

SUMMARY OF HONDO VALLEY COMMUNITY HISTORIES

There are several distinct communities in the Hondo Valley; here the histories of Glencoe, San Patricio, Hondo, Tinnie, Picacho, Sunset, and Riverside will be discussed. Although these communities share some environmental and historical similarities, they each have a unique history. Most of the communities in the Hondo Valley were occupied for a number of years before they were given formal names, and many changed names several times. More detailed histories and life-way descriptions for each of these communities are presented in the Hondo Valley Snapshot Publication Series booklets.

Glencoe

The area around Glencoe changed ownership several times, but was eventually settled by and named after the Coe family of Missouri. Early settlers of the area include Heiskell Jones and his wife, Jack Gilliam, the Horrell brothers, and Dick Brewer.

Lou Coe was the first of the Coe family to arrive in the Hondo Valley. He settled at La Junta, which was later renamed Hondo, in 1866. By 1874, there were five Coes in New Mexico: Lou, his brothers Frank, Al, and Jasper, and their cousin George. Frank and George Coe are perhaps the most well-known, due to their involvement in the Lincoln County War and their association with Billy the Kid. Frank and George both left Lincoln County after the war for several years, but returned in the early 1880s. In 1882, Frank Coe purchased a portion of Dick Brewer's old ranch on the Rio Hondo, and George built a homestead on his cousin Jasper's place, the Golden Glow Ranch, about one mile west of Frank. The cousins built a school and a post office, and the town was officially named Glencoe.

Glencoe's patent records date from the early 1890s and include George W. Coe (1891), James V. Tully (1892), Jasper N. Coe (1892), Frank B. Coe (1892), Prospero Gonzales (1897), Telesfora M. Sanchez (1897), Florencio Gonzales (1898), and Felipe Silva (1898). Many of these settlers actually lived on the land many years before they obtained an official patent to their property. These early settlers engaged in a variety of agricultural and ranching pursuits in order to provide for their families.

As indicated above, the Sanchez family was among some of the earliest settlers in the Glencoe area. From the 1880s up to 1917, the Sanchez family homesteaded a parcel of land now owned by Paul and Nellie Ruth Jones. Paul Jones's grandparents bought the land and the house from the Sanchez's in 1917, and it has been in the Jones family ever since. The Sanchez family built the adobe portion of the house before 1892, according to a Sanchez family member who was born in the house. Additions have been made to the house over the years, but the house and the surrounding property with its functioning acequia still retain some of the character of historic homesteads in Glencoe.

A portion of the Coe Ranch was eventually sold to Bert and Nelson Bonnell, two brothers who worked for the Coes and who married into the family. The Bonnell Ranch house, located at the junction of Eagle Creek and Rio Hondo, became a popular community gathering place and was the scene of many harvest feasts and dances. The house continued to operate as a stop-over for travelers along the highway.

The appearance of modern-day Glencoe, with its open pastures separated by fence and tree lines and dotted with farm buildings, has changed little from its original appearance when the Coe family first settled there.

San Patricio

San Patricio is situated amidst cottonwood and elm trees along the Rio Ruidoso just before it joins with the Rio Bonito. *The Place Names of New Mexico* states that San Patricio was initially named Ruidoso,

not to be confused with the modern-day town of Ruidoso, which at that time was known as Dowlins Mill. The original settlers were Hispanos who named it after the noisy creek that tumbles down the canyon. The town changed its name from Ruidoso to San Patricio after the Catholic church was built there around 1875. The priest at that time was Irish, and the church and town came to be called San Patricio after the priest's patron saint, Saint Patrick. To this day San Patricio is still strongly native Hispano and Catholic. Of all of the communities in the Hondo Valley, it perhaps has changed the least.

Throughout its history, San Patricio's economy was based on farming and ranching. Water was a key factor in the success of the early settlement. Dates from the State Engineer's Office indicate that one of the earliest acequias, or irrigation ditches, in the valley was established in San Patricio by 1867. Crop production would have been impossible without a reliable water supply so one of the first activities of the earliest settlers was building an acequia. This early system would have been small and capable of watering only small parcels of land. Each of the farmers on the ditch had a "right" to irrigate for a specified amount of time during the irrigation season, as well as a responsibility to help maintain the ditch.

San Patricio became a well-known artists' community in the 1930s. One of the famous personalities that settled in San Patricio was western artist Peter Hurd. He was born in Roswell and studied painting on the east coast, but returned to the Southwest and settled in the Hondo Valley in 1933. He developed his own artistic landscape style, and his paintings of the area capture the spirit of the land, depicting scenes of frontier life and the people that lived on the land.

Hondo

Hondo was originally known as *La Junta*, or the junction, referring to the confluence of the Rio Ruidoso and Rio Bonito, which meet here among the cottonwoods and elms that line their banks. The original community consisted of a school and several homes.

The Torrez, Gutierrez, and Montes families were among the earliest settlers in Hondo. Damian Gutierrez and his brothers came to Hondo sometime in the 1880s and homesteaded two farm sections that started in Hondo and continued to San Patricio. Two of the brothers homesteaded in the area that would later become San Patricio. The Gutierrezes moved to Hondo from the Isleta and Lemitar areas where flooding along the Rio Grande had washed out their farm, and came under cavalry escort, which provided protection from Apache attacks.

Lou Coe, a member of one of the first Anglo families to arrive in the Hondo Valley, settled in La Junta in 1866 with his business partner Joe Storm and obtained a contract to deliver hay and grain to Fort Stanton. As the Hispano families in Hondo did, Lou planted apple trees and created an orchard to supplement his income. Hondo became a center for the vegetable- and, especially, fruit-growing business, and several packing sheds, refrigeration facilities, and a trucking company developed in the town. Roadside fruit stands were common in the Hondo area, as they were in many other parts of the valley.

The census records indicate that there were 44 students in the Hondo School District in 1880 and 113 students in 1920. The original Hondo Elementary School building, located at the current junction of US 70 and US 380 in Hondo, began as a two-room school built with a 1902 school construction bond. Two additional rooms were added later. The school gym building was completed by the Works Progress Administration (WPA)—part of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal program—in 1935.

Hondo was the only community in the valley offering the opportunity for a high school education. By the 1925–26 school year, the Hondo high school program became a two-year accredited program and grew into a four-year accredited program by 1930. Both high school and elementary grades shared the old four-

room Hondo Elementary School building. The Hondo Valley Union High School opened its doors in September of 1948 with 76 students. The original Hondo Elementary School closed in 1955 and was moved to the new elementary school adjoining the high school.

Tinnie

The village of Tinnie was originally named “Analla” for the early settler, José Analla, who was part of a wave of Spanish settlers moving into the Hondo Valley from Manzano, Socorro, and El Paso during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Historical records tell us that José Analla moved to the area in 1876. In 1907, Stephen and Oney Raymond moved to Analla with their baby daughter Tinnie. The citizens of Analla were so enchanted with the Raymonds’ baby girl that they suggested the town’s name be changed to “Tinnie.” Published interviews with Oney Raymond quote her as saying “[o]ur little girl was the only Anglo child in Analla and [the townspeople] wanted to change the name in her honor.” A petition was sent to the nation’s capital, and Tinnie became the town’s official name in 1909. Tinnie Raymond became a local schoolteacher in 1926. She married and moved to Roswell some time later.

Oney Raymond recalled that there were about 50 families in the Tinnie area during 1907. In 1915, the New Mexico State Business Directory listed a population of 100 for Tinnie. The Raymonds established the Tinnie Mercantile Company and ran it until 1960, at which time the property was purchased by Robert O. Anderson. Anderson added a porch, a tower, and a pavilion and renamed it the Tinnie Silver Dollar Bar and Restaurant.

The Titsworths are another prominent family in Tinnie’s history. The Titsworth family first settled in Capitan, where they ran a grocery business that supplied Lincoln County Mercantile stores with food and supplies. In 1912, the Titsworths purchased property in Tinnie from Pedro Analla and established a ranch with extensive apple orchards. The Titsworth Ranch became one of the most prominent ranches in the Hondo Valley, specializing in apples and sheep.

Picacho

Picacho was settled around 1867 or 1868 by Hispanic sheep and goat herders from the vicinity of Socorro or Manzano. Robert Casey, one of the first Euroamericans in the Hondo Valley, purchased his ranch near Picacho in 1868 from Leopold Chene, a Frenchman. Casey was a Texas rancher looking to establish a location from which he could provide beef to both Fort Stanton and Fort Sumner. The Casey property was six miles east of Hondo and about two miles west of Picacho. Casey’s ranch included a ranch house, a grist mill, a blacksmith shop, and an irrigation ditch. At that time, there were only four houses between Casey’s ranch and the town of Lincoln, and only one settlement, Missouri Plaza, between the ranch and Fort McKavett, Texas, 400 miles away to the south/southeast. The ranch remained in the Casey family until 1960. The population of Picacho (which may or may not include Tinnie in the census record) was never very large. The count declined from 405 people in 1890 to 287 people in 1950.

The census records indicate that there were 86 students in the Picacho School District in 1880 and 103 students in 1920. The early Picacho school no longer exists. The WPA built a second Picacho school in 1940, which is used as a residence today. The Picacho Elementary School closed in 1958, when various elementary schools in the valley were consolidated into a single school in Hondo.

Sunset

There are few historic records for Sunset. According to *The Place Names of New Mexico*, "little...remains of this former community, and the name’s origin has been forgotten." Sunset was similar in most respects to the other communities in the Hondo Valley, especially Picacho.

According to historic records, the Montañeros were one of the earliest families to settle in the Sunset area. José and Manuel Montañero had settled in the area and built an acequia for their fields by 1867. This small-scale irrigation would have been adequate to support only the Montañero's family farm. When Reuben Michaelis owned the property at the beginning of the 1900s, he found that it was difficult to support a farm without additional irrigation so he built a second acequia on the south side of the Rio Hondo, doubling the area of land that could be used for farming. Both acequias are still in use today.

By 1909, the Montañero farm was owned by Pierre Southworth, who established the Sunset Ranch Orchard Company, with 25 acres of apple orchards and 109 acres for farming. Will Titsworth purchased the Sunset Ranch in 1913 for the Titsworth Company and continued to produce apples, but added lettuce, cabbage, and alfalfa. When the Titsworth Company dissolved at the death of George Titsworth in 1950, rancher Charles Fuller bought Sunset Ranch. The ranch was later bought by Robert O. Anderson and became part of Anderson's Diamond Circle Ranch, which was sold to the current owner, the Ford Secure Trust, in the early 1990s.

Riverside

Riverside was originally a car camp that sprang up in the late 1920s. The 1923 plans for US 70 do not show any buildings at what would come to be known as Riverside. The 1937 plans for the US 70 realignment show "Riverside Camp", which consisted of several cabins and "car shelters" for travelers, a camp house, a tire repair shop, a garage, an icehouse, and a cactus garden. The development of Riverside as a tourist camp coincided with America's growing love of the automobile. From the 1920s onward, it became fashionable to spend annual vacations going on auto tours of the West. For those who had made the journey across the long, flat stretch of Texas and eastern New Mexico, Riverside made a refreshing stop before continuing on. Rest stops provided basic services to the tourists. Amenities typically included a small cabin or camp spot, a service station with gas, and perhaps a bar, restaurant, or general store to stock up with picnic supplies. Riverside never developed into a farming and ranching community, but it remained a well-known stop on the drive between Ruidoso and Roswell for many years.