



SILVER CITY

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Silver City is a private community within the boundary of Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. It began as a winter stop over while building the Mineral King Road in 1873, but eventually became a vacation destination.

The name Silver City also refers to the roadside resort, restaurant, and store, marked by its historic gas pump out front.

It was in 1929 that the store, restaurant, gas station and nine rental cabins opened for business. Jimmy Mehrten was the original owner and built the resort with his own hands.

Mehrten's family was a stranger neither to entrepreneurship nor to the Mineral King Valley. In the mining days, 53 prospecting claims were filed by the Mehrtens, more, perhaps, than any other family. The other Mineral King family business was the Harry's Bend butcher shop, supported by cattle driven up to Mineral King from the Mehrten Valley below.

Jimmy Mehrten himself first ventured into Sequoia National Park in 1906. He began driving a passenger stagecoach up to the Giant Forest on the Old Colony Mill Road; in the forest itself he ran a refreshment and produce stand. His time in the Mineral King area began a few years later at the Atwell Mill; the summer making fence posts and shakes (shingles) was the first of the thirty summers he and his wife Amy spent in the Mineral King area.

In addition to the store, Mehrten made a name for himself as a private cabin builder, hauling up loads of lumber in the bed of his pickup truck. The cabins contained his carpentry “signature”, a wooden sink complete with a carved drain board.

After 17 years of running the store, the Mehrtens retired in 1946, but their legacy lives on in the enjoyment of children and adults alike who spend their vacations in Silver City.

