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Friends of Cerro Gordo**  
*Help support the preservation,  
interpretation and public  
enjoyment of one of California's  
premiere ghost towns!*

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Yes, I would like to receive occasional emails from Friends of Cerro Gordo.

[friendsofcg@cerrogordo.us](mailto:friendsofcg@cerrogordo.us)

Membership (2013-12/31/2014) \$10

Additional support \_\_\_\_\_

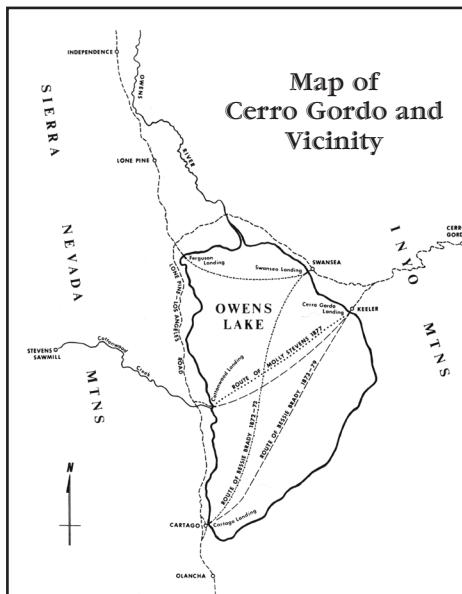
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Please mail to and make checks payable to:

Friends of Cerro Gordo

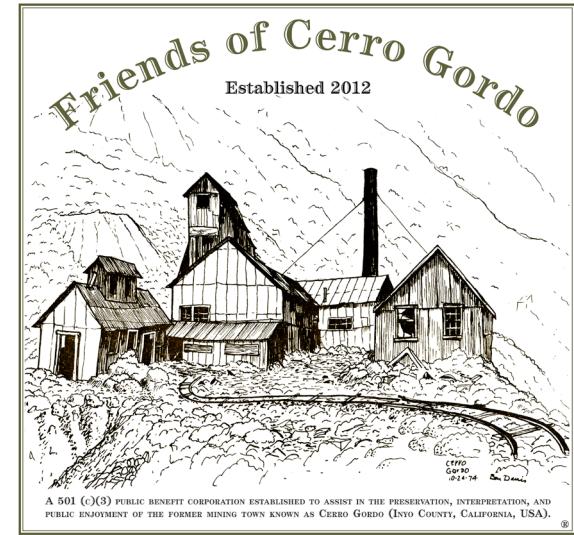
P.O.Box 426

Tujunga Ca 91042-9998



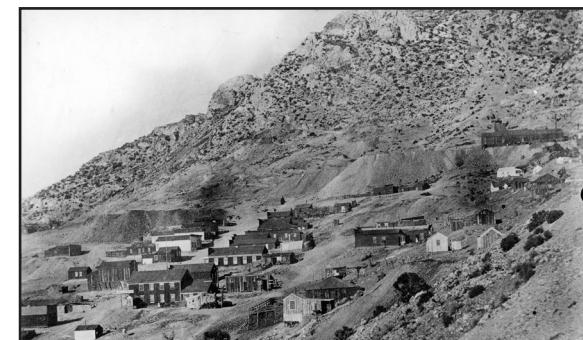
Cerro Gordo is located at an elevation of 8300 feet in Inyo County, California, about 20 miles southeast of Lone Pine. Access is via an eight mile dirt road from Keeler on the eastern edge of Owens Lake. There are no visitor services at Cerro Gordo (except outhouses) and vehicles should have high ground clearance (4X4 recommend).

Phone (909) 856-4434 for current road and weather conditions or email [cerrogordo.ehc@gmail.com](mailto:cerrogordo.ehc@gmail.com).



The Friends of Cerro Gordo is a 501(c)(3) public benefit corporation established to assist in the preservation, interpretation and public enjoyment of Cerro Gordo.

Help support these efforts by becoming a member.



View of Cerro Gordo sometime in the 1870s to early 1900's. The town endured several boom-bust cycles.

(Photo courtesy L.D. Gordon Collection.)

## Cerro Gordo: Mining Town Turned Ghost Town

About a day-and-a-half's ride, southeast of the small Eastern California village of *Los Uvas* (The Grapes), a small group of Mexican prospectors, were combing the flanks of a high desert mountain, searching for mineral wealth.

For a few years, the mountain had been known to them as *Cerro Gordo* (Fat Hill). They found color, but at the same time, somehow managed to enrage a local group of Native Americans and in a skirmish, whose details are lost in time. Three of the five prospectors were killed. The two prospectors left alive were held captive and made promise to never come back. They kept their word for a few short years...

Early in 1867, tales of the strike at Cerro Gordo had spread to other mining camps and a full blown silver boom had blasted its way onto the new land of opportunity. Back then, it took at least two weeks to get to where the action was, from any place like San Francisco, Carson City or Virginia City.

Inyo, as a county, was barely a year old, having just been wrought from Tulare County, over the top of the highest of the High Sierra. Even Los Angeles, where there were only about 2,800 people, was only a struggling little cow-town commonly known throughout the state as "El Pueblo." Cerro Gordo was just beginning to boom.

Because of the vast quantities of silver and lead that needed to be transported, Visalia, Bakersfield, Ventura and Los Angeles, all competed for the trade that was developing from the mines at *Cerro Gordo*. Ultimately, Los Angeles, and its port at San Pedro, became the most favored Cerro Gordo point of shipping. Trains of huge freight wagons delivered so much silver bullion from Cerro Gordo that the *Los Angeles News*, of February 2, 1872 stated:

**“To this city, Cerro Gordo trade is invaluable. What Los Angeles now is, is mainly due to it. It is the silver cord that binds our present existence. Should it be unfortunately severed, we would inevitably collapse.”**

El Pueblo's "silver-cord" remained un-severed.

Today, Los Angeles' economy is far larger than many foreign country's. *Los Uvas* is known as Lone Pine and Cerro Gordo is considered to be "California's best, true ghost town" according to author Phil Varney (*Southern California's Best Ghost Towns*).

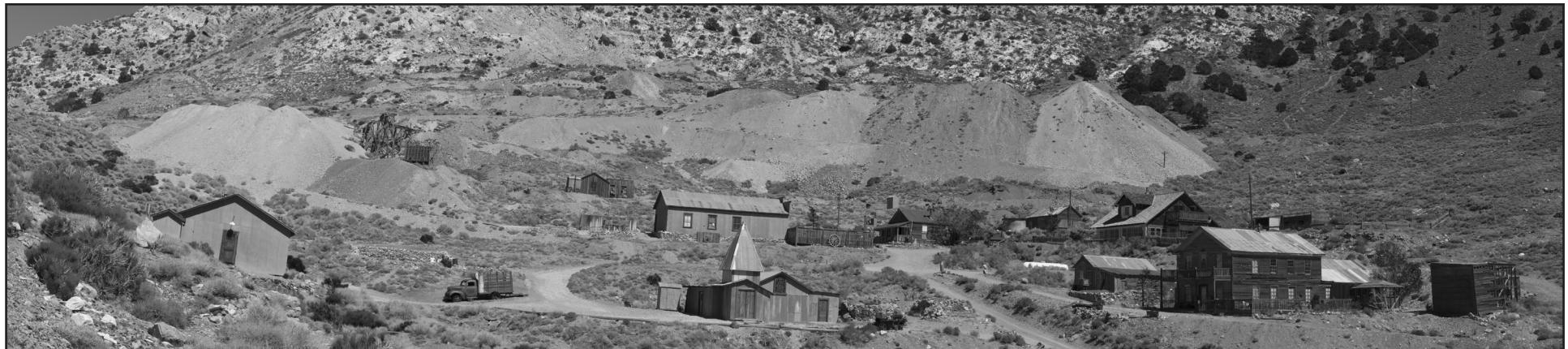
The late Jody Stewart and Mike Patterson were the modern stewards of Cerro Gordo's history, keeping it alive in a state of restorative re-use. It is their dreams that the Friends of Cerro Gordo strives to preserve.

**Cerro Gordo is privately owned and open to visitors by appointment only.**

**Please contact owner Sean Patterson, (661-303-3692)**

**or**

**town manager Robert Desmaris, (760-876-5030 / 909-856-4434), for additional information and road conditions.**



Panoramic view of Cerro Gordo today.