

NEWSLETTER

February 2021

Doña Ana County Historical Society

Jim Eckles Will Kick Off 2021 With Wildlife Talk

Jim Eckles will speak about the history of wildlife at White Sands Missile Range during our February presentation on the 18th at 7 p.m. It will be a virtual talk via Zoom.

Eckles will explain why there are thousands of African antelope roaming our area now and provide background information on these large critters from the Kalahari Desert. In his job at White Sands he spent days escorting photographers and reporters chasing oryx or oryx hunters.

Also, he'll talk about the rise and fall and the recent resurrection of desert bighorn sheep in the San Andres Mountains just to the northeast of Las Cruces. Just a few years ago there were none and now there are close to 200 of the native sheep roaming the missile range.

Many people may remember the wild horse herds on White Sands. Eckles will speak about what happened to the steeds.

Eckles will also talk about his days in the mountains with Kenny Logan and Linda Sweanor as they tracked mountain lions for a New Mexico sponsored study. One thing is for sure, being at the top of the food chain can be tough - lions don't die peacefully of old age. He will also talk about pupfish (yes there are fish at White Sands), deer (where have they gone?), pronghorn and bears.

As before, members will receive the Zoom invite by email a few days before the 18th. Non-members can also "attend" by writing our email address and requesting the invite. That address is: 19dachs63@gmail.com



Oryx, African antelope, were first introduced on White Sands Missile Range in 1969. There are thousands there now and thousands on the lands surrounding the military testing facility.



Linda Sweanor, a mountain lion researcher, holds a three-week old lion cub during the 10-year puma study on the missile range.

How *The Southern New Mexico Historical Review* Began

Editor's Note: With the 28th edition of the Review now out, I thought you might like to see how it got started back in 1994. This is from Madelene Vessel's history of the historical society.

During the summer of 1992, when the DACHS Special Projects Committee outlined a long-range plan for the DACHS, publishing a quarterly DACHS journal was classified with the lowest priority: "to be accomplished eventually, when resources were available." It received a low priority rating primarily because the Special Projects Committee doubted the DACHS's financial and technical ability to produce a polished publication.

Martin Gemoets, who strongly believed that DACHS should publish a historical journal despite the Committee's reservations, appeared before DACHS Board on April 28, 1993, to propose that the Society sponsor what he called the *Southern New Mexico Historical Review*. The DACHS Board of Directors was intrigued by Gemoets's proposal and urged him and his wife Doris to co-chair a Publications Committee to work on the idea. The Publications Committee eventually also included President Linda G. Harris, Vice President Charles Miles, Dorothy Shannon, and Margie Walton.

On June 21, 1993, the Publications Committee met for the first time to plan a strategy. They addressed three major issues: a design for the journal, a procedure for producing the journal, and a plan for its financing.

In terms of design, the committee decided that the *Southern New Mexico Historical Review* would be subjected to a length requirement (44 to 52 pages) and would feature Jose Cisneros' art on its cover.

In terms of production, the committee intended to solicit articles from the membership, solicit book reviews from respected historians, and accept other "unforeseen kinds of writing." (*Editor's Note: Jon Hunner's article in this edition qualifies for the "unforeseen" distinction*) In addition, the committee would divide up editing responsibilities, arrange for typesetting, and have the journal published in time for the annual DACHS Banquet in January. Each edition would be "protected by copyright and include a disclaimer about the facts included in the articles." In order to finance the journal, the committee planned to sell advertising.

At the second meeting of the Publications Committee, on July 5, the strategy was somewhat refined. The approach to financing was revised, a campaign to solicit papers was developed, and a deadline for article submissions was fixed. Rather than sell ads, the committee decided to seek \$1,500 in seed money from the DACHS Board of Directors and try to recover the initial investment through sales. Five hundred copies of a 44-52 page publication would cost between \$2.00 and \$3.00 a copy and could be sold for \$5.00 each.

In the meantime, the committee printed flyer-scanning for papers to circulate among members at the up-coming Society annual July picnic and via the newsletter and Publicity Committee. They also prepared individualized letters, calling for papers, to send to people whose families had made significant contributions to the region's history. The deadline for submissions for the first issue was fixed on October 31, 1993.

On August 26, 1993, Harris reported to the DACHS Board for the Publications Committee and requested \$1,500 to launch the journal. After considerable discussion, board members expressed appreciation for the committee's accomplishments but declined to grant financing. It was a substantial sum, in fact, half the treasury's balance. Before the Board was willing to take such a risk, they wanted more assurance that the publication would be a success. They requested more information about how the journal would be marketed and about how the quality of the journal would be assured.

The next day, on August 27, 1993, Lillia Collingwood, long-time editor of the El Paso Historical Society's journal, *Password*, visited with the DACHS Publications Committee and gave them "informative 1-2-3 advice on what it takes to produce a quality journal." Collingwood emphasized that they needed a professional editor, one who had a good knowledge of history and who possessed the attributes of patience and perseverance. She also described methods of financing used by *Password*, including the idea of selling corporate memberships. Much of the committee's planning was right on target.

The committee's written report to the Board in September focused on their strategy for marketing the journal and for insuring its quality.

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Start Of The Historical Review — CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

At a special 6:30 p.m. meeting, just before the regular DACHS meeting on September 16, 1993, the Board entered into a lively and, at times, heated debate over the issues of funding the proposed journal and approving a recently proposed editor. Ultimately, Gemoets's arguments for funding prevailed. The Board agreed to "provide the seed money for the first publication," approving a sum of \$1,500 to finance the journal's set-up and printing costs and \$300 for miscellaneous expenses.

After October 31, 1993, all submissions were circulated to the members of the Publications Committee who individually reviewed and evaluated them. The committee then met to select the papers that would appear in the first edition of the journal.

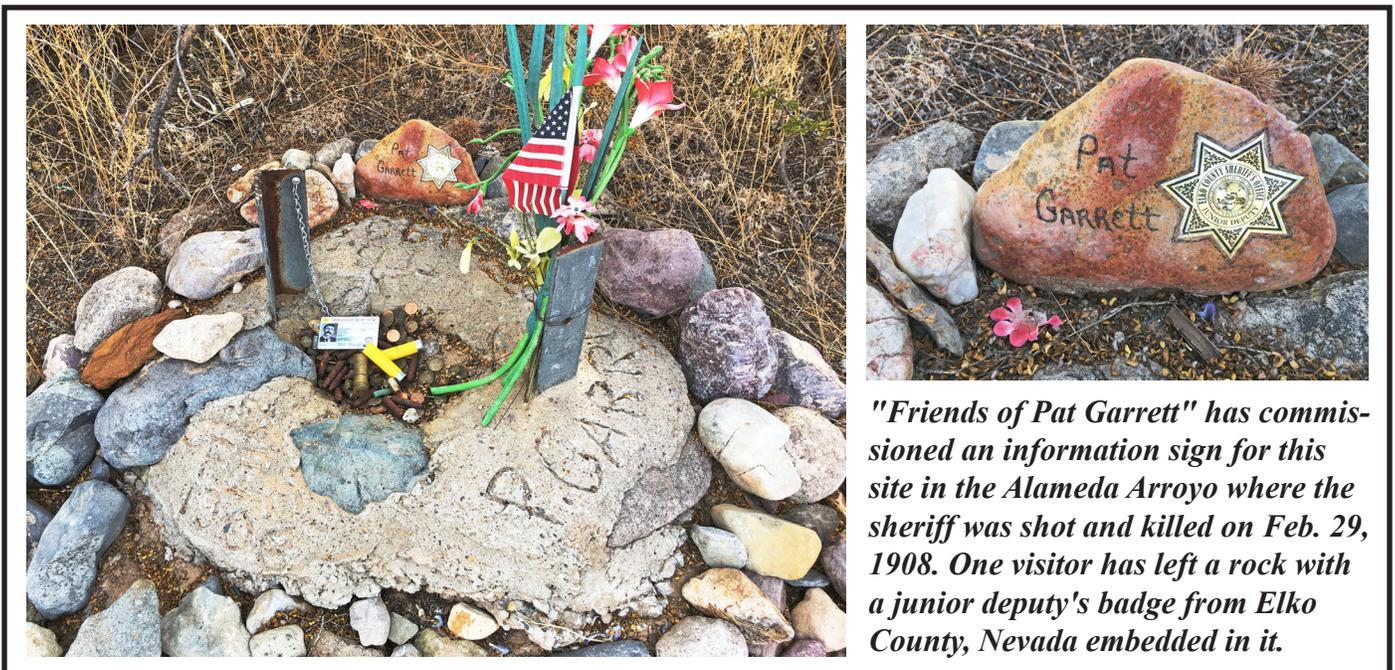
By December 3, 1993, selections had been made and were in the process of being edited. They included "The Jornada del Muerto" by Paxton Price, "Early Owners of the Nestor Armijo Home" by John B. Colligan, "The Mark Thompson-David Bronson Home" by Theresa Gerend, "The Deeds of Roy Nakayama" by Nancy Tod, "The Archers of the Lower Rio Grande" by Walter P. Archer, "George Adlai Feather" by Ilka Minter and Robert R. White, "Major General James H. Carleton" by Allan Holmes, "Hugh M. Milton II" by Lee Gemoets, and "German Lass Routs Apache with Spunk, Burning Candle" as told by Miss Ormeda May to Margaret Page Hood.

Many manuscripts had been submitted, and they could not all be published. Additionally, many of the

manuscripts required more editorial work (clarification, organization, condensation, or expansion) than the Publications Committee was able to accommodate. The unhappy task of writing individual letters to each author whose manuscript would not be published fell to Linda G. Harris.

The *Southern New Mexico Historical Review* was presented to the DACHS membership at the Twenty-Seventh Annual DACHS Banquet on January 29, 1994. Unfortunately, it also had to be immediately recalled! A combination of errors in the typesetting phase of the manuscript led to its being sent to the printer before it had been properly proofread. Consequently, it contained too many errors to be distributed. The Society acted swiftly, however, and an approved edition was promptly produced. As soon as the new version was available, copies were sold in selected local bookstores and at DACHS meetings for \$5.00 each. Two of the DACHS's best saleswomen, Victoria Holmes and Nancy Ann Warner, were responsible for journal sales in several other community outlets. The response was overwhelmingly favorable.

Despite the difficulties associated with the first edition, the Publications Committee began discussing plans for a second edition almost immediately. This time the DACHS Board was solidly behind their efforts: Those who had been involved in the planning felt that many lessons had been learned and that everyone was pleased with the finished product.



"Friends of Pat Garrett" has commissioned an information sign for this site in the Alameda Arroyo where the sheriff was shot and killed on Feb. 29, 1908. One visitor has left a rock with a junior deputy's badge from Elko County, Nevada embedded in it.

Back Page Notes -----

✓ Our NMSU History Department student liaison, Clara Roberts, has graduated. Roberto Torres, who is pursuing his master's degree in public history at NMSU has agreed to replace her. In fact, he sat in at the February board meeting.

He goes by Bobby and has another master's degree in education. When not being a student, he is education director for the World War II Airborne Living History Museum Association and a guest services representative for the War Eagles Air Museum. We foreseen a field trip to the War Eagles Museum in our future.

✓ The historical society has openings this year if you would like to help out. For instance, we could use an editor for the *Southern New Mexico Historical Review* starting in early Fall. If someone is good with websites, we could use a webmaster. If you are good with manipulating a database, you could help with membership and keeping track of everyone.

If you would like to help out - and there are many other possibilities - contact one of the board members or email us at the society's address of: 19dachs63@gmail.com.

✓ DACHS vice president Garland Courts has the March and April speakers lined up for our spring series of talks. The May speaker is still working his schedule so he is only tentative. On **March 18 we will have Rick Hendricks** who will talk about the Spanish Flu that struck worldwide in 1918 killing tens of millions. Rick is familiar to many of us as he was with the NMSU Archives and Special Collections before moving to Santa Fe as the NM State Historian. He is now the state's records administrator. On **April 15 we will hear Dr. David DuBois** who will speak about New Mexico's drought. David is a climatologist at NMSU.

Again, if you have a suggestion for a speaker, please send it along to Garland. His email address is: gcourts@las-cruces.org We anticipate that the spring series will be virtual through Zoom.

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