

Meers Store & Restaurant

Description:

The Meers Store & Restaurant A Brief History!

The old town of Meers sprang up during the gold rush days in the Wichita Mountains at the turn of the twentieth century. Gold fever swept the Wichita's during the 1890s fueled by tales of old Spanish mines and such stories as the report of a housewife near Meers who found a gold nugget "as large as No. 8 birdshot" in the claw of a chicken she was preparing for Christmas dinner. However, "Old-timers" in the Meers area say that a mine supply company in Kansas City, found itself with a large inventory of equipment as a result of a slowdown in the mines in Colorado. They purchased a mine in the Meers area, brought in miners from Cripple Creek, Colorado and "salted" the mine with gold nuggets from Colorado. And the rush was on!

On May 23, 1901, a group of miners met at the base of Mt. Sheridan, near where the present cedar grove is located, and organized a mining district. Out of respect for the first prospectors in the area, the miners named their camp Meers after Colonel Andrew Jackson Meers, who in 1889 found mineral rich quartzite outcroppings near the site.

On July 4, 1901, President William McKinley, by proclamation, created the Wichita Forest Reserve from part of the Kiowa, Comanche, and Kiowa-Apache Indian Reservation, which included the Meers site. In 1902, government officials ordered all persons, not actually engaged in mining, out of the Wichita Forest Reserve. Residents had to move their tents, belongings, and the beginnings of their permanent structures out of the Wichita Forest Reserve. A new town site was chosen 1½ miles north along Medicine Creek.

The Meers Store was relocated on the ridge north of the creek on the west side of the road. The building was owned by F.C. Davis, a pharmacist, chemist, and assayer, and a Dr. Starbuck who published the "Mt. Sheridan Miner", a weekly newspaper. Dr. Starbuck was also noted for prescribing a locally distilled moonshine whiskey for medical purposes.

The town of Meers prospered for a number of years. During its heyday, Meers flourished with grocery stores, drug stores, a café, three doctors, a smelter, post office, a confectionery, the Mt.

Sheridan Miner, and an estimated population of 500 hardy souls.

Mining fever lasted until 1905, when a University of Oklahoma geologist investigated on behalf of the United States Geological Survey and reported that precious minerals found in the ore samples he had collected were not in sufficient quantity to justify extracting them. The geologist was lambasted by promoters and prospectors, but his report put a damper on mining activities, and Meers began to decline. As the years passed, and the population of Meers dwindled, the old building was sold several times. By 1922 when Noel Lilly and his father Dick purchased it from Tom and Tinny Goss, there were about 75 people living in Meers.

Address Line 1: 26362 State Highway 115th

Country: USA

State: OK

County: Comanche

City: Meers

Zip: 73501

Website: <http://meersstore.com/>