

# Doña Ana County Historical Society

## 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Awards Program

Saturday, January 28, 2017  
Double Eagle Restaurant in Mesilla



One hundred years ago, the United States entered World War I. The need to train millions of young men was great. Camp Cody, adjacent to Deming, was one of dozens of training centers scattered across the country. These young men are shown celebrating some special event in their mess hall at the camp just as we gather today to celebrate 50 years of honoring those who make a difference in our community.



The Doña Ana County Historical Society (DACHS) was founded in 1963 to encourage and foster a better understanding of the County's far reaching history for future generations. Emphasizing research, education, and preservation, the society encourages a greater appreciation of New Mexico history, especially that of Doña Ana County.

### **Founding Members**

John Atshool, Betty Bowen, Helen Caffey, Laiten Camien, Martin Campbell, Ira Clark, Adlai Feather, Louis Freudenthal, Dorothy Mechem, Hugh Milton, Thomas Mitman, Helen Shomer, David Streeter, J. Paul Taylor, and Mark Thompson

# **Doña Ana County Historical Society 2017 Board of Directors**

President: Dr. Jon Hunner  
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Liaison to Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum: Leah Tookey

*If you would like to help out on a committee or with some other aspect of the Society, by all means, volunteer. Just contact one of the officers above and offer your assistance. Thank you.*

## Past Presidents

Louis E. Freudenthal	Oct 1963 – Nov 1964	1st
George Adlai Feather	Nov 1964 – Nov 1965	2nd
J. Paul Taylor	Nov 1965 – Nov 1966	3rd
	Feb 1977 – Mar 1979	8th
Charlotte K. Priestley	Nov 1966 – Jan 1969	4th
Calvin L. Traylor	Jan 1969 – Feb 1971	5th
	1991 - 1993	14th
Louise Garrett	Feb 1971 – Fall 1974	6th
James McNeil	Fall 1974 – Feb 1977	7th
Opal Lee Priestley	Mar 1979 – April 1981	9th
Austin Hoover	Apr 1981 – Oct 1983	10th
	Jan – Dec 2004	23rd
Christine Myers	Oct 1983 – Jan 1987	11th
James H. Powell	1987 – 1989	12th
Paxton Price	1989 – 1991	13th
Linda G. Harris	1993 – 1995	15th
Charles (Chuck) Miles	1995 – 1997	16th
Clarence Fielder	1997	17th
Eva Jane (Janie) Matson	1998	18th
Roger Walker	1999	19th
Beverly Pirtle	2000 – 2001	20th
Robert L. (Bob) Hart	2002	21st
Donna Eichstaedt	2003 – 2005	22nd
Charles (Chuck) Murrell	2005 – 2006	24th
Roger Rotenmaier	2007 – Jun 2008	25th
George Helfrich	Jul 2008 – 2009	26th
George Hackler	2010 - 2012	27th
Marcie Palmer	2012 - 2014	28th
Susan Krueger	2014 - 2016	29th

# Doña Ana County Historical Society 50th Annual Awards Program

Welcome .....Dr. Jon Hunner, President,  
Installation of 2017 Officers and Board Members .....Dr. Jon Hunner

## Program

Master of Ceremonies..... Dr. Jon Hunner, President

## Awards

Old Timer's Award .....Plaza de Las Cruces  
Hall of Fame Award.....John Smith  
Heritage Award..... Friends of Fort Selden  
Pasajero Del Camino Real Award ..... David Thomas  
for *Screen With A Voice: A History of Motion Pictures in Las Cruces, New Mexico*  
Endangered Historic Property..... Abandoned Cemetery in Picacho  
Old Timer's Award ..... Pat Garrett Murder Site

# Awards & Recognition for 2017

## **Old Timer's Award**

*This award identifies a cherished object, a natural phenomenon or a cultural tradition prominent in the heritage of the Mesilla Valley deserving of public attention and recognition as an important part of the physical character of this region.*

### **2017 Old Timer's Award Plaza de Las Cruces**

The Plaza de Las Cruces was designed to be the premier public gathering place for Las Cruces. The Plaza is situated on the original site of the Hotel Herndon and steps away from the original site of St. Genevieve's Church. The site was transformed from a parking lot and drive-thru banking service to the beautiful community plaza set to host dozens of large events and countless individual meet-ups every year - just like historic plazas found in many New Mexico communities.

The Plaza has a splash pad, sundial, artistic pavers, colorful lighting, and a stage for performances. Almost 1500 people can be seated for events or 175 booths can be set up for artisans to show their wares. This project was the first public/private collaboration between the City and the Las Cruces Community Partners to develop a community site downtown. It fittingly rests in the historic original town site of Las Cruces.



## Hall of Fame Award

*The Hall of Fame Award is designed to recognize an individual who is known for their exceptional contribution to the preservation of the history and culture of the Mesilla Valley. The contribution should be of a substantial nature and be evidenced by enduring and observable worth to the Doña Ana Historical Society and the community at large.*

### 2017 Hall of Fame Inductee

#### John Smith

Dr. John Smith has been a life-long history “buff”, particularly the Civil War, having collected his first period weapon by the age of 14. The Springfield Model 1863 .58 caliber is still in his collection as are numerous uniforms from both sides of the war. John’s family has been in the border area for generations, he has great grandparents buried at the Odd Fellow cemetery.

John retired from NMSU’s Jornada Experimental Range after many years of service, first arriving at the range in 1974 to “cowboy”. Through his years at the Jornada, John interacted with almost 24,000 student scientists at his cow field trip station. John still gives historic tours of the Jornada on occasion using his vast knowledge of the area.

John has been reenacting historical events and people since the early 1990s through his connections with the Friends of Fort Selden

and the Sons of Confederate Veterans. John has been president of the Friends of Fort Selden for the past six years. He participates yearly in El Tratado de la Mesilla celebrating the Gadsden Purchase and Fort Selden’s Luminaria Tour where he reenacts daily life at the fort. John is also well known for his portrayal of General Henry Hopkins Sibley and participates in numerous historical events throughout the year. According to John, “we’re honoring those who have gone before. We’re also sharing some history that most people don’t know about.”



## Heritage Award

*The Heritage Award is given to a person or persons whose actions or deeds have contributed to the historical or cultural heritage of Dona Ana County and who is (are) not professional or a vocational historian.*

### 2017 Heritage Award Recipient Friends of Fort Selden

The Friends of Fort Selden was formed in 1990 to serve as an auxiliary of the Fort Selden State Historic Site, providing educational programs and portraying living history at the site. Many yearly events take place at the Fort in which the Friends take part, most notably Family Saturdays, Mother's Day Tea, Luminaria Tour and Frontier Day in October. The group also participates in numerous living history events throughout the borderland area, spreading the word about Fort Selden and teaching history to participants.

Every year, Vista Middle School students are treated to reenactments by the Friends and the firing of a cannon during their History Day event. The Friends also participate in the Veteran's Day parade and 4th of July Parade of Lights.

The Gadsden Purchase reenactment is one of their favorite events in addition to participating in Fort Bayard and Fort Stanton historic events. The group has even traveled to Arizona to take part in the Battle of Picacho Peak and other distant events such as Shakespeare Ghost Town and the Battle of Val Verde in Socorro, NM. The group now numbers about 30 members with many dozens of others that have participated throughout the years.





## **Pasajero Del Camino Real Award**

*This award is given to author(s) of a significant historical publication about events, persons, places or issues in Doña Ana County or the nearby area. The Society should strongly consider works by its members and those persons living and writing in Doña Ana County.*

### **2017 Pasajero Del Camino Real Award Recipient**

**David Thomas** for

***Screen With A Voice: A History of Motion Pictures in Las Cruces***

David Thomas is a familiar face to those interested in the history of the Mesilla Valley. Just two years ago, the Dona Ana County Historical Society honored David with this award for his continuing series on local history, singling out his books on La Posta restaurant and Giovanni Maria de Agostini.

*Screen With A Voice* is decidedly 20th century and tells how motion pictures arrived and were viewed locally. The book details all of the theaters that have graced Las Cruces, indoor and outdoor, with plenty of photographs to see what things used to be like.



As this banquet takes place, David is coming out with another book concerning New Mexico's rich history. This one is *Billy The Kid's Grave: The History of the Wild West's Most Famous Death Marker*.

In addition to his writings on New Mexico history, David is the author of [lascrucesblog.com](http://lascrucesblog.com) where he posts notes on his ongoing historical research. He is the founder of WindowDOS Associates, cofounder of Friends of Pat Garrett, a filmmaker, screenwriter, author, historian, and travel writer. In addition, he gives talks about his research.

## Endangered Historic Property

*This designation is used to identify a historic property or structure, a site, or landscape that is endangered because of a threat to its continuing historic significance. The threat may come from neglect, urban sprawl, inappropriate zones, natural weathering or building techniques using incompatible materials.*

### 2017 Endangered Historic Property Old Picacho Cemetery

Located in Old Picacho Village off Salem Colony Rd. this 0.608 acre tract is at the end of Trucha Drive. The village of Picacho was established in 1854 by Evangelisto Chaves.

Today the cemetery property belongs to the Estate of Isaac Chavez but no one is caring for it. According to San Albino and St. Genevieve church records, the earliest burials were in the 1860's. We believe there are 15 to 20 burials in the cemetery. Today only two headstones remain. They belong to the wife and child of Hichiro "Jose" Matsuba, a Japanese born laborer who came into the United States through Juarez bringing his Hispanic wife with him. They settled in Picacho and had five children - the fifth resulting in the death of the mother and child.

The lot is overgrown with mesquite and trespassers have begun dumping waste at the entrance. There are wooden square stumps that may have been crosses and scattered rocks may indicate other graves.

Josie DiMatteo has been trying to care for the cemetery and get help to preserve it. Her maiden name is Matsuba and in addition to the two headstones that do stand, her mother and two sisters are buried there. Josie has several ideas for cleanup and preservation.



## **Old Timer's Award**

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### **2017 Old Timer's Award Pat Garrett Murder Site**

On February 29, 1908, a cold and windy winter day, an icon of the Wild West justice system was gunned down. That morning, Pat Garrett rode in a buckboard with Carl Adamson into the Alameda Arroyo. Just east of Las Cruces, a confrontation with Wayne Brazel resulted in Pat being shot in the back and killed. Wayne Brazel claimed he shot Garrett in self defense. His self-admitted killer was acquitted and faded into obscurity. However, Pat Garrett has lived on long after his physical presence was laid to rest in the Masonic Cemetery in Las Cruces.

Pat Garrett had been sheriff of Dona Ana County beginning in 1897. He was friends with President Teddy Roosevelt and at Pat's death Roosevelt wrote that Pat was the man who introduced law and order to a lawless New Mexico. Although Pat's accomplishments include Sheriff of Lincoln County and the death of William, Billy the Kid, Bonney he was also instrumental in a visionary venture into irrigation on the high plains of Roswell and Carlsbad. As Collector of Customs in El Paso he enforced tax regulations on goods that crossed the Texas/Mexico border. But he came to rest here.

The Garretts were prominent members of the community for many years. They owned two ranches on the east side of the Organ Mountains and they raised and schooled their youngest children here. The family cemetery plot is at the Masonic Cemetery.

Pat's wife, Apolinaria, remained here until her death in 1936. His daughter Elizabeth wrote the New Mexico State song, "O Fair New Mexico." Years later, his youngest son, Jarvis Garrett, placed a cement marker at the murder site in the Alameda Arroyo. Jarvis scratched Pat's name and death date along with the sign of the cross into the wet cement.

The cement marker is still there today, surviving in the soft sand of the Arroyo. It is one of the last reminders of a man who believed in justice. The questions are how much longer will the marker last and, when it disappears, who will remember where one of the great Old West lawmen died. Who will be able to tell the story?

The Friends of Pat Garrett are trying to get the site recognized officially as a historical site so that development in the area does not sweep all evidence of this event out of existence.



**Jarvis Garrett's marker in the Alameda Arroyo just south of the Jornada development east of Las Cruces.**

## **Corporate Sponsors**

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# Dona Ana County Historical Society



J. CANTRELL '09

Preserving Southern New Mexico's Historical  
And Multicultural Heritage Since 1963

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

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