

Southwest Arizona Ghost Towns Harshaw, Mowry, Washington Camp, Duquesne, Lochiel

Between Patagonia and the Mexican border several boomtowns flourished in the late 1800s. A 23-mile drive south on Harshaw Road and Duquesne Road traverses the Harshaw Mining District and the Patagonia Mining District in which remains of these short-lived towns are located. The road begins as Forest Road 58 and bears right 6 miles south to become FR49. It is called Harshaw Road until the intersection FR 61, which is Duquesne (Du-kane) Road.

A sign marks the 2-track dirt road on the left which leads to the few remaining houses in Harshaw. The first is on the corner at FR49. Other standing structures include a striking brick house with a long pillared porch, built by James Finley who bought the Hermosa mine in 1887 and is currently occupied.

The boomtown began in 1877 when David Harshaw began mining on his property. By 1880, the town had a post office, a newspaper named *The Arizona Bullion*, 2000 residents, boarding houses, saloons, corrals, and stores. A devastating fire and a drop in the price of silver in 1882 started the demise of the town and it struggled on until 1903, when the post office was discontinued.

The well-maintained Harshaw cemetery on the right of FR49 is an interesting place to visit. Many of the graves include stories about the person or families buried there. Many old graves are unmarked, but elaborate flower arrangements and mementos decorate the many identified graves on the hillside, dating back as far as 1885.

At mile 12.8, Forest Road 214 goes left to Mowry, the oldest settlement. Today only a few adobe ruins and scattered stone foundations remain. The town grew at the site of a mine worked by Mexicans as early as 1857 and originally known as the Patagonia mine. Lt. Sylvester Mowry, stationed at Fort Crittenden, bought the mine in 1859 and gave the town and the mine his name. The total amount of silver, lead, and zinc shipped out was \$1.5 million. The government confiscated the flourishing mine in 1862 and arrested Lt. Mowry for selling bullets to the Confederates. During the Civil War the Apaches looted the town. Although Mowry was exonerated, his mine had been sold and never produced a significant amount of ore after the War. A post office at Mowry was open from 1866 and shut down permanently in 1913, with a period between 1880 and 1905 when the post office was closed.

Washington Camp, 4 miles south of Mowry, is directly past the intersection of Harshaw and Duquesne Roads. It served as a supply center for the mining towns. Washington Camp housed a reduction mill, a general store, and 1,000 residences for miners and their families. During peak mining days Washington Camp and Duquesne became headquarters for more than 80 mining claims. Although their existence began in the 1860s, they became productive when George Westinghouse of Westinghouse Electric Co. acquired many of the claims in 1889, organized the Duquesne Mining & Reduction Company of Pittsburgh, and invested in equipment for large-scale production. Major production ran from 1912 to the end of 1918, with total production at more than 450,000 tons of ore with zinc, lead, copper, plus silver as an important by-product.

The Duquesne Post Office opened on May 13, 1880 and closed on February 14, 1920. The town held the company office and homes for 1,000 residences. A school was built between Washington Camp and Duquesne since the two towns were only a mile

apart. Today Washington Camp does not look like a ghost town, but behind and near some more current buildings, you can see old structures. Duquesne is a privately owned town with lots for sale and several current residents. The center of the old Duquesne is bisected by FR 128, a narrow loop road that veers right 0.7 mile south of the Harshaw/Duquesne intersection and returns to Duquesne Road (FR 61) at mile 19.1. The



Duquesne Building

road is heavily posted with “No Trespassing” and “Private Property” signs. On both sides you can see remains of buildings, mine adits and remains of mine shafts. The ruins of the Westinghouse estate are on private property.

Continuing down FR 61, five miles south of Washington Camp, you will see a monument to the first European who set foot on United States soil west of the Rocky Mountains. In 1539, Fray Marcos de Niza, vice-commissary of the Franciscan Order and delegate of the viceroy in Mexico came into this vicinity.

Lochiel was a prosperous mining and ranching community that began in 1880 at the border of Mexico. The local post office served under three names from 1880 until its closing in 1911: Luttrell, La Noria, and Lochiel. Ranchers Colin and Brewster Cameron named the town Lochiel for their Scotland hometown and that name lasted in the records. The town had two smelters, a butcher shop, a bakery, 3 saloons, a stable, and 400 residents. Pancho Villa, a Mexican revolutionary, came across the border in this area, stealing cattle and taking them to Mexico. In 1918 an adobe one-room schoolhouse was built next to a teacherage, but by 1920 there were no students left in the town. A church, hilltop cemetery, and customhouse are now on private property. Lochiel’s border crossing and customhouse were closed in 1980 for safety reasons.

Prepared by John and Bette Bosma, April 2006. Photograph by J & B Bosma

Resources: Center for Desert Archeology

Ghost Towns Website

Heritage Resources Management Report No. 15. USDA Forest Service Southwestern Region. “Tearing Up the Ground with Splendid Results: Historic Mining on the Coronado National Forest.” 1995

Varney, Philip. Arizona Ghost Towns and Mining Camps: A Travel Guide to History. Arizona Highways Book. 1994.

Wells, Charles A. Guide to Arizona Backroads & 4-Wheel Drive Trails 2001

Additional Material: GVHC Library File 13