The History of K-M Scout Ranch

Sleeping quietly among the forested slopes of the North Moccasin Mountains in central Montana is the ghost town of Kendall—a once bustling gold mining community. Kendall is the only ghost town in the world that belongs to the Boy Scouts of America—the Montana Council, to be specific. Thanks to the late Glenn C. Morton of Lewistown, the heirs of the late Mrs. Margharite McLean, a former Kendall resident, and the Munski brothers, (Bill and Joe) who contributed additional land for the 598 acres now included in the K-M Scout Ranch, the "ghosts" of Kendall live again...amidst lively company.

Prospecting and placer mining began in the North Moccasin Mountains in the late 1870's. In 1896 two claims, the "Horse Shoe" and the "Mule Shoe," produced some rich ore. In 1898, gold was discovered in the same locality by J.T. and M.L. Wunderlin. These claims became the nucleus of the Barnes-King Development Company's holdings, the shaft and galleries frame of their mine being located 5,008 above sea level at the head of the gold camp's Main Street.

Also in 1898 Harry T. Kendall made a deal with the owners of the "Spotted Horse" mine to re-work the tailings of that mine, making about $1,500. He paid this to Charley Allen for his claims in the North Moccasin Mountains.

In 1900 Kendall built a steam operated mill with a daily capacity of 50 tons and operated the mine and mill for two years. Kendall found that his claim covered a large area and warranted a larger operation than he could afford. Joining with two others he formed the Kendall Mining Company. The operation was profitable from the start reportedly paying $6,000,000.00 in dividends to stockholders over their ten years of operation.

With the activities of the mines a small gold camp came into existence - miners building their cabins scattered through the hills wherever their fancy led them. They called the camp "Kendall" in honor of Harry T. Kendall, promoter of the Kendall Mine. The town site grew over the years and with the additions of King's and Draper's additions the town contained 1,200 lots and covered about 160 acres.

Gold was mined at Kendall until a presidential order at the beginning of World War II closed all gold mining in 1941. Since that time several ventures have been launched to mine gold in the Kendall area.

The T.R. Matlock General Store, the Kendall State Bank. The Presbyterian Church, the open-air bandstand, and the Wedge Buffet Saloon are remnants of the raucous days of the early 1900's. Montana's Boy Scouts are pledged to preserve Kendall’s aura of yesteryear.

Montana Scouters, with the help of a Navy Seabee Unit from Billings built the A-Frame chapel near the old church. Built as a memorial to Morton, it is just large enough to accommodate the pulpit, with a wooden cross suspended above it. The old octagon - shaped bandstand, where the 24 - member Knights of Pythias Band once played concerts, was reconstructed by Montana Scouts, under the direction of a former Boy Scout, John Foster and advice from Glenn Morton. It was dedicated to the memory of Dennis Casey, an Eagle Scout and high school band member who was the first Vietnam casualty from nearby Lewistown.

K-M Scout Ranch, originally known as Camp Kendall utilized the ghost town as the Scout Camp in 1971. The next year the camp was relocated to the other side of the mountain along the road below the present Cheyenne campsite. Then in 1973 the present location was selected. Originally water for the camp was pumped up the hill from the old town site. We are fortunate to now have our own well.

The Dining Hall building is named the Flaming Arrow Lodge in honor of Camp Flaming Arrow which was located outside Bozeman, MT and has since been closed. The medical lodge is named after the late Dr. Bill McGregor of Great Falls, who was responsible for its construction. The A-Frame atop the medical lodge is named Moccasin Lodge after the mountains where the camp is located. The camp office is the log Harrison Lodge, named in honor of a Scouter who died in a tragic plane accident.

We hope you enjoy your stay at K-M Scout Ranch!