

# Guajalotes, Zopilotes, y Paisanos



Turkey



Vulture



Roadrunner

## Hillsboro Historical Society

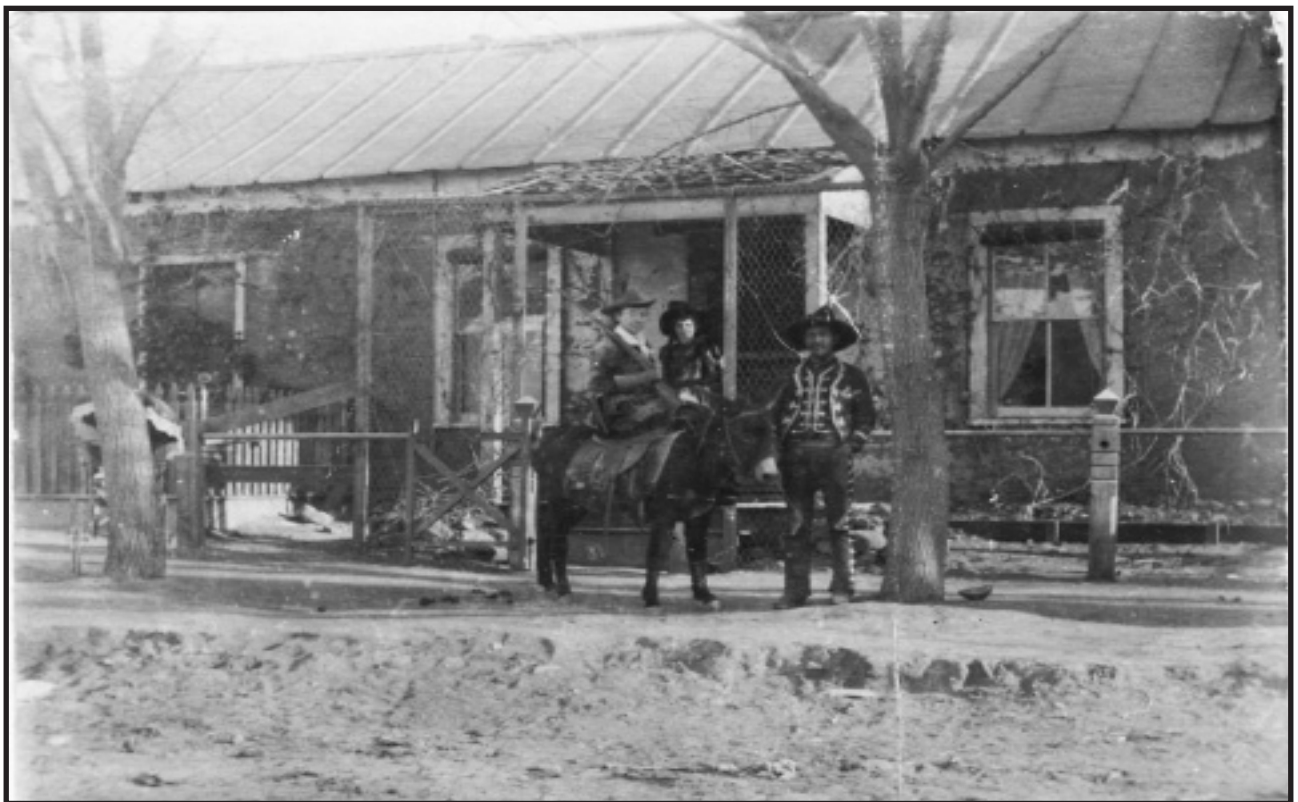
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### Museum Update

The story of Nat and Levina Irwins, survivors of both Lake Valley Apache Attacks

How Hillsboro Became a Town--Maybe

Hillsboro Timeline Continued - Spaniards and Apaches (or lack of)  
on the Percha



Two ladies and a gent looking relaxed in front of our Black Range Museum building.  
Date unknown. The building appears to be a residence at this time.  
Note baby carriage stashed behind tree to left.

## **Board**

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## **President's Message**

Greetings. Fall is upon us and truly my favorite time of year. The nights and days are cooling off and the Holiday season is here.

First, we want to welcome Sandy Ficklin to the board. Sandy has been functioning as the board secretary for the past few months. Now it is official.

I am sure many of you are aware that we had to cancel the Antiques Festival this year. I apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused. The Board weighed the decision carefully and felt that we just did not have enough vendors committed to make it worthwhile. Whether we sponsor the Antiques Festival next year or not has yet to be decided.

On other fronts the HHS has been very busy. We purchased a 40' storage container and placed it on the west side of the property. This will provide storage during the restoration of the building and for artifacts and exhibits not on Black Range Museum display. Special thanks to Dave and Jodi Manzara, Dennis Franklin and Cami Cospers for their assistance with this project.

We had a clean-up day on October 15th to remove the "Trees of Heaven" infesting the property. Shout out to Ted Caluwe and Linda Seebach for their expertise and assistance in cleaning up and treating the infestation. We still have some more work to do, but it made a huge difference.

Steve Morgan and Nicole Trushell have volunteered to design the landscape plan for the museum grounds. They both bring a world of talent and expertise to the table. The Board will be providing input to help guide the project, if you have any suggestions, please contact one of the Board members.

We have procured liability insurance for the museum and are planning to be at least partially open for Christmas in the Foothills.

Harley has been working hard on the application to place the museum on the National Register. John Tittmann and Wyman Edwards have provided architectural drawings and advice in this process and help with the recommendations for the restoration.

We have been gifted some new donations to the museum. Steve Dobrott (Ladder Ranch) has donated some historic wagon wheels and parts from the ranch. Denise Lindsey has donated the wood stove from the Kelsey cabin on Animas Creek and the Carr family has donated a cash register once used in the S-X Bar. Thank-you for sharing.

Wow...we have been busy. I do want to say how much we sincerely appreciate the volunteers and all the help and interest in our history, we could not do it without you. We still have much to do and are always looking for your ideas, thoughts and help. Have a great Holiday Season!

## A Young Rancher's Adventures in Lake Valley, 1879-1884

by Tom Scanlan

*Editor's note: The very best parts of doing this newsletter are the fascinating new friends it brings to our door. Tom Scanlan is one of these--a native Californian, now living near San Diego. With a father who was a career navy man, Tom lived in many parts of the U. S. while he was growing up, and he did a hitch himself in the Marines. Along the way, he accumulated college degrees in Experimental Psychology and Physics with graduate work in geology, geophysics, and oceanography—subjects he then taught for 27 years. Amidst all of this, home, in a way, remained the Bloomfield/Farmington, New Mexico area, where he spent time with his grandfather on those numerous occasions during his grade school years when his father was at sea. He got to meet his great grandmother, Levina Irvins. To our good fortune, Tom has applied his research skills in tracing his ancestors, especially Levina and her husband, Nat. Following them through history led him to Hillsboro and some amazing discoveries about the Irvins branch of his roots, which he shares with us here. We're proud to have been able to aid him in his quest.*



Tom Scanlan

When I retired in 1990, which seems like eons ago, one of my projects was to put together a family tree. I began by visiting my maternal relatives in the Farmington and Bloomfield area and corresponding with a first cousin in Virginia, who'd worked on dad's side of my family history. In Bloomfield, I assembled a crude, hand drawn tree with the help of an aunt and some of her children and grandchildren. I later made visits to the local Mormon church where I could access their family history microfilm records. Needing a way to organize this growing pile of information, I purchased FamilyTreeMaker 3.0, joined Ancestry.com and eventually printed out an early map of Texas and New Mexico Territory. The map turned out to be especially useful.

I was able to pinpoint a number of places on the map where mom's ancestors, the Irvins, had settled, married and started families. They were mostly farmers who'd traveled from Georgia and the Carolinas and settled in Texas shortly before the Civil War. From the gulf port cities, they migrated north and west across Texas, farming and raising stock.

Sometime in 1878 or early in 1879, twenty-year-old newlywed Nat Irvin, an only child (a rare situation in those times), and his eighteen-year-old wife Levina, moved his small herd to Lake Valley in New Mexico Territory. The recent discovery of silver in that part of the state was spawning a number of boom towns and hence a huge demand for meat to feed the influx of miners and merchants.

But after only a few years in New Mexico, they migrated back to Texas. And then, a few decades later, around 1905, they migrated back to New Mexico, this time all the way to Farmington. This double reversal of migration, so graphically accentuated on my map, posed some obvious questions. Why did they leave New Mexico and go back to Texas? And when they returned to New Mexico, why travel diagonally across the entire state to Farmington?

It didn't take a lot of research to answer the second question. Farmington was becoming a boom town shortly after 1900. Its fertile valleys where the San Juan, Animas and La Plata rivers converged was the perfect place for raising stock and growing fruit. Especially apples. And the brand new rail line from Durango to Farmington provided a way to ship their produce and livestock back East. And there was plenty of land available there under the Homestead Act.

OK. That question answered. Now, why didn't the Irvins just stay in Lake Valley and then migrate north to Farmington during the orchard boom? My first thought was that the silver mines were playing out and then the value of silver plummeted with the adoption of the gold standard. Well, all of that really happened but the dates didn't add up.

Young Nat Irvin, his wife Levina, their two small children (both born in New Mexico) left Lake Valley sometime in late 1883 or early 1884 because my research showed that their third child was born in San Angelo, Texas in 1884. And they had seven more children in this same part of Texas over the next twenty years. But back in 1884 the silver mines were still producing. And the gold standard wasn't formally adopted until 1890. There was

still a desperate need at this time for farmers and stockmen in southern New Mexico Territory. So why would they leave at that time and return to Texas?

At this point in my research I had to dig a bit deeper. It turns out there was a whole lot happening in the Lake Valley area at this very time besides silver mining and boom towns. Those very activities invited the inevitable raids by the previous inhabitants of that area, the Apaches. When I visited Hillsboro this July to try to find an answer to my question, Harley Shaw (whom you all know as the talented editor of this fine journal) handed me the February 2016 edition of the HHS journal and said there was an article therein that I might find interesting.

To say the least!

The article he was referring to was Sarah Gibson's first-hand account of the 1879 Apache attack on McEvert's ranch in Lake Valley. In this article Sarah mentions Irvins and Irvins' ranch several times while recounting the attack. Early in her account, describing the ranches near McEvert's, she states, "Irvins, his wife and son below, and the Gibsons had the middle ranch." At first this sentence didn't make sense but a careful reading of this sentence suggests she's referring to two generations of Irvins.

There's further evidence for two generations. Later in her account, Sarah describes Mr. Irvins as "a stubborn old fellow". But just a few sentences later she refers to a "young Irvins" who was at their ranch after hearing the shooting up at McEvert's ranch. (At this time I'd like to clarify that Sarah refers to the name Irvin as if it were "Irvins", but that's an apparent error of memory.) With two generations of Irvins in mind, young Nat and his wife Levina, and also Nat's father and his wife, the rest of Sarah's account involving the Irvins in this attack is much easier to follow.

The 1880 Census for Lake Valley (then Hillsborough Precinct of Dona Ana County, Territory of New Mexico) includes Nat Irvin, Levina Irvin and their infant son, Tom, listed as 7 months old at the census date, August, 1880. There's no mention of Nat's parents, but the age of Nat's infant son suggests they may have only been visiting Nat and Levina to help deliver young Tom.

Experiencing an Apache attack, especially while pregnant, would be reason enough to head back to Texas and a safer environment. But Nat and Levina Irvin didn't leave after that attack. And that wasn't the only Apache attack they experienced.

An article by Lee Silva in the December, 2006 issue of *Wild West* magazine describes a more publicized Apache attack in Lake Valley which was led by Chief Nana on August 18 of 1881. Early in the article Silva states, "Next, the raiders moved past Tierra Blanca Creek to Absolom D. Irwin's ranch, about three miles north of Lake Valley. (The present-day ghost town of Lake Valley is at a different site.) Absolom was away on business, but his wife, Sally, and their five children made a run for it. Some of them got away, but Sally was severely beaten and a baby was snatched from her arms. Although Absolom arrived in time to put out the ranch house fire, his family was gone. Believing them captured, he rode to Lake Valley to give the alarm." Many of you may recognize this as the event which resulted in a posse led by George Daly the following day being ambushed in Gavilan Canyon, about ten miles west of Lake Valley.

Well, I'd seen more than a few misspellings during my family history research, and Irvin was often misspelled as Irwin (usually the handwritten script was misread). So my first thought was that maybe Silva was referring to Nat Irvin's ranch. How likely is it there'd be both an Irwin and an Irvin family in Lake Valley at the same time? On the other hand, the first names Absolom and Sarah weren't even remotely similar to the names Nat and Levina. And although Nat and Levina Irvin did have an infant child at that time, they did not have *five* children. More digging.

I checked newspapers and census reports from that time and place and came up with an Absalom Irwin family that somewhat fit the description in the article. The 1880 Census of the Nogal Mining District, Lincoln County, NM, on the other side of the Rio Grande, a long ride east of Lake Valley, listed an Absalom Irvin (not Irwin) and his family. There were seven, not five, children listed, the youngest being age 2. The wife's name was listed as Sarah, not Sally, but that's pretty close. Census takers make mistakes and the Absalom Irvin family described in the Nogal 1880 Census was certainly a far better match to the family described in this attack than Nat Irvin's, who had only one child at that time, now 20 months old. So, unlikely as it seems, there apparently were both an Irwin and an Irvin family in the Lake Valley area at this time. They were probably even related (Nat's grandfather was named *Abasalom* Irvin), but that's another project.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Further digging has disclosed that Absalom was Nat's uncle and that Absolom's house was the Irwin house that burned during the 1881 Nana raid. In fact, Young Nat Irvin apparently had plenty of kin nearby during the exciting 5-year stay in Lake Valley. Close by is Nat's father Powhatan B Irvin (listed as Peter B Irving) and his wife Mary. Both Irvins were listed as stockmen, not miners, merchants, soldiers, etc, which is also consistent with family history. And this finding obviously ties in well with Sarah Gibson's story. Up closer to Hillsborough town, according to Silva's account, was PB Irvin's brother, Absalom Irvin (also misspelled, sometimes) and his wife Sarah, and their five children, who apparently moved to their place south of Hillsborough just in time to be terrorized by Nana and his Apache raiders in August of 1881.





**Levina Irvin**

My family history study indicates that at the time of the 1881 attack, Levina was pregnant with their second child, Daisy. She was born in Silver City in January of 1882. Despite experiencing a second Apache attack in the vicinity of Lake Valley, Nat and Levina did not leave New Mexico at this time. Why not? People were getting killed.

Well, Nat may have found a way to make staying on in this wild part of the state worth his while. My next discovery suggests that not only was Nat Irvin still in Lake Valley at the time of Nana's attack in 1881, he was still there in 1883. A short article in the March 30, 1883 issue of the Black Range newspaper praises Major Fountain and his militia's arrest of the notorious cattle rustler John Kinney and a number of his rustling gang. *Among those arrested in Lake County was Nat Irvin.* My great grandfather was a cattle rustler? Sure enough, the article lists him and several others as being jailed in Las Cruces. Well, that's a surprise!

You all know what eventually happened to Major Fountain, or at least there's plenty of theories about his (and his son's) disappearance. Some folks just don't take kindly to being arrested for growing their herd, even if by somewhat unethical means. John Kinney spent just a few years in jail and afterwards led a fairly long and successful life. I don't know the final disposition of Nat Irvin's arrest but records indicate he was back in Texas by 1884 (his third child was born Sept, 1884 in Arden, Texas.)

I have to believe, given what I've been able to discover, that either Nat Irvin was forced to leave New Mexico as a condition of his arrest, or Levina herself laid down the law. I can almost hear her saying something like, "Nat, I'm not going to have another child and raise my family in a place where if the Apaches don't kill you, you get arrested for rustling cattle. We are leaving this godforsaken valley and going back to Texas!" Whichever the case, I finally had a likely answer to my question about why they left for Texas when they did.

However, as previously mentioned, the lure of New Mexico eventually prevailed. Nat and Levina Irvin returned to New Mexico with nine children in 1905, this time to Farmington. A few years later, shortly before the 1910 census, Nat Irvin's only married child, my grandfather Tom, survivor of at least two Apache raids and a cattle-rustling father, left his ranch in Anson, Texas and joined the rest of his kin in Farmington. Accompanying Tom Irvin were his wife Irene and three pre-school-age children, one of whom was later to become my mother.

Incidentally, if you haven't figured it out by now, Levina Irvin was a pretty tough old gal. She outlived four of her ten children and some of her grandchildren, including her first son, Tom, and two of his three children. I had the good fortune to visit her at her longtime Farmington home in 1955, right after I left the Marines and returned to New Mexico to begin my studies at New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology. She mentioned knowing Geronimo, on friendly terms, while at their ranch in Lake Valley, and that other Apaches had not been so friendly. But she never mentioned that her husband, Nat, had been arrested for cattle rustling. Odds are, given those times and circumstances, he was never convicted.

Levina passed away in 1957 at the age of ninety-six.

**Hillsboro Historical Society Board meets on the second Tuesday of each month at the Hillsboro Community Center. 6:30 PM. Everyone invited.**

## **The Legal Foundation of Hillsboro--Sort Of**

*By Mark Thompson*

Hillsboro, New Mexico is a “Ghost Town.” Really? At least according to web-sites sponsored by both the State of New Mexico and County of Sierra. It is a tourist attraction thing, not a “legal definition.” (How many ghosts does it take to form a ghost town?) I was last there on a Saturday in 2015 and enjoyed a nice lunch at a café with local residents. I would be hard pressed to say you can walk into stores and see cowboys and cowgirls driving their pick-ups in any other ghost town. But then Hillsboro/Hillsborough has always had a strange “legal” status.



**Miner's Shack**

Perhaps by 1877 there were homes being built along the Percha Creek. By the 1880 federal census there were 170 people enumerated in the Doña Ana County “electoral precinct of Hillsborough.” An 1882 map noted Hillsborough within federal land, specifically, Section 16, of Township 16 South, Range 7 West, i.e., west and south of the New Mexico Principal Meridian.

Effective April 24, 1884, the territorial legislature created the County of Sierra and designated the “Town of Hillsborough” as the county seat. Without trying to be legally precise we often use terms categorizing communities as “villages, towns and cities.” But some community leaders, and perhaps the employees at the Las Cruces office of the federal government General Land Office (“GLO”), must have recognized that something more “permanent” needed to be accomplished. One option which we believe was not used was a petition to the county commission to incorporate a “Town” pursuant to the new municipal code adopted by the legislature in 1884.

On August 29, 1884, the Probate Judge for Sierra County, John Donahoe, tendered \$300.00 to the GLO in Las Cruces and the federal government recognized a “Cash Entry” for the purchase of 240 acres in the north half of Section 16, T 16 S, R 7 W, NMPM. The purchaser was designated as a Trustee and the document filed in the Sierra County Probate Court records on September 8, 1884, indicates that the land was purchased “in trust as a townsite for the town of Hillsborough for the benefit of the inhabitants thereof.” Subsequent documents, including the Patent from the United States issued in 1889, all used some variation of this same trust language. This language is legally sufficient to create the trust relationship, although I will admit that curiosity sent me searching in vain for a “trust document” in hopes that it would give us more clues as to how and why this legal method was used. (Donahoe served in a similar capacity for the town of Chloride, New Mexico so obviously this method was not unique.)

The subsequent deeds to the individuals also referred to a plat showing the townsite on file with the county clerk. Although not specifically naming the surveyor nor the exact date of filing, I believe the deeds are referring to the survey and plat by William Harris filed with the Sierra County Clerk in 1884. (One obvious clue: the Harris plat shows how the town, developed with the terrain in mind, both fits in and is limited by

Section 16, especially on the north side of the town.) Donahoe began issuing warranty deeds to the individual “inhabitants” of Hillsborough by November 1884. For example, on November 11, 1884, he issued a deed to Placido Garcia for Lot 4 in Block 8. That lot is about right in the middle of the town, at the southeast corner of the intersection of Elenora Street and First Street. “Good Title” to the individual lots was eventually created by the issuance of the U.S. Patent for all 240 acres to the Trustee in 1889.

Donahue continued issuing warranty deeds, perhaps based upon some proof of residence, etc, but we have also found deeds issued by persons claiming to be the Board of Trustees of the Town of Hillsborough. (A “Board of Trustees” was a term often used instead of “Board of Commissioners” for towns in New Mexico.) This Board may have only been used when the transaction required more than a simple determination by Donahoe that the prospective grantee was an “inhabitant.” For example, on February 21, 1885, the Board issued a warranty deed to D. F. McDonald and others for land north of Block 34 not previously “subdivided” and requiring a special “metes and bounds” description within Section 16. For another sale, on May 16, 1885, the Board began a long process of public auction for 11 lots that had not been “claimed,” ending with a warranty deed to Jose



**Early (undated) photograph of Hillsboro along Percha**

Maria Rodriguez for all 11 lots on September 5, 1885. Sounds good and practical, but no doubt you can hear the chorus of lawyers warming up!

One problem turned out to have little substance but started us on another research chase just to make sure we had not missed something. The aforementioned deed to McDonald indicated in the “heading” that the grantor was the “Hillsboro Town Co.” That name was carried into the county clerk’s index and subsequent references. A town company, or more commonly a “townsite company,” was a private corporation involved in the creation of a town. I searched the Secretary of the Territory records in the New Mexico Territorial Archives, this was before we had looked at the McDonald deed, and determined that no “Hillsborough (Hillsboro) Townsite Company” had been incorporated in New Mexico. Townsite companies were so common at that time the Secretary of the Territory had an index category for corporations formed as “real estate or townsite companies.” Oh well, history buffs must sometimes chase empty promises!

The text of both the McDonald and Rodriguez deeds do contain language which certainly raise some interesting questions. The McDonald deed text asserts that the grantors are the “Town Trustees of the Townsite of Hillsborough” and that they obtained the property from the GLO “in trust for the several use and benefit of the occupants and inhabitants of said townsite.” The McDonald deed was executed by the President and Secretary of the Board of Trustees which would be normal for a corporate or town board deed. The deed was recorded on June 9, 1885, and the clerk, J.M. Webster, swore that the officers had appeared before him and that they were “personally known to me . . . to be the Town Trustees of the Townsite of Hillsborough . . . in trust for the several use and benefit . . . etc.” You might call this document a “mixed metaphor,” combining both municipal government language and private trust language. But the most interesting aspect is the assertion that these trustees were the persons receiving the property in trust from the GLO. That assertion is contrary to the evidence in the GLO files, and the 1889 U.S. Patent, indicating that John Donahoe was the sole trustee and purchaser from the federal government.

The Rodriguez deed also contains a fascinating if different story. It asserts that on December 15, 1884, five inhabitants/property owners were elected as the town board of trustees at a public meeting called for that



purpose, four of whom were then elected officers, including those also involved in the McDonald sale. The deed then recites how the Board of Trustees proceeded to appraise the property, proclaim a public sale at auction, etc. In other words, it proceeded just as we might expect a municipal body to proceed if selling excess property. The deed does not assert that this procedure, sale, etc., was in furtherance of the trust created by the sale by the GLO to Donahoe. Reading this deed in isolation, one would assume that the Donahoe trust, the Harris plat, and the purchase from the GLO had no relevance.

Notwithstanding the claims of independent and/or separate authority, did this Board of Trustees actually receive title to the McDonald, Rodriguez and perhaps other property from Donahoe? We have not yet found the answer to that question. We can hear the lawyers' chorus singing "quiet title suit" but we need not go down that road for this history project. For the question of "what is Hillsboro," we might just as well applaud the efforts of several persons to get the problems of ownership of property resolved. At this time we still have no evidence that the Board of Trustees created in 1884 continued to function as a local government, doing the more mundane things required of a municipality. We have found no evidence that Hillsboro ever went through the process of attempting to create an incorporated municipality under New Mexico law. Hillsboro eventually lost the county seat status after the New Mexico Supreme Court in 1938 upheld the result of the 1936 special election, which probably pleased the ghosts.

(With special thanks to Garland Bills, Joe Ficklin and Harley Shaw for help with this project.)

### **Antonio "Tony" Frederico Chavez Luna**

January 19, 1919 to August 22, 2016

We're always saddened to lose another of our true old-timers. Antonio "Tony" Frederico Chavez Luna passed away on August 22, 2016. Until he became too ill to travel, Tony often visited his son, Stretch Luna, helping maintain the family property and cleaning gravesites at the Hillsboro cemetery. He was one of three children of Romelia "Romie" Chavez Luna-Bird of Happy Flats. His sister, Tarcia, died April 17, 1939, on her 22nd birthday. Tony's mom, "Romie" died September 30, 1994 at the age of 99 1/2 years. She lived all of her life in Happy Flats, and Tony, as well as Stretch, were born in the original family home in Hillsboro. That homeplace is part of the house now owned by Bruce Cosper. Tony's brother, Genero Chavez Luna died on July 23, 2000. Tony attended high school in Hillsboro, where he met Estefana "Fannie" A. Rubio. They were both juniors when they met. Fannie's father was a Mimbrenño Apache and her mother was Tewa. Tony and Estefana were married on August 3, 1940. Freddie "Stretch" Rubio Luna was born on August 5, 1941 and was named by Fannie's parents. Shortly after the Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor, they moved to Central, New Mexico. Their second child, Stefane Rebecca Luna was born on May 20 1942. Tony was an employee at two of the Grant County underground mines. He also worked as a bouncer at several dance halls as well as performing duties as a relief police officer for the town of Central. Estefana was municipal judge for several years. During his spare time, Tony played baseball on one of the Grant County baseball teams. He enjoyed music as demonstrated by his guitar and piano playing. Tony retired in the 1980s from Kennecott Copper Company after 34 years. Tony was the last of his generation of Hillsboro-born residents. His survivors are his wife Suzie Tenorio Luna of Central; Rebecca and her son Claudio J. Salazar Jr. of El Paso, Texas; Tillie Yguado Lopez Luna and her and Stretch's son, Freddie Lopez Luna of Albuquerque, and Stretch. Fannie had preceded Tony in death in 1982. Graveside services for Tony were held at the Hillsboro Cemetery.



## Hillsboro Timeline

Harley Shaw

As we move closer to the present in a timeline, we normally expect more details and greater resolution of facts. This is not necessarily the case insofar as the Athapascan and Spanish Entrada eras for our watershed. No one knows precisely when the ancestors of Apaches and Navajos arrived in the Southwest. Current literature describes both tribes as nomadic when they came to the Rio Grande. They were hunters, gatherers, and raiders. Historians seem unclear about the role these cultures played prior to the Spanish Entrada and uncertainty exists regarding how early they arrived in the Black Range, hence Percha Creek. Forbes (1994) noted: “. . . it is very clear that the Western Apache were in the Little Colorado region in the twelfth century and gradually moved south to the Gila River watershed in the years from 1200 to 1400. . . . We must not, however, think in terms of ‘Navahos and Apaches’ in that early period but rather in terms of numerous small groups or ‘tribelets’ who spoke various dialects or languages.” Forbes hypothesizes that the great drought of 1276-99 displaced Pueblo people southward, creating territorial conflicts between them and the already-present Athapascans (Hodge et al. 1945). Forbes also stated: “It is wrong. . . to picture the Navajos and Apaches simply as recent migrants from Canada to the Southwest. Biologically, we know that they are thoroughly intermixed with their neighbors of all languages, and this intermixture has included the absorption of bands, clans, or village units who were participants in ancient Puebloan or other Southwestern ways of life.”

Not much is known regarding the pre-Entrada relationships between the Pueblo and Apache peoples. Undoubtedly some territoriality and antagonism existed, along with shifting alliances over time. Trade between the various groups also occurred. Considering the moderate climate of the Rio Grande Valley and its tributaries, as compared with the rugged and relatively sterile environment of the upper Black Range, it seems unlikely that the high-elevation portions of the mountains were permanently occupied by any of the tribes. In their report on the 1983 archaeological survey of the Black Range, Laumbach and Kirkpatrick (1983) commented: “Trying to find Apache sites now is as difficult as it was to find the actual Apache a hundred years ago, perhaps a little more so. Only two indications of Apache occupation of the Black Range were found.” From all indications, these groups moved their rancherias seasonally and left little permanent sign of their camps. The Percha watershed may have been a hunting ground for groups that seasonally inhabited the lower and mid reaches of Alamosa, Cuchillo Negro, Palomas, Animas, Percha, and Trujillo creeks in the eastern foothills of the Black Range.

Regarding the early relationships of Athapascans with the Spaniards, Forbes said, “. . . a basic antagonism against the Spaniards had already developed in the area from Sonora to New Mexico by 1539, and this hostility cannot be entirely explained by the activities of Estevan alone. In all probability, the Indians of this area knew well enough the character of their would-be conquerors, because of reports from the south, for Spanish slavers had been raiding north from Culiacan for years.... Certainly the Indians of Sonora had received many reports of such outrages, and these accounts coupled with the memory of Nuño de Guzman’s bloody entrance into southern Sonora in 1531, were probably enough to prejudice the natives against the Europeans....”

Most of the conflicts between Spaniards and Indians during the early 16th century involved Pueblos. The Athapascans seemingly stayed out of the way, but their presence undoubtedly restricted Latino or European occupation of the Black Range well after the first arrival of the Spanish. During the last half of the 16th century, two factors affected the relationship of the Spaniards with all of the tribes: acquisition of horses by the Indians and growing slave trade on the part of the Spanish.

By the mid-18th century, Spanish troops, based mainly in Janos, were engaged in full-time efforts to permanently defeat the Gila, Chirichahua, and Mescalero Apaches—a task in which they ultimately failed. The conflict between Spaniards and Apaches was not caused solely by Spanish aggression. Raiding had long been a way of life with the Apaches, for whom it provided proof of their warriors’ valor and supplemented their supply of food, and weapons. Conflict between the traditional Apache lifestyle and the Spanish, Mexicans, and Americans was no doubt inevitable. Seemingly the tribes “believed” in raiding for their livelihood. If so, they were destined to be subdued, because the more settled societies could not endure such disruptive behavior. However, we know that the Apache also traded with other tribes and the Spanish at times.

Most of the easily accessible written history regarding the Apaches in the Black Range deals with 19th century battles between them and Anglo settlers. A less well-publicized literature documents efforts of the Spaniards in the 18th and 19th centuries to subdue the Apache raiders ((Thomas 1932). During the late 19th century, Anza’s efforts were focused on southwestern New Mexico and expedition correspondence and diaries tell of several attempts to follow the Apaches into the Black Range. In general, operating from Janos or Chihuahua City the Spaniards’ horses were exhausted and their supplies were running out by the time they reached this region.

Those Apaches, so pursued, must have had frequently-used camps in upper Animas Creek, because they consistently retreated to it. We know nothing of their lifestyle during periods of relative peace, if such periods existed.

Pre-American occupation of Las Animas by Apaches is poorly documented. Wilson (1985) concluded that the east face of the Black Range between Cuchillo Creek and Trujillo Creek was not permanently inhabited by the Gila, Warm Springs, or Mescalero Apaches. He noted that references to Apaches in the area were very scarce prior to 1850, and that the country was virtually unknown through the first 150 years of Spanish occupation. Juan Bautista de Anza may have led troops up Animas Creek in 1780, but mentioned no evidence of Apaches there, even though he had seen abandoned rancherias in the Fra Cristobal Mountains. Anza assigned no name to Animas. Colonel Fernando de la Concha pursued Apaches into Las Animas in 1788, and Captain Antonio Cordero wrote that he entered the Black Range in 1789. We have no record of any actual battle occurring between Apaches and Spaniards in the Percha watershed.

Explorers during the mid-1800s found little evidence of Apaches along the east face of the Black Range, almost invariably first encountering them nearer the Mimbres Valley. John Wilson suggested that the eastern face of the Black Range did not provide suitable natural foods, especially yucca, to allow permanent residence. Limited farming may have occurred in the lower reaches of some of the other creeks, but we find no records of Apache farms or camps in the Percha.

Chris Adams, U. S. Forest Service archaeologist on the Black Range District has recently developed an eye for Apache era camps and artifacts. Perhaps his work will shed some new light on the subject. For now, however, we know virtually nothing about pre-Anglo presence of Apaches in the Percha watershed. Unfortunately, most of what we know since U. S. citizens began to settle along the creek involves the warfare of the 1870s and 80s, as mentioned in the article above by Tom Scanlan. Much remains to be learned.

#### References

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## 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 Hillsborough 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. Straggling 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.
800—200 years ago	Arrival of Athapascans and Spanish. Moderate use of Percha Creek by Apaches. Ongoing conflict with Spanish. Possible appearance of French trapper/traders.
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	Continued warming. 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 in sparse patches, if at all. Ponderosa pine missing. Flat lands toward river covered with big sagebrush and grasses.
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.



#### MEMBERSHIP

**MEMBERSHIPS ARE ON A FEBRUARY 1 TO JANUARY 31 BASIS. APPLICATIONS WE RECEIVE AFTER NOVEMBER 15 WILL BE CONSIDERED 2017 MEMBERSHIPS VALID FROM FEB 1, 2017 TO JANUARY 31, 2018.**

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