

CHARMING CHERRY

Sequent Occupance

In determining the sequent occupance of the Cherry hamlet it is easy to find evidence to support an original mining community founded around 1880 after original speculators came searching for gold from approximately 1865 to 1880. Prior to this the only known "inhabitants" were intermittent travelers frequenting a Stage stop at a sole residence around 1865.

We (Team J) were informed that over the years enough gold was found to make the mining profession worthwhile and a boom town was created along a creek, both to be named Cherry, after the wild cherry trees that grew there, not after a family by the name of Norville-Cherry that had later settled the land. Cherry Creek had originally been referred to as "upside down" by the Indians of the area because much of it runs beneath the ground (Trimble, 41).

A post office was established in 1884 and a school in 1898 and by 1929 about 300 people inhabited the mining town (Norman, 3), where we were told that a sign of quartz indicated a possible sign of gold. A store was built to support the villagers and a cemetery on the eastern edge of town revealed that the first settlers to the town were being replaced by the next generation - one of the original mining families being the Allen's whose family gravestones are present.

By the mid-1940's the decline of Cherry began when not enough gold could be uprooted per capita to justify mining. It can be assumed that a slight depression took place where people left the area for alternate occupations.

In 1970 approximately 25 people lived in the hamlet and only one mine was left operating until its termination two years ago when it was determined to be unsafe. Since 1970, the town began a growth process resulting in the present population of about 48 residences.

The function of the hamlet has changed over time as various individuals and physical characteristics influenced its growth and demise.

Population of Cherry

Our group found that determining the total population was extremely difficult. The general concensus was that there are 48 residences, containing about 50 full-time residents. Additionally, there are a number of residences

that are occupied on a part-time basis. These part-time residents are professionals or retirees whose homes in Cherry are second residences.

Determining population figures was difficult for various reasons. Mainly, many of the residents were not available or were not accessible to us. It was obvious that many people were not at home, thus making headcounts difficult. Nearly every residence was posted as private. Many signs clearly stated "No Trespassing" or "Private Drive, Do Not Enter". In addition to the signs, at least two residences had large guard dogs in front, one of which was a massive Rottweiler that has gained notoriety in Cherry for killing three havalinas. Other residences had locked gates that were clearly there to keep outsiders out. For these reasons, we thought it best not to approach many residences. We did ignore some of these barriers. In all instances we found the people to be very accommodating and pleasant. As a matter of fact, we received two tours by residents. One by Mr. and Mrs. Al Creighton, who showed us around their six acre place as well as around the small hamlet. Mrs. Creighton even gave us samples of some cherries, the namesake of the hamlet. Our second tour was given by Mr. Gene Ingwaldson. He took us in his four-wheel drive, and showed us the last operating mine near Cherry, the Golden Idol Mine.

One property we entered that was privately owned and posted, but not occupied, was the town cemetery. We later learned that the owner was a former resident who was a retired teacher and owner of the town school house. She currently lives in Mesa, and unfortunately, when contacted to obtain further information, grew rather irate when she learned that we had entered her property.

Determining the ages of the residents of Cherry was problematic for similar reasons discovered when attempting to find population figures. Generally speaking, Cherry has an adult population. We heard of just two child residents. The vast majority of the residents are either middle-aged professionals or retirees. Two retired couples that we spoke with had traveled and vacationed in Cherry in the early 50's before choosing Cherry as their retirement home. Those residents who are not retired seem to be fairly well-off professionals that commute to work or live there part-time.

Our original impression was that Cherry was a retirement village, but it would appear that the largest percentage of the population does work. The jobs that are held by the residents are quite varied in location as well as in

function. There are two surveyors who commute to Phoenix, one whose wife is a nurse in Cottonwood. Mr. Creighton, who is a retired engineer, now does realty work in Cherry. Mr. Deshawn, who owns a now closed antique shop, operates a shop in Dewey, the town previously called Cherry Siding, that was a railroad stop for Cherry (Swenson, 51). Pastor and Mrs. Bud Miller live in Cherry and have a Church called Christ Unlimited near Dewey. The closed mercantile store is owned by a couple that occupy the adjacent home. The store has closed due to the owner's poor health. His wife is a teacher in a nearby town. Some part-time residents include a lawyer who owns a ranch, a doctor who is affiliated with the Arizona Heart Institute in Phoenix, a dentist, and a gentleman who is involved with Gosnell and the Point Resort. Two new residents are Mr. and Mrs. Green who have a second home in Santa Monica, California. She is a film producer and he is in land management.

Function of Cherry

The public services in Cherry include APS and AT&T. Arizona Public Service supplies greater Cherry with electrical power at slightly higher rates as Cherry is designated a remote site. The electricity is used for winter heating and well-pump operation.* AT&T negotiated with the citizens of Cherry about 1-1/2 years ago to install telephone service. This required the purchasing of easements and property. Occupants of Cherry may now have a telephone for a \$68 base rate or use the pay phone installed outside the switching station as part of the property negotiations. As there is no water or sanitation services in Cherry, individual households have one or more wells and a septic tank. There is also no fire fighting service except the forest service who will not help put out fires on private property. Although some stretches of road are owned by the county, others by the forest service and still others are privately owned, the county maintains the roads every few months.

Cherry has six day mail service, but it is not handled by the U.S. Post Office. The mail is delivered by a highway contractor out of Dewey, hence the 'HC' designator at the beginning of the Cherry addresses. There is no garbage collection in Cherry, so each household must handle its own garbage disposal.

* The houses along the road to Mingus Mountain have only generator power as they are not serviced by APS.

Most of the garbage is taken to facilities at Dewey. With the closure of the mercantile store, there is no shopping at Cherry. Grocery shopping is done as far away as Cottonwood or Phoenix, usually on a weekly or biweekly basis.

Children go to Mayer for schooling after the original Cherry Schoolhouse was closed in the 1940's. The nearest hospital is in Prescott and the nearest emergency services are in Camp Verde and Cottonwood.

There is no commercial farming or ranching in Cherry proper, although some residents have a household garden plot, and can produce for greater self-sufficiency. One family has almost 90 fruit trees and produces large amounts of canned goods. This same family holds a community-wide barbecue several times a year. The community also gets together irregularly to discuss matters of common interest. The latest matter was an idea to allow off road vehicle trails through the surrounding hillsides. The community was collectively against the proposal, although independence and isolation seem to be highly valued.

Overall, the general hypotheses, as stated in the hamlet exercise, have been proven true except for the presence of commercial land use which is at present absent within the Cherry hamlet. Cherry is essentially a residential community with a number of residents commuting to other localities. Urban functions are absent and the community is not multifunctional due to its size. Land use is not highly segregated. The population is primarily comprised of retirees or employed adults as is not the usual case in an urban environment.

