

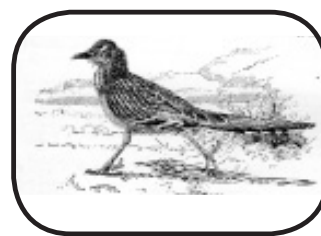
Guajalotes, Zopilotes, y Paisanos



Turkey



Vulture



Roadrunner

Hillsboro Historical Society

February 2016. Volume 9 Number 1



Hillsboro Players "Half-Baked Horse Opera"

The Sarah Gibson Story of Victorio's attack at McEver's Ranch

Hillsboro Timeline--continued

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From the President

Greetings..the Hillsboro Historical Society is looking forward to a great year. The recent Steve Siegfried production, a "A Half-baked Horse Opera," played to a full house and raised money for the HHS, Hillsboro Community Center and Library. The Antiques Festival is gaining momentum for Labor Day and looks to build on last years success. We are always looking for ideas on fundraising and projects... Please let us know what you are thinking? Also if you are aware of any artifacts that are relevant to the local area we are always interested in acquiring either through purchase or as tax write off for the donator. Thanks so much for your support!

News, Comments, Activities

HHS is actively planning another Antiques Festival and Historic Home Tour for next Labor Day. Garland Bills is chair of the Antiques Festival Committee this year, and Patty Woodruff has agreed to organize the Home Tour. Such events as these provide income for Hillsboro Historical Society and help maintain the Heritage Days tone of the Labor Day weekend for the town. Other events, such as Stephen Siegfried's hilarious play, mentioned above by Larry, provide operating funds for HHS and the other volunteer-based organizations, including our Municipal Water Board, the Volunteer Fire Department, the Community Center Board, and the Hillsboro Community Library Board, that serve as substitutes for town government in our unincorporated village. For a small town such as ours to sustain such a beautiful Community Center, Auditorium, and downtown History Education Center is a major accomplishment. In addition to these, the Spit and Whittle Club in Kingston is developing the Schoolhouse Museum. I seriously doubt that many small communities can boast so much work accomplished by an entirely volunteer work force. I think we can all be proud of the work we do.

Most of us live here because we like the quiet lifestyle of a small town. However, smallness and isolation create certain disadvantages when a community wants to take on larger projects. HHS was formed, initially, with plans to purchase the Sierra County Courthouse and Jail property. Early on, we raised over \$20,000 to accomplish this goal. The fund that this established has slowly grown to the point that we now have perhaps \$35,000 available for historic preservation. The two historic structures currently available are the courthouse and the Black Range Museum. Owners of both of these properties are willing to sell them. Our best estimate is that if we had at least \$200,000 in hand, we could purchase both and have a little left over for stabilization, interpretation, and maintenance. When you listen to national news about governmental and corporate spending, such a figure seems like a trifle, but, If you view such a number from within a cadre of local volunteers, mostly retirees on fixed incomes, \$200K seems insurmountable. Yet the museum and the courthouse are the historical cores of our town--and they are in danger of deteriorating beyond usability. For those of us who love the quiet and uniqueness of our area, watching key elements disappear is discouraging. However, like the present owners of the courthouse and the museum, we all have our own future health expenses and our heirs to

consider. None of us can afford to place our limited estates in jeopardy.

So, raising money for the big projects means going outside the community, and we're not quite sure how to start. The possibility of finding grants has been suggested, however grants to buy properties are nearly non-existent. Money to improve, stabilize, interpret, and curate historic properties might be available, once we, as a non-profit, own properties and artifacts. But money to buy property will probably have to come from private donors or funds raised through events. The magnitude of such an undertaking looks overwhelming to our small board.

We currently have a sub-committee, led by Garland Bills and advised by Chuck Barrett, working on a renewed vision and plan for HHS. I think that an essential question this committee must address is whether we should continue to try to preserve significant, but relatively expensive, structures and artifacts in our community; or should we perhaps lower our sights and focus on our current Education Center and Store, along with an increased effort to generate literature and displays about local history. As you might expect, with a board of nine people, not all are in perfect alignment regarding our goals. Like the other volunteer organizations listed above, HHS was formed to benefit our community. Perhaps its time for our members and all others concerned about Hillsboro, Kingston, and our regional heritage to give us some feedback and guidance.



Photos courtesy of Camy Cosper and Sarah Kotchian

Stephen Siegfried's Half-Baked Horse Opera

From the Archives

Sarah Gibson's Story

by Sarah A. Gibson--1917

Richard E. Mitchem of Cedar City, Utah sent the story below to Sonja. We've seen several accounts of the 1879 Apache attack on McEver's Ranch, but this is the only first-hand description we've seen, told by one of the women who was living at the cienega, when the attack occurred. Mr. Mitchem received this manuscript from Judith Crawford of Deming, NM.

Here are a few interesting things of Indians in the early days, witnessed by W. W. Gibson, his wife and family, and those who took part in some of the fights. At the time of the beginning of this, the Gibsons lived in a small farming settlement on the Frio River, Uvalda County, Texas. They had a bunch of sheep and seven children and were quite prosperous and happy until misfortune overtook them, which caused them to break up home and sell their sheep on account of William's health. He had a hemorrhage of the lungs and the doctor said he would have to travel and "rough it" to regain his health. So they bought a camp outfit and with a good team, first began by camping around there for awhile. The deer and wild turkey were plentiful then. They had no trouble getting plenty of wild meat, which the doctor had recommended as a good cure for his trouble. (They could kill anything anytime they wanted).

They had made up their minds to reach Arizona, if possible, but owing to the wild Indians and their needs, it was dangerous to start out with such a family without more protection. On the second of September, 1877, they decided to make a start and they traveled as far as possible. While they were waiting that evening, a man on horseback passed their camp and informed them that a train of 13 teams (2 wagons and 10 mules to each team) loaded with silk and satins was headed for Chihuahua, Mexico. Also one man and a wagon loaded with sewing machines was in the train. The next morning, September 3, they all started together for El Paso. It being about 300 miles, they had a long trip before them.

Everything went well with them during this trip. At night the wagons were circled and the mules were put on the inside of this circle and the men and families slept outside of this. Only when danger was nigh, then the little wagons were corralled with the mules for protection. Now and then they would hear of somebody being killed before or behind them at some watering hole, but they never bothered the train for, there being 45 men in the bunch, they were not looking for that kind of trouble. One day, when everybody was hungry for meat, some deer were seen some distance away and everyone shouted "deer, deer!" The wagons all stopped and before anyone could think, Bill Gibson (as he was called) who was a good marksman, having been a soldier during the war, raised his rifle and brought down two with one shot.

Just a month from the start found them in El Paso all safe and sound. Here the train had to be inspected of its silks and satins before leaving the U.S. for Mexico. The Gibsons stopped here for about a week to rest and clean up. They then started for Hillsboro, New Mexico, which was about 180 miles. One day while they stopped at a fort to camp, (there were seven children you remember), the mother was getting some clean clothes from the trunk for them. They had a \$25.00 bill in among the clothes somewhere, about all they had except some change, and in some way it got misplaced and lost. After they had traveled a day or two, the father dreamed one night they had lost it. After they looked, sure enough, it was gone. Only having little money when reaching Hillsboro, New Mexico, they had to get work of some kind. They were lucky, for in a day or so, they got a job hauling ore. They worked until they had money for four large mules. This was nearly two years. Here, twins were born to them, girls, on April 16, 1879.

A man in Hillsboro offered Bill Gibson a place of cows and ranch on a lake about twelve miles below town, where they moved and began to work. All this time, Bill was regaining his health. There were only two families beside themselves; one was the McEveretts [ed note: McEvers], wife and daughter who lived on the upper part of the swamp. Irvins [ed note: Irwins], his wife, son and his wife lived below and the Gibsons had the middle ranch. All was peace and contentment for at least two or three months. One day while the father was gone hunting, the mother and oldest boy, Johnnie, was outside when suddenly he called to his mother to come and look. On doing so, what did she see? Some distance away was now and then something black popping up and down behind some rocks, which looked very much like Indian heads. After a consultation with her boy, Johnnie, they decided to go on down to the (Irvins) ranch and see what it really was. But when they reached his

place, Mr. Irvins took Johnnie and went to see what the trouble was. He was a stubborn old fellow, and when he came back, told her she was scared for nothing, as there was nothing there. It must have been crows she saw jumping around on the rocks. But after they started back home, Johnnie said there were moccasin tracks all around there where they were. So this made her more uneasy and when they reached home, they could see the upper ranch and heard some shooting and could see enough to know there was trouble up there. He (Bill) was there from hunting and while she was getting dinner and they were talking about the incident when John came running in and said he heard shooting at McEveretts and believed they were shooting at somebody. On investigating, they could see there was trouble. Bill sent John after the horse, where he was tied in the swamp and by the time he got back, young Irvins was there, for they had heard the shooting too. The men with John took their guns and went up there. Irvins and the two women came later so the mother and children went on up with them. Before they got there they could see the shooting and the men taking part in it. Mrs. Gibson could see Bill taking aim at an Indian who wore a very large hat and he made the remark to Irvins "Here, hold my horse (as he dismounted and handed him the bridle), I want that hat". He fired and the red man fell off his horse with a loud yell, but his comrade caught him and carried him away in his arms. So Bill missed getting his hat. In the fighting, one white man was wounded. A bullet hit him in his arm, tearing the flesh from it and went through his breast to the other arm. But fortunately, he got all right. The Indians were after the horses and the men were shooting at the Indians to make them leave the horses alone. Everybody stayed at McEverett's all night, almost afraid to look out. The next day, the men ventured out to see what the Indians had done.

This was not all the mischief they did this time, for they heard afterward that on their way out from town, the Indians stopped at a Mexican family's and made them all undress and then left them, laughing at them and what they thought fun. After they left, one boy wanted them all to leave and hide, telling them they would be back and kill them, but the family only laughed and said "no, they won't be back". But the boy left and went to a cave he knew about and stayed there. That night, after the Indians had had a fight with the white men from town, killing seven white men in battle, they came back to the Mexican's house and killed the whole family of nine except the boy who was hiding. When they went out the next day to see what was done there, everything was quiet. After that, the government sent some men there to build a sort of fort of adobe. They built it in eight or nine days and left 500 rounds of shells and two kegs of powder and thought that was good protection. But on the tenth day after the last excitement, Mr. McEverett and a hired man was out in the field with a wagon and horses hauling corn fodder, which was piled in shocks. They felt uneasy still, for they carried their guns with them and set them down by the wagon. Everything looked nice and peaceful, but they were suddenly surprised by about fifteen shots by some more men nearby and several red men jumped from beneath the shocks of fodder from all over the field. The men jumped from the wagon just as the bullets passed over their heads. When they (the Indians) started shooting at them, they run for shelter in the tall sunflowers, which grew all around them. The women from the house started outside and could see someone from the Gibson ranch and waved. The man, who was wounded before, was going to Gibson's and heard the shooting. Also, the children. Bill was not home, having gone with the team several hours before to Irvins to go out on the prairie to haul hay. Mrs. Gibson sent the man when he got there at top most speed to stop them if possible. The women from Gibson's waived for him to come on down there, they thought it better for them to run from danger than face it, so they waived them (McEverett's) to come on down there, which they did. The girl, about 17 years old, tried to ride her pony away which she thought a great deal of, but it was the pony the Indians wanted and they began shooting at her until she had to leave her pony and fly, which she did, never looking back or stopping for water, but just kept ahead until she reached Irvins. Some of the boys from Gibsons come running in crying, "here they come, Ma". This excited them all so they began getting the little ones together for a run to the lower ranch where all the men were. John run to the top of the hill and shouted, "here they are". The mother took one of the twins and a box of cartridges. Mollie, the oldest daughter, took the other twin and Polly, the other girl, took a small youngster named Lane. They started on a run when John said, "here they are". Imagine the excitement. The mother started to exchange loads with Polly as Lane was too heavy for her small arms, to run, and on doing so she dropped the box of cartridges in the dirt and had to stop to pick them up. She thought of the quickest way of doing it, as one will in a tight place, by scooping them up dirt and all in Lane's hat. By this time, Mrs. McEverett caught up with them and picked Annie, another one that couldn't run, up across her shoulder and away they went. By the time they was well around the point of the hill, here come Bill and the men with the hay wagon. They were very glad of this for the Indians were getting pretty close. While they were all piling in the wagon, one of the men started after a horse, which was tied in the pasture, but the Indians began shooting at him over

the heads of the others in the wagon. They wanted the horse. (The man, Coffee, got to Irvins just as the men were getting on the wagon to leave for the hay). They all found shelter in Irvins house which was made of small pickets.

Here they stayed until the next day before anyone ventured out. While there, everything seemed quiet and they didn't think there were any Indians anywhere. So they were all brave enough to get out and look around. Bill was one of them who was always there when any fighting or excitement was going on. They could not see or hear any Indians, so Bill and Mr. Irvins were standing by the wagon with a post between them facing each other and talking it over, when Whiz, Buzz, a bullet hit the post which was sticking up just between them and another one hit the ground between young Irvins' legs. This caused a scatterment for shelter again where they remained until someone come from town. How did they get word? Listen! You remember Mr. McEverett and his hired man run into the sunflowers to hide at the beginning? Neither knew where the other one was all this time. The hired man found his way out during the night and away to town, where he gave the alarm. Mr. McEverett ventured out from hiding about nine o'clock at night and went to his home, or where his house was that day, for the Indians had blown the house up with powder that was in the house, first removing the bedding, trunks and clothing. The beds they put in one pile and burned. The clothes they took from the trunks and others and hung them across some poles, which were in the yard used as tying places, and set fire to them.

In one of the trunks was a packet where the girl had put a ten-dollar bill. This they had not found. From here, Mr. McEverett made his way to the Gibson place, but it was deserted. So he went cautiously to the Irvins place, hiding and listening several hours to be sure the occupants were white before he made his appearance and presence known at the house. No doubt he expected to find some or maybe most all of them murdered but no, not one even hurt, except from fright. When he found they were white he hollered and you may be sure there were some proud people there. They all thought sure he was killed. But it was sad to see their home all tore up. But they built again and stayed there.

The Gibsons left right after that raid and went back to Hillsboro and after they left, the same Indians came back and made another raid. They were sure thankful they were not there then. After they went to town, they don't know how long, there was an old Mexican that lived about five miles from town that had been feeding the Indians. He started from town with a young man, both riding little ponies. They met some Indians and they were going to kill the boy, but the old Mexican told them he was his friend. The Indians said the Mexican have no white man for friend. He told them if they would not kill him, he would take the young man with him and promise not to take him back, but they stripped him (the young man) of all but his underclothes and took his horse and told him to walk. So they went on a little ways until they were out of sight of the Indians they thought, and the young man got up behind the Mexican and they started towards town. The first thing they knew, they heard the Indians coming and they sure made that pony fly and they just got over the top of the hill next to town when the Indians came to the top and they stood there a little bit looking over into town and they went off. But the Mexican saved the boy and liked to have killed the pony.

Bill Gibson was not there long until they had him dead drunk. That was better than money to him. Well, they had no more trouble, only they could not get any more work there and Bill did not want any. He wanted to get away from there but they had no money. That was June, 1880. There was a man by the name of Jackson that wanted to come to Globe and he said he would put up the money to get us to travel with them. So he put up enough to get about halfway there, so there we were without anything to eat. Mrs. Gibson had a feather bed she had made off of her geese and ducks in Texas so she sold that and got enough to take them to Globe, Arizona. As they came from Hillsboro they crossed several fresh Indian trails and expected every day to run up on a bunch, but as the Lord would have it, they got through all safe and sound. When they arrived in Globe, they were out of money again. So Bill, as he always has done, studied out a plan. He took his gun to town and sold it and got them something to eat and a sack of barley for his mule. When he poured out the food, there was a twenty dollar gold piece in it. You may be sure they were proud of that. So they took it and got cloth enough to make a tent and Mrs. Gibson made it by hand so they had a shelter to stay in. At that time, Globe was a new mining camp and Bill had no trouble getting work. Went right to hauling lumber down off of the Pinal Mountain, got good wages right along.

Well, they worked and struggled along with nine children and their two selves for nearly a year. So, in March, 1881, they were sending their three oldest boys to school when one day they came home with the measles and just about the time they began to get well, all six of the others got down and they sure had a time setting up and keeping fires at nights. As it was a tent, they had to keep it warm day and night. They all got along all right without a doctor except one, they had to have one up with him. They thought they were going to lose him, but

he pulled through and is still alive. The hardest part of it was in about a month after they got well, they started to move and the first night they camped, it commenced to drizzle. They stretched their tent but had to cook outside and the next morning, the two girls and the mother took cold and broke out like the measles. They had fever with it. But by the next morning, Mollie and mother were all right, but Polly never got over it. They went on to the place they started and she kept getting worse all the time. When they got there, she had such a high fever, they had to stay there and watch her die for there was no doctor nearer than sixty miles. The neighbors what were there did all they could for her, but didn't anything do any good so she died and they had to bury her there so far from anywhere. They intended to take her up and bury her in Globe, but they never got to. It like to have killed me, oh, it was so hard.

Well, we started back to Globe but there was a man from Texas. He and William were great friends. His name was Joe Sloan and he offered us a ranch and some cattle if William would go in with him as a partner. It was about fifteen miles from Globe so he stopped there. On the line of San Carlos, right among the Indians, which was their camping place. They never tried to hurt us because we were Joe Sloan's friends, but one day, six Indians came there and no one was there but William and the family. They acted awfully strange and it scared us pretty bad. We expected every minute they would kill us, but they would not hurt us because we were Sloan's friends. So they camped there that night and went off the next day. We were making butter to take to Globe and Bill was going to go in with it the next morning. He was loading the wagon when one of his friends come and told him the Indians had gone to a cow ranch not far from there and killed one man and wounded two more and drove their horses all off. Come to find out they were at our place. So we loaded on all we could get on the wagon and went to Globe and that night, Sloan and our boy, Johnnie, went back and the whole place was surrounded with Indians. One of them told Sloan he had better not stay all night for there were bad Indians there. So they caught the chickens and came on back to Globe. The Indians stole a fine mare from us and we could not get her back and they took and killed nearly all our cattle.

So we stayed at Globe and built us a house and bought some more cattle and we kept making butter. We lived around Globe for twelve years, had four more children that made us twelve living and one dead. We had quite a lot more ups and downs, but no more Indian troubles. William kept improving all the time in health; he drank quite a lot of blood while at Globe. We were living on the outside of Globe and one day he went to town and when he come home, he could not speak above a whisper and he kept that way for a long time. At last he came in one day and talked out. It surprised me so I could not speak for sometime. So he kept getting better all the time. We left Globe in December, 1891 and went down on the Gila. When we went over the Pinal Mountains, there was a big snow about four feet on each side of the road. By the time we got about half way, the water began to freeze so we had to camp under a big pine tree. Nine children and one of their cousins and myself. Well, we got down on the Gila on Christmas Day and ate our dinner in the dirt. We lived down on the river until the next fall and went to Congress, Arizona. We lived around there until three of our girls were married and three of our boys, but our boys were not at home. Then we left there and went to Skull Valley and there two more of our girls were married. Then we left there and went to Thompson Valley and there two more of our boys were married and while there, William had a cancer on his nose and came very near killing him, but they found out about a man living at Del Rio, Texas that had medicine that would cure a cancer. So they sent and got some and it did cure it good and sound, but it was fearful while it was killing the cancer. It took it all out in thirty days.

Well, the children were all married, but one of the boys, he has never married. So we moved back to Congress on a creek called Date Creek. We lived here once before and while we lived here first, our boy, Joe, had been sick for a long time. He died at Winkleman March 9, 1915, so we have lost two out of thirteen children. I was sure thankful I got to keep my children as long as I did. Joe was 42 years old when he died and left a wife and two children.

Well, William is 79 years old, borned 1838, went all through the Civil War, was a Confederate soldier, had one bad wound once and had one bad spell of sickness, but came home fat and hearty. I was born 1849 and am 68 years old and here we are living alone on Date Creek. So many children and 34 grandchildren and none of them can live here. We have been married 52 years next November. Well, this ends my yarn as well as I can remember.

For more information on the attack at McEver's ranch, go to: <http://hillsborohistory.blogspot.com/2011/09/remembering-9-11.html?m=1>.

HILLSBORO TIMELINE TWO

Harley Shaw

This is an extension of the Hillsboro Timeline that we began in our November, 2015 issue. A recent report by the New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources provides a detailed map of the Hillsboro 7.5 quadrangle showing the complicated landscape immediately surrounding Hillsboro. I'd like to show it here, but it is too big and color reproduction too costly. It can be seen online at <https://geoinfo.nmt.edu/publications/maps/geologic/ofgm/downloads/242/HillsboroReport.pdf>. The mixed up geological structure it portrays, created by violent volcanic and active tectonic forces has attracted miners for the last 136 years. Most of this dynamic melting, erupting, cooling, breaking, folding, mixing, compressing, and rearranging of the bedrock had happened by 25 million years ago. The mountain has slowly calmed down since then, although a modest amount of more recent volcanic activity created the dark basalt caps on a few hilltops and mesas are visible from town. Much of which has happened more recently—during the past 2.5 million years—has been created through erosion and the mass downhill movement of surface materials. Those who have seen Percha Creek flow after heavy rains, especially those who saw the 1972 flood, are well-aware that such serious rainfall and erosion still happen. But the flood events that created the large sedimentary deposits to our west, stretching across the flats to the Rio Grande, would have made the 1914 and 1972 floods seem like trickles from a rusty faucet. To envision magnitude of snow, rain, and melt that happened at the end of the Ice Age, between 2.5 million and 15,000 years ago, one must contemplate the depth of the sedimentary materials visible in the steep walls of lower Percha Creek between the Black Range foothills and the Rio Grande River.

The flow that created these sediments occurred during prolonged cycles of warming and cooling. The Black Range apparently lay too far south to develop true glaciers, although small ones existed on Sierra Blanca Peak east of us as late as 9850 years ago. Even though no glaciers existed at the head of Percha Creek or Las Animas, the weather during the Pleistocene was cold beyond our imagination. No doubt snow accumulation on the higher parts of our mountain was at times deep and persistent. When the big warming trend started about 25 million years ago, masses of frozen water lay primed to melt and tumble to the Rio Grande. Not only soil, but house-sized rocks were carried violently downhill, covering the rocky mineral substrate. During the last 250 million years as many as four major episodes of intense runoff from the highlands occurred during interglacial periods, and causing down-cutting of Percha Creek and other channels. Earlier channels slowly filled during periods of cold and reduced runoff, only to erode again during the next thaw. What we know as Percha Creek remained after the last major outflow, which occurred from approximately 190,000 to 130,000 years ago. It was probably deeper at the end of this period than it is now, with gradual filling occurring during gentler outflows over the past 130,000 years.

Large landslides occurred at several locations around Hillsboro and further up the Black Range. At least two ancient slides lie west of the twin bridges above town, where a younger, smaller slide rests atop an older one. These probably happened during unusually wet periods within the past 200,000 years. Heavy rains can still cause such landslides, as demonstrated by the washout that closed Highway 152 on the west side of the mountain after the 2013 Silver Fire.

So far, we've only discussed the non-living elements of our landscape. Since living creatures leave less evidence of their existence than do rocks and soil, figuring out what animals and plants have come and gone over the past 3 billion years or so requires expertise that has yet to be brought to bear on our watershed. Fossils exist in some of the sedimentary or metamorphic layers, but I know of no effort by paleontologists to map or clearly identify these biological records in stone. We can be assured, though, that given the tremendous fluctuations in the land surface, temperature, and moisture over such a long time, the kinds of living creatures present changed accordingly. Add to this the fact that the long trend from single-cell species to the variety and complexity of creatures that existed prior to the arrival of *Homo sapiens*, and the best we can provide is the understatement that our knowledge is incomplete. This, of course, is a boon to folks with curiosity—they'll always have something new to discover.

Without these basic studies of the historical geology and the paleontology of the Percha watershed, we're pretty much limited to simple acknowledgement that the Ice Age occurred, with its climatic comings and goings and associated changes in plant and animal life. We can speculate that archaic *Homo sapiens* probably

wandered into the watershed sometime within the past 15,000 years, but we know little about their land use or their culture. We know a little more about the Mimbres cultures that appeared some 1800 years ago, because we can excavate their pithouses and study their, rock art, tools, and pottery. Athapascans (Apache ancestors) wandered into the watershed some 500 years ago, and our knowledge of them stems from their pottery, rock art, oral tradition, and, later, Spanish and Anglo written history. Most of our own written history in the watershed covers the past 136 years—about .000033 percent of the age of the planet earth and about .09 percent of the time since humans first wandered into the Southwest. However interesting such short-term history may be, when placed in the perspective of the magnitude of change that has occurred since the earth formed, all of our huffing and puffing about human foibles seems sadly disproportionate to the longer geological and universal time scales.

But, to return to our original recognition of the new Hillsboro geological map, all of that local shifting, tumbling, boiling, rising, falling, and mixing of the planet's crust created the concentration of minerals that created Hillsboro. Those early prospectors that picked up float or panned the washes were searching the outwash materials moved and churned by water flow over the past 25 million years. But when they followed float deposition upstream and, ultimately, up hillsides, seeking the mother lodes, they moved back in time to mineral mixtures deposited some 75 million years ago.

Nonetheless, if we keep trying to outline the history of our watershed, once the geologic magnitude is understood, we're rather stuck with studying the happenings within the past 15,000 years at best and the last 136 years most likely. Even during this most recent period, questions are more common than facts. Let's hope our developing timeline helps us place the facts in their proper time frame and identify the gaps where stories are yet to be told.



Black volcanic caprocks on the mesas around Hillsboro are geologically recent, forming from smaller, local volcanoes within the past 25 million years

PERCHA WATERSHED TIMELINE

1877-Present	Rise and fall of mining. Finite histories of Hillsboro and Kingston.
Early 1877- August 1877	Stitzel and Dugan discover gold N. of Percha Creek. Other prospectors move to area, town formed. Galles, Weeks, Eliot, and Yankie draw straws for privilege of naming town. Yankie wins, calls it Hillsboro after his home town, Hillsborough, Ohio.
1863	About 1863, Union Soldiers of the California Column patrolled Cienega de Los Apaches, which is today called Trujillo Creek, 5 miles south of Hillsboro.
Fall, 1862	Joseph Walker leads party of prospectors headed for Arizona along east front of Black Range and around south end. No real descriptions, but Apaches kept them from crossing mountain.
Spring 1862	Sibley defeated at Glorieta Pass. Stragglers groups of Confederate soldiers crossed Percha en route back to Texas.
February, 1862	Sibley's Confederate troops cross mouth of Percha en route to battle at Fort Craig.
1854	Fort Craig garrisoned. U. S. Troops begin to make excursions into Black Range, including Percha Creek.
February 2, 1848	Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Official transfer of ownership of territory.
October 15, 1846	General Kearny and Army of the West camped on Percha Creek near location of present Percha Ranch en route to California.
August 15, 1846	Territory of New Mexico claimed by General Kearny for U. S. A.
August 24, 1821	End of Spanish rule of Territory of Mexico. Some incursions of American and French trappers through Southwest.
1809	Zebulon Pike crossed near mouth of Percha Creek while a prisoner of Spanish Army. He noted Apache sign and sign of Spanish pursuers in the general vicinity.
Sept. 25th, 1779	Commandant General Jacobo Ugarte y Loyola, with 250 troops pursued Apaches into head of Las Animas Creek. Could have also entered Percha Watershed.
1583	Espejo, traveled northward for 15 days from the location of current El Paso, Probably crossed Percha Creek. Described the region as empty of humans and having vegetation made up of mesquite groves and prickly pears in the lower elevations, pine, pinyon, "sabines", and cedars. Sabines were probably alligator juniper.
1581	Rodriguez-Chamusco expedition crossed mouth of Percha Creek. Notes that area is unsettled.
400—200 years ago	Moderate use of Percha Creek by Apaches. Ongoing conflict with Spanish. Possible appearance of French trapper/traders.
500—400 years ago	Arrival of Athapascans and Spanish.
1800—800 years ago	Various stages of eastern Mimbres culture present. Formation of pithouses on points along Percha Creek. Vegetation and fauna generally as at present.
15,000—1800 years ago	Arrival of humans. Vegetation zones moving uphill; ponderosa pine increasing. Grassland and creosote bushing appearing in plains. Little known about presence of Archaic (Clovis or Folsom)cultures in our watershed. Mostly surficial geological activity.
130,000-15,000 years ago	Continued warming. Disappearance of many large Pleistocene mammals. Most geological activity surficial—continued canyon formation, rearrangement of surface layers, landslides, stream aggradation. Vegetation generally shifted downward from present distributions. Mixed conifer (spruce-fire) forest probably reaching downhill perhaps to 5000 feet (elevation of Hillsboro); pinyon-juniper woodlands extending into plains. Ponderosa pine zone very limited or missing.
2.5 million —130,000 years ago	Final period of massive sedimentary outflows. Canyons on east face of Black Range well established in approximate current formations.



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