

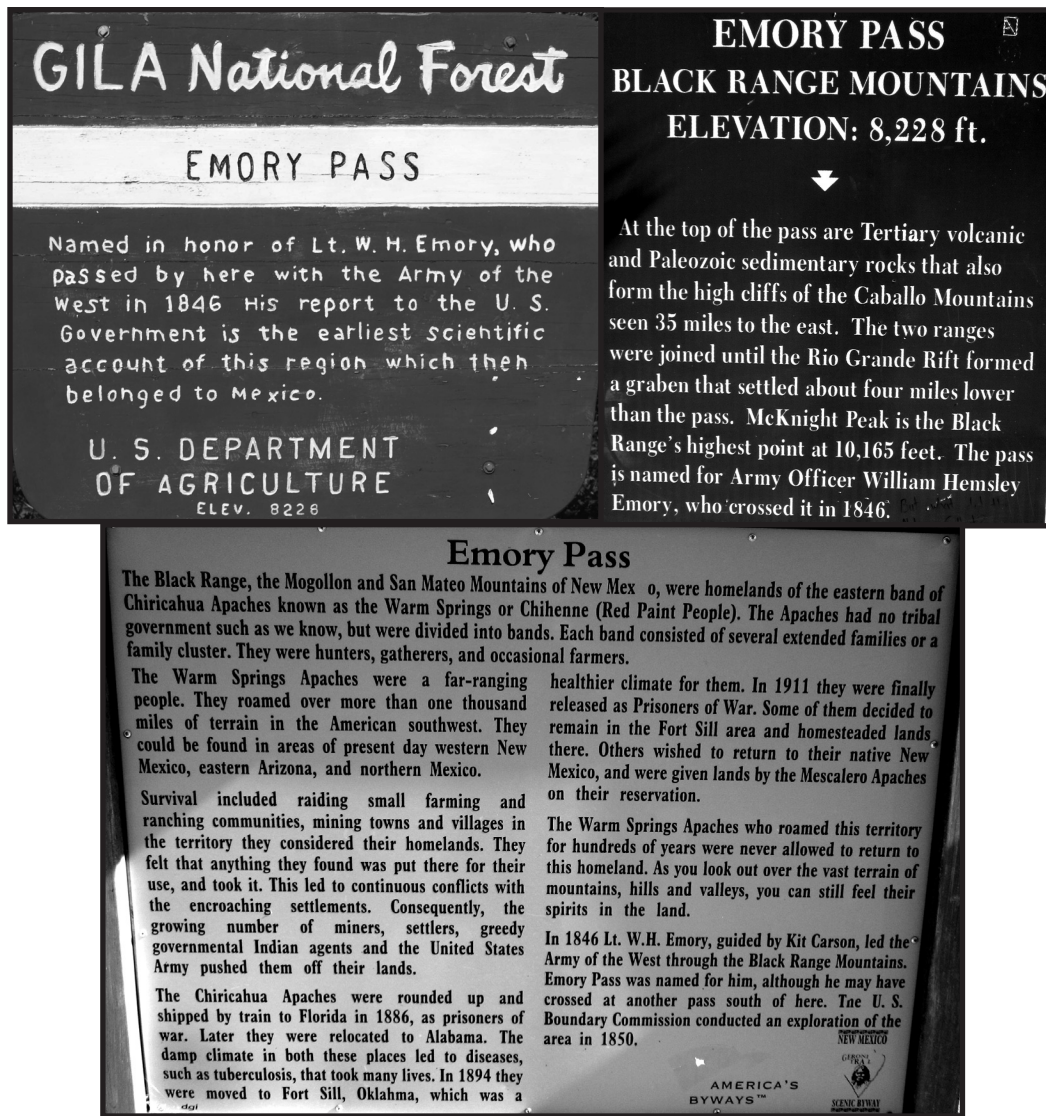


Guajolotes, Zopilotes y Paisanos

Vol. 10 No. 4

Hillsboro Historical Society

November



(Mis) naming of Emory Pass. Three signs still displayed by different agencies at Emory Pass, each with different information regarding Emory's route. Top left is a Gila National Forest sign that is somewhat vague regarding Emory's route; the second a New Mexico State Highway Department Historic Marker, which sustains the error that Emory used this pass; and the final, in

President's Message



Greetings. Another year is winding down and as is my personal practice I like to reflect on the past years challenges and accomplishments. It has been a good year for HHS, we have made significant progress in archiving artifacts, cleaning and repairing the building and grounds. With the help of Steve Morgan and Nicole Trushell we have a great plan for the outside exhibits and landscaping. We have made significant progress on understanding the historical significance and context of the property itself. Plans are in place to restore the water tower, work continues on cleaning and repairing the museum. I know there is much left to do, however I believe it is very important to recognize how far we have come and celebrate those accomplishments.

I also want to recognize some changes in the Board, Sonja Franklin one of the founding members of the HHS has stepped down and her seat is open. Sonja has faithfully served the interests of the HHS for over 15 years, her love, passion for and knowledge of the local area never wavered. Steve Elam is also stepping down and although relatively new to the area, has consistently been a thoughtful voice and supporter of the HHS efforts. We are very thankful for their time and service.

This will also be my last column as President, as my term is expiring. I do plan to run for the Board, however the decision on who will lead as President will be decided by the 2018 Board members. I do want to take this opportunity to thank all those who have made the HHS what it is, it has been my honor and privilege to serve as your President. I wish the HHS all the best in the years to come.

Larry Cosper



Guajolotes, Zopilotes y Paisanos is the quarterly newsletter of the:
Hillsboro Historical Society
P. O. Box 461
Hillsboro, New Mexico, 88042

The mission of Hillsboro Historical Society's is to preserve, collect, and protect the history of Hillsboro, Kingston and the surrounding area. We are an all-volunteer, non-profit organization. All donations are tax deductible.

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Newsletter Editor:

Harley Shaw hgshaw@windstream.net

The title for this newsletter is inspired by the association of Hillsboro and Kingston with Percha Creek. The name Percha may derive from the fact that turkeys "perch" or roost along it. Perhaps there were more historically than there are now. Of course, Hillsboro and Kingston both have their own seasonal vulture (zopilote) roosts, so the term remains appropriate. Paisanos are countrymen or friends, a term that applies to us humans who also "roost" here. In our small towns, we are extremely diverse in roots, religion, and politics, yet we remain countrymen. In keeping with the avian title motif, in the Southwest roadrunners, which also live within the Percha Creek watershed, are called paisanos.

Hillsboro Historical Society News

The Hillsboro Historical Society is now the proud owner of the Black Range Museum. Along with this ownership comes new responsibilities, requirements and, best of all, new opportunities. For the first time our membership will elect the Board Members. This election will be held in December and will be by email or mail ballot. We are currently seeking nominations for 3 positions on the Board.

We would also like to see community involvement in other ways. We are seeking volunteers! Whatever your skills or interests, I'm sure we can find an opportunity that will be both fun and fulfilling for you.

Please contact Barbara Lovell-Reid with your nominations for the Board, volunteer interests or for any questions you may have. All nominations must be received by November 30 with a biography. Ballots will go out in December and must be received no later than December 31.

Nominations and volunteer interests should be emailed to egbdc4@gmail.com or you may call 575 895-5501. We're asking for your support and we look forward to hearing from you.

HHS meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 6 pm at the Community Center. Everyone interested in our local heritage is invited. We are always looking for new members and volunteers. Members/Volunteers are the backbone of our society, and we welcome your ideas.

We are open Friday through Sunday from 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. The Sadie Orchard-Tom Ying display opened April 15.

Hillsboro Historical Society Board of Directors

Museum Activities

Over the past year our board and other volunteers have accomplished a lot toward renovating and reopening the Black Range Museum. The biggest initial task was cleaning and inventorying the historical artifacts. Garland Bills and Barbara Lovell have accomplished this for all but two of the eight rooms in the building. In so doing, they were able to open three rooms to the public. One of these houses our museum store, which is essential in generating dollars to keep the museum running. The other two have focused on Sadie Orchard and Tom Ying, the two best-known historical inhabitants of the building. Sadie ran the Ocean Grove Hotel in the building, and Tom used three rooms on the west end for his restaurant. We are still trying to sort out the exact dates and details of occupancy by these individuals. Sorting fact from legend can be daunting.

Early on, we realized that we needed to have the museum structures and grounds assessed by professionals with broader experience than existed within our membership. We've been extremely fortunate to have help, *pro bono*, from the landscape architecture firm, Landscapes for Life, owned by Steve Morgan and Nichole Trushell. In addition to contributing time and funds to HHS, Nichole has been appointed to fill out the term of Sonja Franklin on our board. Sonja has been struggling with health problems for the past two years and decided she needed to step down until those issues have been resolved. Sonja is one of the founders of Hillsboro Historical Society and has served continuously up until the present. She remains on our Advisory Board and will be a person we seek out regularly regarding history of the area.

Nichole Trushell, Linda King, and Robin Tuttle met on October 31 to discuss a plan for a public event to be held on the grounds behind the museum. The event will celebrate accomplishments in developing an outdoor exhibit area. This was originally planned for this winter, but given the delay on the water tower restoration, the event will be held sometime in June. In the meantime, HHS will have a display table at Christmas in the Foothills this year showing the conceptual plan for the exhibit area. Joe and Sandy Ficklin have already set backyard cleanup in motion, and a group made up of board members plus a couple of community volunteers (Steve Siegfried and Ray Reid), spent a day cleaning up the grounds.

Insofar as planning for structural repairs, we hired historical architect Jean Fulton of Las Cruces to do an initial assessment of our building and of the interesting round water tower outside the back door. Jean's report has helped us establish priorities for repairs and will be important in helping us avoid pitfalls when we begin to stabilize and restore the structures. In addition, we received the comments of Jean's colleagues, Dr. Sonya Cooper, Associate Dean for Academics, NMSU College of Engineering, and Randal Skerik, lead historic preservation architect for the Na-

tional Park Service Vanishing Treasures Program regarding the overall condition of the building and the uniqueness of the round adobe water tower. Comments by these individuals, along with the increasingly detailed research on the site and structures are leading us to realize that these structures are historically significant for SW New Mexico. The water tower was almost certainly built to supply water for Tom Ying and his restaurant, probably in the 1920s.

We've been working with Tom and Satomi Lander of Kingston to develop a proposal and plan for stabilizing and restoring the water tower. With winter coming on, concerns about stucco work freezing have led us to postpone actual work until warm weather in spring. In the meantime, we're hoping we can generate some additional funds to help us avoid dipping too deeply into our general coffers for this restoration. Present estimates for the project are about \$15,000. One fairly large part of this cost involves hiring a crane to lift the water tank off of the tower to allow adobe repairs and rebuilding the wooden platform. We'll also need the crane to set the tank back on the tower, which means keeping it on the premises or paying for two trips to Hillsboro. Tom and Satomi are still trying to come up with the best approach for this part of the project. HHS recently received an additional \$5000 gift donated to support the water tower project.

We have submitted the paperwork to place the museum property on the historic register, but have been advised by the State Historic Preservation Department to hold off until we are further along with the restoration efforts. In the meantime, we've begun to clean up the property and prepare for landscaping, and Garland Bills and Steve Dobrott have risked life, limb, and lungs getting the layer of soil out of the ceiling of what we plan to be the "ranch room." Cleaning up this south side of the building and stabilizing the back wall are turning out to be a much bigger project than we realized, and we've adopted a go slow and be careful approach. Those old adobe walls look pretty fragile in places. Garland, Steve Dobrott, Rand Berger, and Harley Shaw have agreed to serve as an advisory group to coordinate work on the building.

As we bring more of the artifacts back into our display areas, we have begun to worry about security. Larry Cosper is working with a security specialist to set up cameras for monitoring the display and the premises. Barb Lovell informs us that the Whitham family has donated a family collection to be used by the Hillsboro Historical Society and the Kingston Spit and Whittle Club and Old Schoolhouse Museum. Joe Whitham was an early surveyor and miner in our area, and he also owned and operated the toll gate on the road between Hillsboro and Kingston (see Guajolotes, Zopilotes, y Paisanos Vol. 6, No. 1). Among the artifacts being donated are Joe's surveying tools. Barb is driving to Dallas to pick up the collection.

In the meantime, Garland, Barb Lovell, and several other volunteers are manning the museum Friday, Saturday, and Sunday of each week. They have become increasingly aware that the museum is just far enough from the center of town that it fails to draw many people who stop, eat, and walk around. We're working on improved signage and hope to create greater visibility through ongoing historic activities and programs. During the summer, Dr. Travis Perry of Furman University set up his blacksmithing shop in front of the museum and increased the visitation considerably. He also contributed a portion of his profits made by selling his blacksmithing products. The days we had the blacksmithing display were some of the most successful since the museum opened.

We have obviously taken on quite a load, both in terms of work and finances. So far, in addition to the board, several members of the community have stepped up to help us. We can certainly use all the help we can get. Anyone willing to get involved can contact President Larry Cosper or any of the various board members. Or just wander into the museum, look around and give us your thoughts.

Museum Events

We are open Friday through Sunday from 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. The Sadie Orchard-Tom Ying display opened April 15. HHS meets on the second Tuesday of each month. 6 pm at the Community Center. Everyone interested in our local heritage is invited. We are always looking for new members and volunteers. Members/Volunteers are the backbone of our society, and we welcome your ideas.

The (Mis) Naming of Emory Pass

Harley Shaw

Anyone who has driven Highway 152 between Hillsboro and Silver City knows that it crosses the crest of the Black Range through Emory Pass, which was named after U. S. Army Topographical Engineer Lt. William H. Emory. Based upon the impact Emory had on our region, he deserves having his name attached to some geological feature, and this significant high pass in the Black Range is probably as good as any. But its naming was based upon a historical misconception—another of history’s “myths agreed upon.” Even as late as 1998, the standby reference on New Mexico geography, Robert Julyan’s *The Place Names of New Mexico* got it wrong. Julyan’s entry for Emory Pass says:

“In 1846, Lt. William H. Emory of the Topographical Engineers, guided by Kit Carson, crossed the Black Range with the Army of the West at the pass now bearing his name.”

It further notes:

“The pass had been known by several names, including Black Range Divide, Iron Creek Divide, Kingston Pass, Whitetail Pass, and Wright’s Cabin Pass, but in 1939, the USBGN approved the name Emory Pass.”¹

Read closely, this last paragraph suggests that Julyan knew something wasn’t quite right, but refrained from criticizing the agency. USBGN stands for United States Board on Geographic Names, which has final say on all place names that show up on government-approved maps. The names they approve are listed in the Geological Survey Geographic Names Information System (GNIS). USBGN was created in 1890 to standardize names on federal maps. According to Julyan, the primary criterion for most USBGN designations is traditional local usage—a criterion that didn’t hold sway in the naming of our pass.

Emory Pass
What do you call the highest point on highway 180, which leads from Silver City to the Rio Grande? I refer to the spot of nearly level ground from which one looks down eastward across the desert of central New Mexico, and westward across the timbered mountains toward Arizona. I refer to the saddle at the summit of the so-called Black Range.
It is described thus in detail because it has no accepted name—or if it has, the writer has never heard of it. A place so remarkable and so often mentioned cries out for a good appellation, and so we propose to christen it. We hereby christen it Emory Pass. The reason therefor, we shall give at length.
First, the place must be dignified by the name pass. Saddle has no suggestiveness in such a connection, and divide applies to a watershed, not to a passage thru the mountains. It is well above 8,000 feet in altitude, and the fact deserves the same recognition that similar crossings receive in Montana and Colorado. Therefore, it is a pass, and tourists will love its name.
Not all the arguments for the name Emory can be summarized here and now, but today there is room to say that Lt.-Col. Emory is the source of our earliest authoritative information about this whole region. His *Military Reconnaissance*, published in 1848, describes the march of an American army from Santa Fe over this pass to California during the Mexican war. The route led past the Kneeling Nun and the San Vicente spring, later to become the site of Silver City. The army consisted of much less than 200 men, but it got there. And it made history. Cook of Cook’s Peak chaperoned the wagon train of the outfit thru the level Florida gap. Only the cavalry crossed the mountains.

William H. Emory, then with the rank of lieutenant, accompanied the commander, Gen. Kearny, as observer for the War Department. He completed his job in superb style, and was rewarded later by being detailed to survey the boundary after the country was ceded by Mexico.
If any man can show just cause why the name as bestowed should not stand, let him now speak, or else forever hereafter hold his peace.
Emory Pass—I salute you!

So when and how was Emory Pass named? Unlike many questions about history, this one can be definitively answered. The GNIS web page provides access to the original correspondence and other documentation that leads up to name place decisions. As it turns out, the current name of the pass first appeared in 1938 as an effort by a well-known and respected culprit—Episcopal minister, Ross Calvin. Calvin served as the rector of the Church of the Good Shephard in Silver City from January, 1929 to December, 1941.² In addition to his ministerial duties, Calvin was an ardent outdoorsman, amateur ecologist, and historian. He grew to know the landscapes of the Gila National Forest intimately, and put his knowledge on paper in books, magazine articles, and his own newspaper column. His best-known book, *Sky*

Determines, was published in 1934 and is still in print.³ A second book, *River of the Sun* was published by the University of New Mexico Press in 1946. Calvin was honored with an honorary Doctor of Law by the University of New Mexico in 1953.

How, then, did such an esteemed scholar of the Southwest get it wrong? Probably the best answer is that he didn’t have enough information on hand at the time to get it right. And he may have let his enthusiasm get out of hand as well. Ron Hamm, Calvin’s biographer, notes that on July 12, 1938, Calvin wrote in his *Silver City Daily Press* column, The Village Parson, “What do you call the highest point between Silver City and the Rio Grande?” He noted that the pass had no official name. Three days later, in the same column, he wrote, “Emory Pass is now named. . . . We have named it to be sure!”

Calvin cites Lt. Emory’s government publication, *Notes of a Military Reconnaissance from Fort Leavenworth in Missouri, to San Diego in California, including parts of the Arkansas, Del Norte, and Gila Rivers*⁴ as his basis for naming the pass. On October 17, 1846, Emory had written:

“We ascended from the stream, on which we were encamped, by a narrow valley for 2 1/2 hours before reaching the summit between it and the Mimbres, which was so indistinct that I had passed several miles before discovering it.”

As it turned out, naming the pass required more than just suggesting a name in a couple of newspaper columns. But Calvin persisted. In the GNIS files for Emory Pass, is a letter dated August 17, 1938 written for US Forest Service Acting Regional Forester Morten M. Cheney to the Chief Forester of the Forest Service:

“. . . The Supervisor of the Gila National Forest is recommending that the pass through which the Black Range highway crosses the Black Range be called “Emory Pass. . . . At the present time, the pass is referred to as Black Range Divide but this name is not appropriate. It is sometimes referred to by a few local people as Wright’s Cabin Pass” but this name will never be generally used.

“The attached article by Mr. Ross Calvin, which appeared in the Silver City Daily Press of July 12, 1938, gives what appear to be valid arguments in favor of using the name “Emory Pass.

“In view of the fact that the name will appear upon maps, we are suggesting that you submit the name “Emory Pass” to the United States Board on Geographic Names for approval.”

The Gila National Forest Supervisor at the time was Frank O. W. Pooler, who was away from the office when this letter was submitted, so the naming of the pass was set in motion by his surrogate. When it arrived in Washington, D. C., it passed to the desk of T. W. Norcross, who was Chief Engineer for the Forest Service. In a letter to a George C. Martin, Executive Secretary of the USBGN, Norcross wrote:

“Attached hereto is a copy of a letter dated August 17, received from our Regional Forester, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

“A letter, which is self-explanatory, is accompanied by a newspaper clipping and a map of the Gila National Forest, showing the location of the Pass for which the name “Emory” is proposed. It will be appreciated if you will take as early action on this name as possible.

“Mr. Carter is out of the city on a business trip, but it is felt that there is no particular question concerning the suggested name for this Pass and that Mr. Carter would approve forwarding it to you for submission to the board.”

In current-day politics, slipping a decision through the Forest Service at a time when both the Regional Supervisor and the Forest Service Chief happened to be out of the office might raise a hue and cry of conspiracy. Considering communications of the 1930s, this was just coincidence, and the acting supervisors felt that the issue was too insignificant to bother with waiting. If any opposition existed, the process used by the USBGN would most certainly disclose it.

This is probably a good time to place the history of the pass and its usage in some kind of perspective, although little has been written about it. From the information I have at hand, I find no evidence that it was a heavily-used route between the Rio Grande and Mimbres Valleys. No doubt a trail passed through it and was used by hardier denizens of Kingston for foot or horse traffic. A wagon track reached the Gray Eagle Mine and, perhaps, Bennett’s saw mill, both in the bottom of South Percha Creek. But prior to 1934, wheeled vehicles crossed the Black Range further south. After completion of the railroad, Hillsboro and Kingston were more often reached via rail to Nutt, then by stagecoach or wagon via Lake Valley. Completion of the railroad spur from Nutt to Lake Valley shortened the stagecoach ride. By the twenties, motorized vehicles were common and had reached Kingston, but all from the south and east; none over the high pass.

The road over the Black Range through the pass was not completed until 1935. In *Black Range Tales*, James A. McKenna describes a trip he made by automobile on November 8, 1934 to Hillsboro and Kingston. In Kingston, he visited the few old friends still alive, among them Bel Drummond and John Moffitt. At the end of the trip, McKenna and his entourage drove to the “summit of the Black Range.” He gave the pass no name. On that date, it was as far as they could go, because the road was still being built down the west side of the range. They could hear the machinery working in Iron Creek. The highway over the mountain remained unpaved until about 1960.

So, as noted by Julian, the pass was called variously Black Range Divide, Iron Creek Divide, Kingston Pass, Whitetail Pass, and Wright’s Cabin Pass. I find no evidence of it being called Emory Pass until Ross Calvin had his hot flash in 1938. I suspect that completion of the road through the pass, hence increased awareness of it, brought about the decision to name it.

In keeping with the agency’s protocol, upon receipt of the request for naming the pass from the forest service, George C. Martin, Executive Secretary of the USBGN, sent a form letter to the appropriate local governments, including Grant and Sierra Counties, local post offices, the New Mexico Bureau of Mines, U. S. Geological Survey, and the state highway department, and to two old-timers in the area, James Drummond and John Moffitt. It added the name “Pirches” Pass to the list of possibilities. The only response from agencies in the GNIS files came from S. G.

Leaky of the Geological Survey. Leaky was stationed in Socorro, probably at the school of mines. He notes that a local surveyor, R. P. Nelson called it Whitetail Pass. He had suggested that Moffitt and Drummond be contacted. Both Moffitt and Bel, Drummond's widow, responded.

Moffitt wrote:

"... in regards to the Pass that has been used for more than 55 years by people passing from Silver City, George Town, Members [sic] River, etc. through this part of the Range to Kingston, Hillsboro, Las Cruces, El Paso, and points East and has always been known as the Kingston Pass and Trail. As the town of Kingston is only 3 miles east of this Pass and you had to pass through either way, I would suggest calling it Kingston Pass."

And Bel Drummond, answering for her husband:

"... Mr. Drummond died a year ago, so I will write for him. He came to Kingston in 1882 and held a residence here as long as he lived. He was well acquainted with this range and took interest in everything regarding it. I never heard him mention the name Emory in connection with this country. Probably it has been thought of recently or since the "local interest" has waked up.

"I have been in N. Mex. Since 1897 and have never heard this pass called anything but Iron Creek Divide. *It* means something. The creek rises near the divide, is constant water. A nice trail along the side. One of the interesting rides we travelled horseback. My choice of name would still be this old one"

The record of decision, dated May 23, 1939, acknowledges the existence of five local names—Black Range Divide, Wright's Cabin Pass, Iron Creek Divide, Whitetail Pass, and Kingston Pass. But it gives the decision of the Executive Committee to Emory Pass, noting:

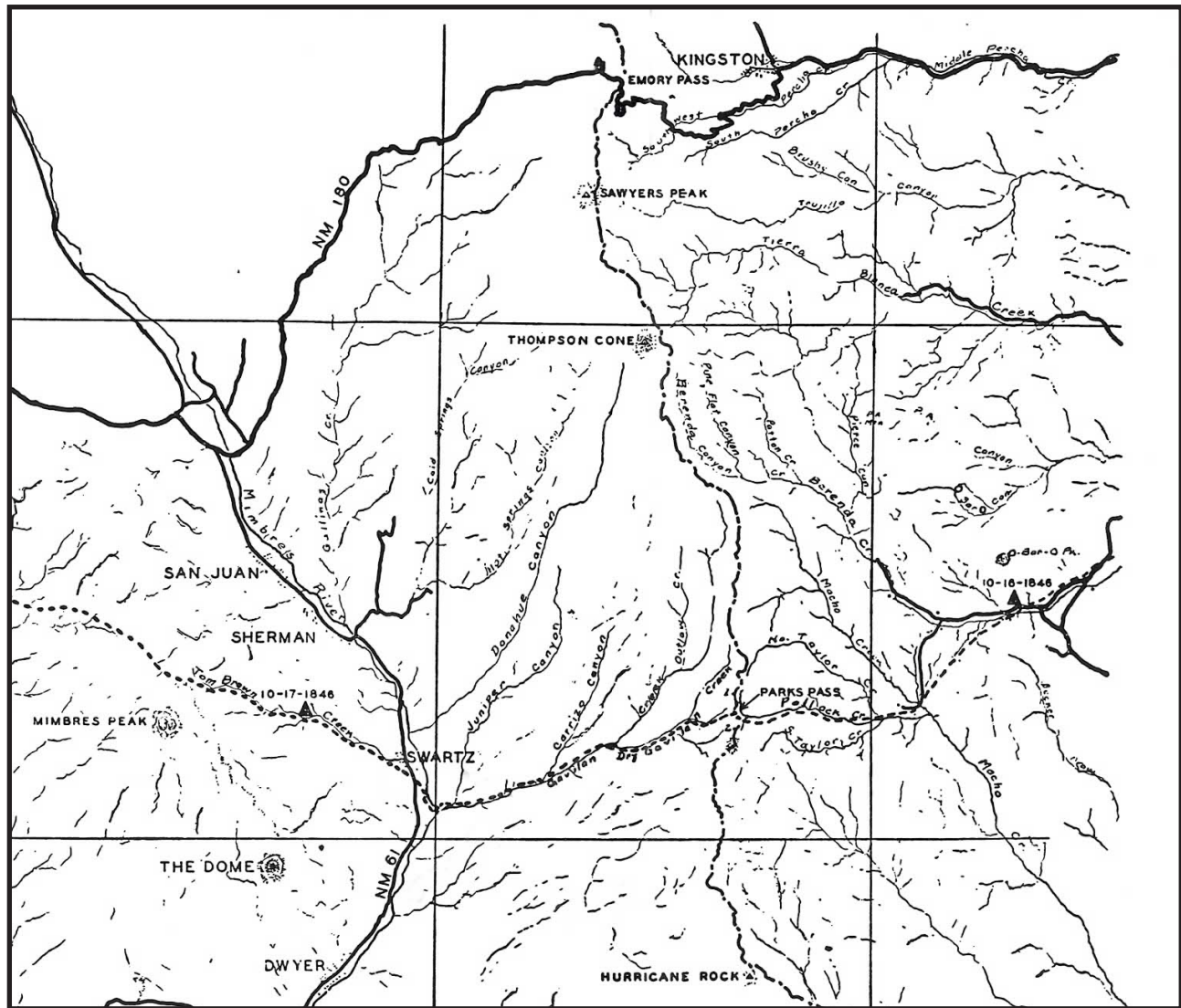
"The pass through which the Black Range Highway crosses the Black Range, . . . Gila National Forest, Grant and Sierra Counties, N. Mex. Named for Lieut. (later Lt. Col.) W. H. Emory, who accompanied Gen. Kearney over this pass on his military reconnaissance to California in 1848."

It notes that the name was submitted by the U. S. Forest Service on August 23, 1938 and that the pass had not previously been named on maps.

In 1957, retired Army Colonel George Ruhlen, challenged the fact that Emory had ever crossed Emory Pass.⁵ Ruhlen delved into army records and reviewed diaries of other members of Kearny's troops. He also retraced the company's route from a point about three miles south of Socorro to their first camp on the upper Gila River. In the region of the Black Range, he solicited the services of H. L. Parks, a rancher who had lived near the head of Berrendo Canyon for over 70 years. Parks knew southern New Mexico and the Mimbres region as well as any human living during the 1950s. After extensive research, consultations with Parks over several years, and retracing the expedition on the ground, Ruhlen concluded that Kearny had followed a long-established Indian trail through a low pass at the head of Pollock Creek, a tributary of Macho Creek. He named the pass for H. L. Parks, but the name seemingly did not stick. It doesn't show on current-day maps or come up on Google Earth. On crossing the pass, the party entered the head of Dry Gavilan Creek and descended Gavilan Creek to the Mimbres Valley, crossing the river near the settlement of Swartz and proceeding northwesterly to the copper mines at Santa Rita.

Ruhlen notes that this was an old and well-established Indian trail. Cabeza De Vaca possibly crossed it in the 1530s, at which time it was already an Indian trail. It was also used by Fremont in March, 1849 and Chamberlin's party in July, 1849. It was probably the trail followed by Stitzel and Dugan, when they crossed over from Georgetown and discovered the gold that led to settling of Hillsboro. During the building of Elephant Butte Dam, a highway across the pass was proposed, purportedly connecting the sites of Elephant Butte and San Carlos Dams. Had that highway been completed, perhaps Emory Pass would exist closer to the place Emory really crossed the range.

Ross Calvin lived until 1970. Ruhlen's paper was published in 1957. By this time, Calvin had written an introduction to a 1951 publication of Emory's journals, in which he confessed that he was responsible for the wording on the marker at Emory Pass, but had discovered his mistake. "... actually, the expedition crossed the high hills several miles further south. . . . The highway inscription . . . should say, not 'Emory passed by here,' but 'Emory passed near here.' " Today, three different signs placed by three different agencies mark Emory Pass. Two of them continue to perpetuate the error regarding the place Emory and Kearny's Army of the West crossed. "Park's" Pass is some 13.5 airline miles south of Emory Pass through some extremely rough terrain. Traveling between the two on foot, by horseback, or, long roundabout by vehicle (if still possible) amounts to a trip of hours.



Map from Lt. Col. George Ruhlen's 1957 paper showing the probable route of General Kearny's Army of the West crossing the Black Range.

- 1 Julyan, Robert 1998. The Place Names of New Mexico: revised edition. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.
- 2 Hamm, Ron 2016. Ross Calvin: interpreter of the American Southwest. Sunstone Press, Santa Fe.
- 3 Calvin, Ross 1934. Sky Determines: an interpretation of the Southwest. Macmillan Company, N.Y. The book has recently been reissued by Sunstone Press, Santa Fe.
- 4 Emory, W. H. 1848. Notes of a Military Reconnaissance. H. W. Long and Brother. NY.
- 5 Ruhlen, George 1957. Kearny's route from the Rio Grande to the Gila River. New Mexico Historical Review 32(3) 213-230.

MEMBERSHIP

MEMBERSHIPS ARE ON A FEBRUARY 1 TO JANUARY 31 BASIS. APPLICATIONS WE RECEIVE AFTER NOVEMBER 15 WILL BE CONSIDERED 2018 MEMBERSHIPS VALID FROM JANUARY 1, 2018 TO DECEMBER 31, 2019.

The Hillsboro Historical Society is a 501(c)3 organization that preserves and shares the history and artifacts of the Hillsboro, Kingston and Lake Valley. Member benefits include the quarterly newsletter, priority registration for lectures, programs and field trips. Dues are \$25 annually for individual or family. Please mail this completed Membership Form, along with your check made payable to Hillsboro Historical Society, P. O. Box 461, Hillsboro NM 88042.