

SOUTHERN NEW MEXICO HISTORICAL REVIEW



Pasajero del Camino Real

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The *Southern New Mexico Historical Review* (ISSN-1076-9072) is looking for original articles concerning the Southwestern Border Region for future issues. Biography, local and family histories, oral history and well-edited documents are welcome. Charts, illustrations or photographs are encouraged to accompany submissions. We are also in need of book reviewers, proofreaders, and an individual or individuals in marketing and distribution.

Copies of the *Southern New Mexico Historical Review* are available for \$7.00. If ordering by mail, please include \$2.00 for postage and handling. Correspondence regarding the Review should be directed to the Editor of the *Southern New Mexico Historical Review* at Doña Ana County Historical Society, P. O. Box 16045 Las Cruces, NM 88004-6045.

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Editor's Page

The *Southern New Mexico Historical Review* devotes the current issue to the Statehood achieved by New Mexico one hundred years ago. The road to this prize proved a difficult and complex journey. The Territorial citizenry were by no means united in their desire to exchange a Territorial government for new laws and obligations. Before statehood came a required and contentious constitutional convention to which the delegates brought all the deeply divided interests of their constituencies. Some of the delegates reportedly brought weapons, as well, as if to prove the misgivings abroad in the other forty-six states that New Mexico was not worthy of admission to the civilization represented by the Union. Violence and a great, sand-filled void characterized the views of New Mexico harbored throughout much of the United States. Indeed, even today a recent poll found that many of our fellow U. S. citizens can identify Roswell's reason for fame but also believe those events happened in a part of Mexico that has beaches.

Dr. Richard Melzer, Professor of History at the University of New Mexico-Valencia Campus examines the truth about New Mexico as it struggled toward a new identity in the period 1910-1912. His article provides a State of the Territory, providing—as he puts it—snapshots, both literal and figurative, of the various issues that would confront the new state: education, economic progress, modernization, cultural opportunities, the status of women, and a reputation for harboring extreme individualism.

In 1841 the last Mexican Governor of New Mexico Territory Manuel Armijo opined: “Poor New Mexico—so far from heaven, so close to Texas.” As Cameron Saffell, Curator of the New Mexico Farm and Ranch Museum, describes so vividly, big, boisterous, and aggressive Texas was determined to put on a celebratory show in 1912 to outshine any events going on next door in Las Cruces and environs.

Many of the issues explored in these articles continue at the forefront of our state's challenges and concerns today. We hope you will enjoy reflecting on the similarities—and progress—between then and now.

Martha Shipman Andrews, Editor