract that didn't fleece him out of his headfeathers, but Barbourville's Cane Treaty is all in favor of the Cherokees. It gives them rights to the cane that grows along the Cumberland River, to use in their native crafts. Cherokee representatives come in from North Carolina to sign the treaty every year as part of the fun, and they stay around to lend color to the festivities.

It's not all coonskin caps and gunpowder and redskins, though. Barbourville is the home of Union College and boasts a college town's share of pretty girls. There's a lively contest for Queen of the Festival with an impressive ceremony for her coronation. Last year, Miss America came in to crown the Queen; some equally notable celebrity will be on hand this October.

The shooting match that pits Kentucky riflemen against Pennsylvanians has its roots in Kentucky's earliest pioneer history.

Favorite gun of the settlers -- and of Boone himself -- was the long rifle. These incredibly accurate weapons, about as long as a man was tall, were tailored to order, each matching the reach and heft of its owner. Boone was six-foot-plus, and the great gun which is carved with his name in the Kentucky Historical Society's collection at Frankfort was authenticated as Boone's own, partly by comparing its dimensions against his.

In pioneer days, most of the rifles were made in Pennsylvania. Because they helped the men who settled Kentucky, they became known as Kentucky long rifles. A few years ago,

somebody in Pennsylvania affronted the Kentuckians by claiming the guns ought to be called Pennsylvania long rifles, and a good feud started flaming.

The governors of the two states challenged each other to a test at arms. A band of Pennsylvanians who shot the old pieces as a hobby rallied to defend the Keystone State's great honor, and boys from the Bluegrass rose with equal valor. Two matches were held; the Kentuckians won. Surrounded by white powder smoke and hot gun barrels, they all agreed to make it an annual affair. In two subsequent matches, Kentucky has yet to be beat.

This fall at Barbourville, state will once again fire against state. This year's festival dates are October 14, 15, and 16, when bright autumn colors should be at their best.

With 1965 proclaimed "Kentucky Homecoming Year" by Governor Edward T. Breathitt, Barbourville folks wouldn't be too surprised to see the ghost of old Dan'l himself come to town.



THE DANIEL BOONE FESTIVAL AT BARBOURVILLE

The annual festival in Barbourville, Kentucky honoring Daniel Boone features a parade of mule-drawn wagons, lads in coonskin caps and buckskins, and real live Indians.

ST. AUGUSTINE CELEBRATES 400TH BIRTHDAY

by Stephen J. Flynn

St. Augustine, Fla.---This historic city has always been fun to visit, but this year it is something extra special, offering something that no other American city can yet duplicate.

That unique "something" is the 400th birthday of this city, the oldest in the United States. The celebration is already in full swing, and will continue through the rest of 1965 and into next year. Even if you come later, you'll be able to enjoy many of the birthday presents that St. Augustine is receiving at the cost of millions of dollars.

For St. Augustine has been getting a face-lifting which, oddly enough, is designed not at giving it a New Look but at restoring the Old Look it had in the centuries when it was under the Spanish flag. One of its narrow streets, which until a year or two ago was, frankly, getting a little down at the heels, is today a sparkling replica of old Spanish-America, with several old houses restored to their 16th and 17th century heydays.

Walk along St. George Street and you can stroll into one of the oldest surviving structures in the city, now restored as an old Spanish inn of the early 1700s. Before it was restored, a search was made of ancient archives in both Madrid and St. Augustine and a cargo of Spanish period furniture was brought to the city. In another, transformed into a combination museum and Spanish official's home, you can stroll in a walled garden bright with tropic blossoms.

A few hundred feet north of the cluster of restored homes, you can walk through the ancient gate, with its flanks of restored

log fortifications. This was once the northern limit of the town in its very early days.

Close by the gate, with a command of Matanzas Bay and the ocean beyond, broods the great, grey Old Fort---El Castillo de San Marcos. You can visit the fort for a small admission fee collected by the National Park Service for its upkeep. When the English came down from Georgia under General Oglethorpe, they destroyed the town but, despite weeks of bombardment, could not capture the fort. Under American rule, the fort was a prison for the tragic Seminole Indian leader, Osceola. You can still see his dark dungeon and the narrow barred window through which his fellow-leader, Coacoochee or Wild Cat, slithered to freedom.

To get a picture of the area's long, spectacular history in one evening, cross the lovely old stone Bridge of Lions, head out along the beaches and attend the new pageant "Cross and Sword" in the special ampitheatre on Anastasia Island. The pageant, a colorful and authentic work, has brilliant scenes showing the founding of the town by the efficient and ruthless conquistador, Don Pedro Menendez de Aviles in 1565.

Wander further through St. Augustine and you are reminded that by no means all of its heritage is that of the armed conquistador. On Matanzas Bay north of the fort, the religious aspect of the town is being dramatized by a building program at Mission of Nombre de Dios, founded on the spot where conquistadors and priests made their first landing.

At the Mission, a building program is in progress, featuring a new church, a library-research center and, perhaps most

spectacular of all, a stainless-steel cross on the spot where Father Lopez de Mendoza blessed the landing.

The cross, which will shine from indirect lighting at night, will be visible for miles at sea. Far more important to most St. Augustine visitors, it will be a visible landmark to millions of motorists approaching the city on four-laned U.S. Highway 1 or scenic oceanfront Florida Highway 1A, as well as on feeder roads from Interstate 75 nearby.

Dedication of the cross is set for Sept. 8. Four days before that, the official quadricentennial year begins, even though the actual Spanish landing took place Sept. 8, 1565. But on Sept. 4 begins a long gay round of such events as a day of parades through town by ancient horse-drawn carriages, a big fair with booths for Spanish-style snacks and games, a time of strolling serenaders and even street-dancing.

The emphasis placed on dedication of the cross is no accident, for St. Augustine has a long and proud religious heritage. Its Cathedral of St. Augustine overlooking a tree-shaded downtown square, is seat of the oldest Catholic diocese in the nation. Formal dedication of an extensive renovation of the cathedral is Dec. 8. Across the square stands Trinity Church, oldest Episcopal church in Florida. A few blocks northwest of the square is the magnificent Flagler Memorial Presbyterian Church which Henry Flagler, oil tycoon who developed Florida's east coast, built for one million dollars in 1889.

There are many ways to see St. Augustine. Best way is to plan your sightseeing before you get to town. To get a big

colorful package of free information about the city and its many attractions, drop a post card to Wilbur S. Bell, Manager, Chamber of Commerce, St. Augustine, Fla. You'll get plenty of planning material by return mail.

Then you can decide how long you wish to take to drive from one point of interest to another. Or, you may decide to park the car and take a sightseeing tour in a tram train with knowledgeable guides, a surrey with the fringe on top with equally knowing and courteous drivers, or even in a sightseeing boat.

There are literally dozens of tourist attractions in and around St. Augustine, ranging from a restored house said to be the oldest in town to a farm-full of thousands of live alligators. So that it's hard to see how every member of an average American family could fail to find plenty of enjoyable spots to visit.

St. Augustine has lots of recreational opportunities, too. If you like to fish, you can have several varieties, in bays and lagoons or offshore in search of the big fellows.

The beaches of St. Augustine's vicinity are among the best on the Atlantic Coast. A few miles from downtown over the Bridge of Lions and you come to a stretch of 18 miles of wide, hard-packed white-sand beach. It's a beach that's never too crowded, a place where you can drive your car right out on the beach at low tide, where you can spend a glorious day swimming, fishing and picnicking.

Head a few miles south of the big beachfront state park on Anastasia Island and you can enjoy one of the great sea spectacles at Marine Studios, the world's first oceanarium. Here

you see porpoises leaping and cavorting, or you can see hundreds of kinds of fish---ranging from big sharks to tiny and colorful tropical fish---in their native habitats through 300 portholes.

As one of the earliest tourist resorts on the East Coast of Florida, St. Augustine has a complete range of places for you and your family to stay. Of course the most spectacular place in town (and a valid sightseeing stop in its own right) is the huge pile of Spanish gingerbread known as the Ponce de Leon Hotel. It is sprawled over more than six acres of downtown property, and when it opened in 1885, it was launched by its builder, Henry Flagler, with a brilliant season. The Ponce de Leon is open only during the winter season.

Most other places in and around town are open year-round, of course. In fact, many motels and clusters of cottages on major roads or along the ocean actually lower their rates a bit in Fall and Winter. But regardless of the time of year, rates are in most instances within range of the average vacation budget.

If you've never been to St. Augustine, you really should see it, and especially so in this, its 400th anniversary.

If, on the other hand, you visited the place before, you should come back. It's spruced up to the point where you'll find it altogether different.

Perhaps the modern mood of St. Augustine is exemplified by the derring-do of the statue of Ponce de Leon at a circle near the Bridge of Lions.

Old Ponce came through here in 1513, looking for the Fountain of Youth. He never found it. But if you observe the New Look of this town, you can't help thinking that maybe St. Augustine has found that Fountain instead.



St. Augustine Celebrates 400th Birthday

A view along St. George Street where some of the old Spanish buildings have been restored to appear as they did in the 16th and 17th centuries.