

# NEWSLETTER

## April 2021

Doña Ana County Historical Society

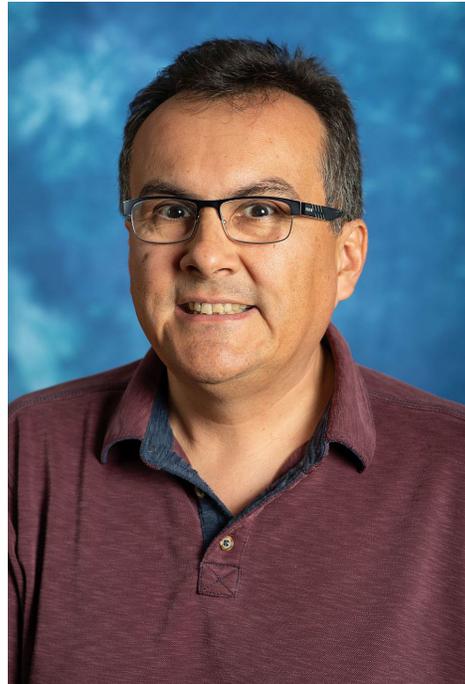
### Dr. Dave DuBois To Talk About Our NM Climate

Dr. Dave DuBois, the State Climatologist for New Mexico, will be our April presenter with a talk about New Mexico climate and our periods of drought and, sometimes, wet times. The talk will be conducted on Zoom at 7 p.m. on April 15. We will send out the link a couple of days before the event.

In his talk, DuBois will take a look at the variety of weather phenomena we have experienced in New Mexico. Based on data from the last 125+ years he will investigate our climate record to include droughts and our wettest years.

The talk will cover what possible climate scenarios we may be faced with in our future. Following this he will provide some ways we can participate in citizen science efforts to collect climate data such as the Community Collaborative Rain Hail and Snow (CoCoRaHS) network. (Your editor now has over 4,000 observations for the CoCoRaHS

system - it is an easy way to participate and down here there is little snow to report in the winter.)



In addition to being the state climatologist, Dr. DuBois is the Director of the New Mexico Climate Center, and Associate College Professor at NMSU. He provides climate and climate change information and education to policy makers, the agricultural community, industry, educators, students, and the public.

He also gives numerous talks and holds workshops every year on topics covering climate, drought, air quality, and climate change. He teaches and trains

students at New Mexico State University and maintains an active research program in air quality and climate. He also chairs the NM Drought Monitoring Workgroup.

Dave is a native of New Mexico but grew up on a farm in southern New Jersey.

### Las Cruces Photos(1899-1900) Now On FaceBook

The historical society was contacted weeks ago by Jerry Elder who wanted to post some old photos his great-grandfather Charles Fulton Neale took in Las Cruces around 1900. The images are now on the DACHS FaceBook page under the "Community" section. If you go to the page, the community section will be beside or near the main feed depending on whether you are using an app on your phone or tablet or coming in on the website.

Jerry said that his great-grandfather came to Las Cruces because he had tuberculosis and was hoping the dry air would help. He or his wife took the photos. Neale did not improve so the family moved back home to Springfield, KY where he died at the age of 29.

Jerry scanned the photos and deciphered the faded captions handwritten on the back of each one. Its possible these images have never been seen by the public before.

# Virtual Presentations Now Available On Puebloan Culture

By Donnell Hester

Hello from San Antonio, Texas. Back in 2010, I taught a course to the Academy of Learning in Retirement entitled THE ANCESTRAL PUEBLOAN CULTURE. I put a great deal of effort into that course and a few years ago revised what I had done and created numerous video presentations about the subject. I've resurrected what I was doing and have begun producing study guides for those videos that I really need to share with others, and you all drew the short straws.

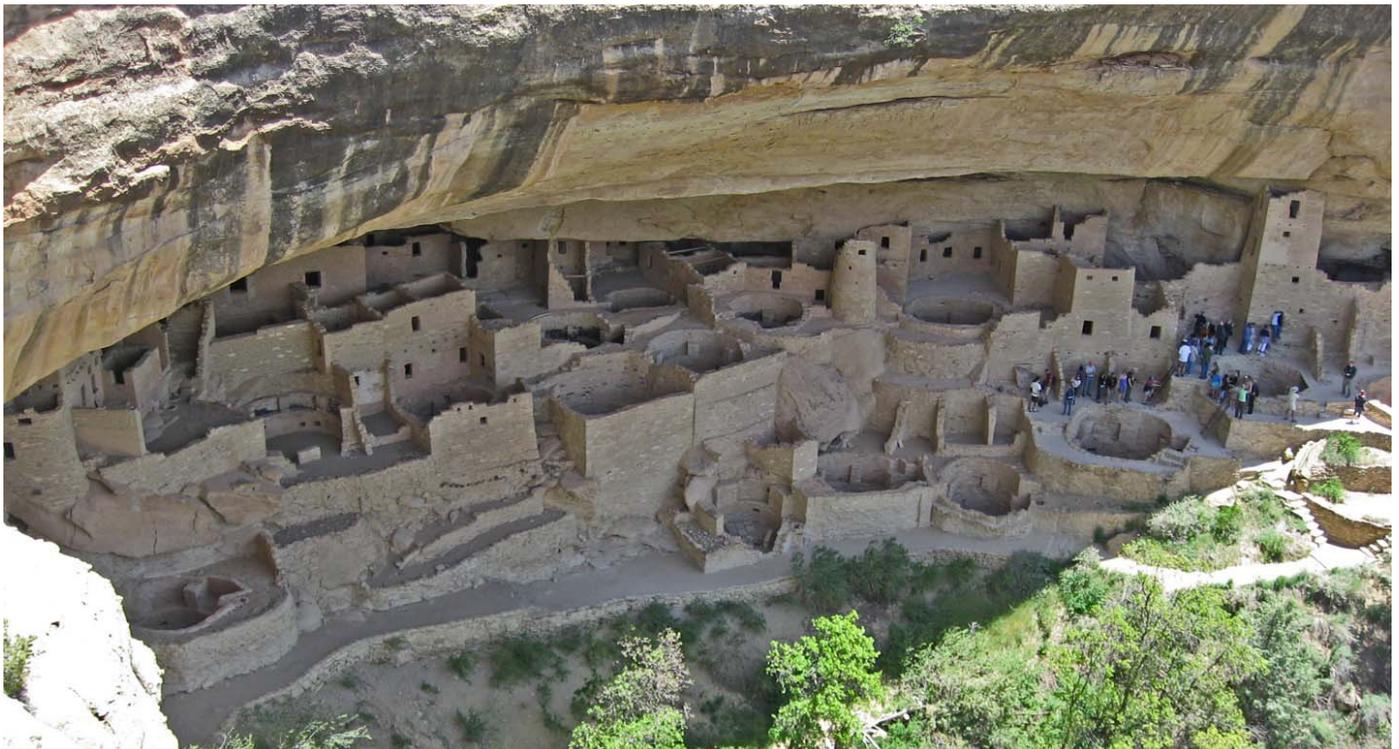
Back in 1962 and 63, I had the pleasure of being able to work at Chaco Canyon in New Mexico for the National Park Service. I began getting acquainted with this culture and have maintained an interest in it ever since. I thought it would be best for me to share what I have learned about the culture and I hope that I can present it in such a way that you will be able to learn and appreciate that part of our historic background. Although I started with Chaco Canyon, I have also visited two other sites: Mesa Verde National Park in Colorado and Aztec National Monument in northern New Mexico.

I've managed to produce the presentations for Mesa Verde first and that is what I'm going to be referencing in this email. I also have a general study

guide to introduce you to the culture and some background information about the archaeology involved in studying these very interesting places. I'm pretty certain that the presentations may not do justice to the sites that I present, but I do hope that they will instill in you a sense of awe about this culture. They were amazing people and when their culture disappeared in the 1200s - we still do not know exactly why that happened.

When you go to the URLs from the DACHS website, you will be taken to my Dropbox and presented with PDF Study Guide Files. They, in turn, link you to the various presentations. This project is not intended for a short presentation of this culture. Do not expect to finish this in an hour or two. It will probably take several weeks for you to complete all of the presentations in these study guides. So, take your time, and move it to your own pace through all of these presentations. I hope that it will be worth your time and effort to learn more about this culture.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Since we print the newsletter as well as send out PDF versions, I thought we would simply ask you to go to the DACHS website and use the links provided for Donnell's presentations. The URLs are too long and cumbersome for inclusion here.



Cliff Palace at Mesa Verde National Park. Photo by Jim Eckles

# New Doug Preston Thriller Novel Features Local History

Novelist Doug Preston and his writing partner Lincoln Child have just come out with a new novel that is set here in New Mexico. Most of the action takes place around Socorro and on the north end of White Sands Missile Range.

The book is called *The Scorpion's Tail* and was published in January. The plot involves the FBI and a fictional archaeological institute out of Santa Fe. In the context of treasure hunting in New Mexico and looting sites, the story sucks in the Doc Noss and Victorio Peak story. Trinity Site and the first atomic bomb blast figure prominently in the story as well. There is also the pueblo revolt with the Spanish being driven from New Mexico. To top it off there are some of the latest weapons out on the missile range being used for no good.

The book is a hoot. I imagine the two authors had fun writing it.

The two have been writing for years and are known for their techno-thriller-horror books. There is a whole series involving a legendary FBI agent

named Pendergast who pops up at the end of this book. Their first big hit was *Relic* which was made into a movie.

I met Doug in 1995 when I escorted him and his wife, a professional photographer, onto the missile range to do a story for *New Mexico Magazine* about the flora and fauna on White Sands. We spent just over two days in the back woods areas looking for animals and photos. We even "camped" at Hardin Ranch in Rhodes Pass in the San Andres Mountains. Doug has also written non-fiction for the *New Yorker*, *National Geographic*, *Natural History*, *Smithsonian* and *Harper's*. The article for *New Mexico Magazine* appeared in the October 1995 issue.

This new book is the second in a new series for the writers that features Nora Kelly, an archaeologist working out of Santa Fe. However, the best character is sheriff Homer Watts of Socorro County who can outdraw anyone in the area and shoot straight while moving one way or the other. He is what we played at being when we were kids.

# Historical Society Of New Mexico To Hold Conference Here

The Historical Society of New Mexico will hold its big annual conference here in Las Cruces in April 2022. Like the last time it was held in Las Cruces, this one will be a joint conference with the Arizona Historical Society. It should be a great opportunity for historians from the two states to share ideas and new discoveries. The Convention Center will be the venue.

The Dona Ana County Historical Society will be assisting in making it happen. Already we've been asked to compile lists of organizations (with POC information) that might support the conference by

partnering or with display tables outside the meeting rooms and compiling a list of places out-of-town visitors might want to visit while they are in Las Cruces. For example, the White Sands Missile Range Museum, with its archives, has already agreed to be there.

If you would like to help Jim Eckles compile the lists in the next few weeks, shoot him an email at 19dachs63@gmail.com. We will be calling for volunteers to help out as we get closer to the event. And, if you are not helping, you might want to attend as there will be dozens of great presentations.

# It Is Time To Start That Historical Article For The Annual Review

The Dona Ana County Historical Society is looking for original articles concerning Southern New Mexico history for its next annual Review (Volume XXIX, January 2022). Biography, local and family histories, oral history, student papers and articles focusing on the history of the Southwest and Northern Mexico will be considered. Small monetary awards are available for some pieces.

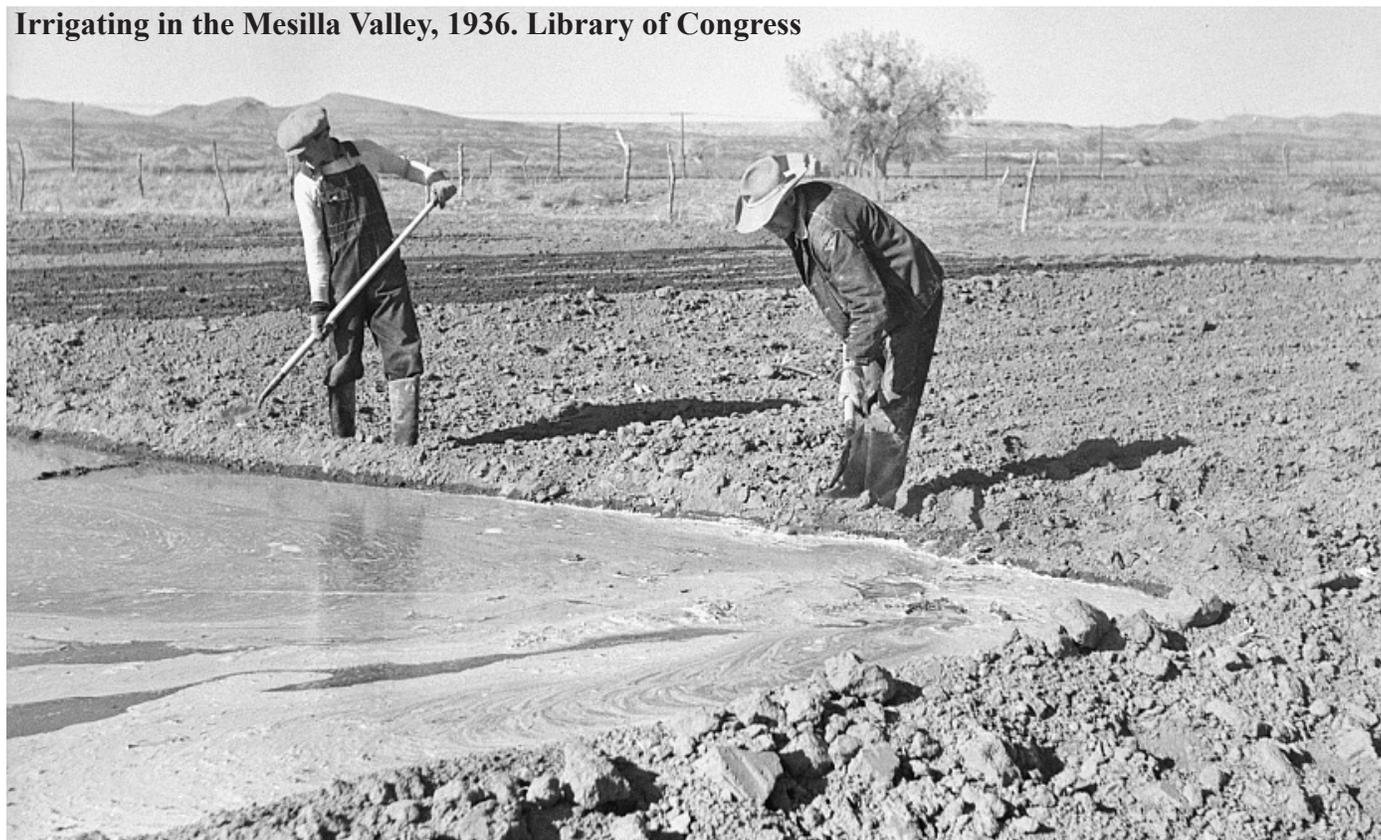
Jim Eckman will be the editor for this edition. All submissions must be made electronically as

Word documents. Other formats can be negotiated. Also, we would like end notes instead of footnotes. To submit an article or to ask questions, contact Jim Eckles by email: 19dachs63@gmail.com or by phone at: 575-521-8771. Eckles will act as the middle man and continue to do the layout.

The deadline for final articles is October.

More information is available on the society's website at: <http://www.donaanacountyhistsoc.org/HistoricalReview/Reviews.html>

Irrigating in the Mesilla Valley, 1936. Library of Congress



[www.donaanacountyhistsoc.org](http://www.donaanacountyhistsoc.org)

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