



NEWSLETTER

September 2022

Doña Ana County Historical Society

September Topic Is Historic Las Cruces Buildings

Dr. Troy Ainsworth, Historic Preservation Specialist for the city of Las Cruces, will be our speaker on Sept. 15 at 7 p.m. The presentation will be held in the auditorium at Good Samaritan, 3011 Buena Vida Cir., and will also be available via Zoom.

Troy's talk is called **Value, History, and Sustainability: Historic Preservation in Las Cruces**. His discussion will focus on the



the future of Las Cruces.

Troy M. Ainsworth, Ph.D., serves as the Historic Preservation Specialist for the City of Las Cruces. He is a three-time alumnus of Texas Tech University, where he was awarded a Doctorate of Philosophy in Land-Use Planning, Management, and Design with a specialization in Historic Preservation. In addition to preservation-related work,

societal and economic value of investing in the existing built environment by maintaining the productive use of buildings. The role of the City's historic preservation ordinance will figure centrally in this talk, and selected significant buildings will be featured as notable examples. Additionally, the discussion will focus on the importance of a useable past for

he researches and writes on various aspects of Borderlands history.

If you cannot attend or do not feel safe yet, you can participate via the Zoom platform. We will send out the Zoom invitation a few days before by email. Non-members can also attend in person or request the Zoom link via email at: 19dachs63@gmail.com.

Fall Elections Are Approaching / Time To Step Up

This fall it will be time to elect/re-elect volunteers for board membership and officer positions. Coming up this year we have *one at-large board opening* and *the positions of vice-president, treasurer and secretary* will be open. If you would like to volunteer or know of someone who might be persuaded to volun-

teer, please let President Dennis Daily know. Dennis can be reached at: ddaily@nmsu.edu

In addition, there are other opportunities to volunteer. For instance, you could maintain the DACHS website and FaceBook page OR edit the monthly newsletter OR help on the Awards Committee. Let us know.

Board Member Jose Aranda Has Arranged Hispanic Heritage Program

On Oct. 4, from 11 a.m. to noon, the Dona Ana Community College, East Mesa, will present a workshop on Oral Histories--How to Preserve Your Family's History. Donna Wojcik, NM Farm and Ranch Museum will conduct the free class. This will take place in the Academic Resources Bldg. (DAAR).

the same room, a panel of local experts will teach attendees how to do family research. The panel will include Dennis Daily--NMSU Library & Archives, Dr. Jerry Wallace--NMSU History Dept., Dr. Troy Ainsworth--Las Cruces Preservation Office, Vicki Minnick--Thomas Branigan Library, and Angelica Valenzuela--Dona Ana County Clerk's Office..

Immediately following, starting at noon in

Billy The Kid Play Performed In Rodeo, New Mexico

By David Thomas, Playwright & DACHS Member

The "Trial of Billy the Kid," a one-act play, was performed Saturday night, Aug 13, in the Chiricahua Desert Museum's Geronimo Events Center, in Rodeo, New Mexico. The event was sponsored by the Cochise County Historical Society and The Friends of Pat Garrett.

Members of The Friends of Pat Garrett and the Dona Ana County Historical Society who participated were: Dan Crow played Judge Warren Bristol; Karla Steen played Susan Ellen McSween; Sally Kading and Dan Aranda acted as stage hands.

The play setting was the Dona Ana County Courthouse, Mesilla, April 6, 1881. Billy was on trial for killing Sheriff William Brady in Lincoln on March 31, 1878. The charge was murder in the first degree, and the penalty for conviction was death by hanging.

The venue in Rodeo was packed with about 200 in the audience. The event included a short concert of Western songs by Dan Crow, like the one he gave at the DACHS May meeting, and a BBQ dinner beforehand.

The play fictionalizes the real event to the extent that Billy the Kid testified on his own behalf and he had several witnesses testifying in his defense. In the

real trial, Billy did not testify and he had no witnesses standing for him.

The prosecuting attorney was Simon B. Newcomb, the newly appointed District Attorney for Third Judicial District. The attorney for the defense was Albert Jennings Fountain. The Judge was Warren Henry Bristol, district judge.

Among the witnesses testifying for the defense were Albert Howe, Florencio Gonzales, Susan Ellen McSween, and John B. Wilson.

*Albert Howe was in the posse led by Buck Morton that chased after John H. Tunstall on February 18, 1878 and murdered him in cold blood.

*Florencio Gonzales was the Lincoln County Probate Judge. He testified to recovering Tunstall's body the day after his murder.

*Susan Ellen McSween testified to events she witnessed in Lincoln, including the funeral for Tunstall held in her sitting room in her house in Lincoln (she said she lined Tunstall's coffin with Parisian black felt that she tore from her finest dresses).

*John B. Wilson was the Lincoln Justice of the Peace. He testified that he issued warrants for the arrest of Sheriff Brady and Deputy

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Karla Steen, a DACHS member, immersed herself in the role of Susan Ellen McSween in the David Thomas production with the best costume on the stage.



The cast for "The Trial of Billy the Kid."

Play of Billy The Kid's Trial a Great Succss - continued from page 2

Sheriff Hindman on February 19, 1878 for murdering Tunstall. Billy was carrying those warrants when Brady was killed.

Billy's defense was that he had not killed Sheriff Brady, and, further, it was the cold-blooded murder of Tunstall that produced to the violence in Lincoln the day that Brady was killed.

The jury deliberated for only a few moments before finding Billy guilty of the first degree murder of Sheriff Brady (the script compelled their decision).

Judge Bristol, quite happily, issued the following sentence:

"That on the day aforesaid, between the hours of nine of the clock in the forenoon and three of the clock in the afternoon, he, the said William Bonny, alias Kid, alias William Antrim, be taken from such prison to some suitable and convenient place of execution within said County of Lincoln, by the Sheriff of said County, and that then and there on that day and between the aforesaid hours thereof by the Sheriff of said County of Lincoln, he, the said William Bonny, alias Kid, alias William Antrim, be hanged

by the neck until his body be dead."

Cast list:

Bailiff -- *Rick Eldridge*

Warren Bristol, Judge -- *Dan Crow*

Simon Newcomb, Prosecuting Attorney -- *Bill Cavaliere*

Albert J. Fountain, Defense Counsel -- *Howard Topoff*

John Webster Southwick, Sheriff -- *Bob Ashley*

Henry Antrim (Billy the Kid) -- *Craig McEwan*

Saturnino Baca, Prosecution Witness -- *Al Bammann*

Bonifacio Baca, Prosecution Witness -- *Jesse Bradfield*

Jacob B. Mathews, Prosecution Witness -- *Kim Kvamme*

Albert Howe, Defense Witness -- *Wayne Fralie*

Florencio Gonzales, Defense Witness -- *Ray Mendez*

Susan Ellen McSween, Defense Witness -- *Karla Steen*

John B. Wilson, Defense Witness -- *Doug Hocking*

William L. Rynerson, Defense Witness -- *Reed Pete*

Newspaper Reporter -- *Bud Johnson*

The Chiricahua Desert Museum is located at NM Highway 80 and Portal Road just north of Rodeo. It is open everyday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. - closed on Thanksgiving and Christmas. It is noted for holding the largest collection of herpetological wildlife art in the world.

Kick-Off Event For Project To Digitize Amador Records

On September 9, the NMSU Library will celebrate the award of a \$350,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities for a three-year project to digitize approximately 15,000 pages of correspondence in the Amador Family Papers.

The Amadors were an influential Mexican American family who played an important role in the early development of Las Cruces and the Mesilla Valley. The voluminous family papers, dating 1860-1940s,

are held in the NMSU Library Archives and Special Collections. The correspondence, nearly all in Spanish, illuminates the personal struggles, triumphs, and day-to-day lives of a Mexican family as they navigate a bi-cultural and bi-national life on the U.S.-

Mexico border during an important period of our region's development.

The kick-off celebration will be held Friday, September 9, 3-5 p.m. in the Zuhl Library, third floor. Speakers will discuss the Amador story, details about the collection, and the work that will be accomplished with the grant.

Dr. Katherine Massoth, historian at the University of New Mexico, and Dr. Daniel Villa, linguist at New Mexico State University, will highlight their research projects using the Amador correspondence. Samples of the Amador letters will be on display.

Refreshments and music will be provided. The public is invited to attend and reservations are not necessary. Free parking will be available in NMSU parking lots 45, 50, and 17 south. Lots 45 and 50 are the large ones southwest of Corbit - between it and Zuhl Library. Lot 17 is a small one just on the south side of Frenger Food Court.

YOU ARE INVITED



BE BOLD. Shape the Future.
NMSU Library



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE
HUMANITIES

Notes -----

✎ TRINITY SITE - If you are making plans to attend the next Trinity Site open house, be warned that it is not the first Saturday in October as it has been for decades. The missile range has decided to move it to later in the month so it doesn't bump up against the annual budget issues in Washington - will there be money to keep the government open, etc? This open house will be on October 15. Everything else is the same.

✎ FORT SELDEN - Join Ranger Mike and Ranger Flo for a guided tour of Fort Selden Historic Site. Although these tours can be scheduled by calling the site, they have added a few ranger-led tours to the fall calendar. All you have to do is show up! The tour is included in general admission. \$5/adult. Free for children 16 and under.

They definitely recommend water, a hat, and closed toed shoes. The tours begin at 11 a.m. on September 3rd and 24th. Also, there are tours on October 15 and 22.

✎ FARM & RANCH MUSEUM - New Mexico author Carol Potenza is the speaker for the Sept. 8 Culture Series presentation at the New Mexico Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum.

The lecture, hosted by the Friends of the Museum, begins at 7 p.m. and admission is free. The title of Carol's talk is: **Write What You Know: Creating Mysteries in a Historically Rich and Culturally Diverse State.**

New Mexico, with its scenic beauty, depth of history, and cultural diversity, provides a fertile field for writers, from Fabiola Cabeza de Baca to Tony Hillerman to Rudolfo Anaya. Writing, whether fiction or nonfiction, novels or newspaper articles, takes hard work and dedication. Authors spend countless hours on research, character creation, plots, editing, marketing, and publishing their work.

Carol will talk about her process, the ghost stories woven through her novels, how her scientific background shapes her stories, and the unwritten rules that can have a profound effect on a writing career.

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