



NEWSLETTER

December 2016



Doña Ana County Historical Society

Notes From Our Vice President. . .

By Kimberly Miller

It has been one year since I became a member of the Historical Society. During this time, I have been impressed with the dedication of the Board members and with the variety of presentations we have at our monthly meetings (and most of these were set up before I became VP, so I can't take the credit!) Each of the speakers has shared insights and information that is not generally available, and they have all been fascinating.

I look forward to the coming year and anticipate another great year of presentations and of getting to know you. Thank you all for your support!

Farolitos or Luminarias?

We are all familiar with the small paper bags filled with sand and a candle that are used to light walkways and roadsides during the Christmas season. I have always referred to them as luminarias and only recently learned that they are also called farolitos. (The electric plastic ones are humorously called bagolitos.)

The northern half of New Mexico uses the term farolitos more commonly, while southern New Mexico is more apt to use luminarias. Historically, it seems that northern New Mexico may be right this time. According to the New Mexico History Museum "In a December 3, 1590 journal entry, Spanish explorer Gaspar Costaço de Sosa mentioned the small bonfires his cohorts had lit to guide a scout back to camp." De Sosa referred to these small bonfires as luminarias.

In his book, *The Farolitos of Christmas*, Rudolfo Anaya used 'farolitos' for the small paper lanterns and 'luminarias' to describe the small bonfires of stacked wood.

(When I saw the book title, I was really hoping it was going to be about bonfires!)

Farolito translates as "little lantern," and luminaria as "festival light." Luminaria bonfires are lit in the mountain villages and along the roadways of northern New Mexico in order "to welcome visitors and to commemorate holiday activities." Their use has spread throughout the United States, both for decorative purposes and as memorial vigils.

Whether you call them farolitos or luminarias, they are beautiful reminders of all we are blessed to celebrate. Merry Christmas!

Miscellaneous - Important Stuff

Awards Luncheon - On page 3 you will find the reservation form for the annual awards luncheon to be held at the Double Eagle on Jan. 28. The cost is \$26.50 and the menu will be cheese enchiladas and/or roast beef with all the trimmings. If you joined us in the past, you will remember that there are lots of salads and great desserts to go along with the entrees.

Dues are due - Also on page 3 is a form for renewing your membership in the historical society. You can mail it in or bring your check to our next meeting.

Speakers - We have an interesting slate of speakers for the spring meetings starting in February. Our president, Jon Hunter, has been on sabbatical recently traveling to national historic places. He will be talking about his efforts. Jim Eckles will give a presentation on Camp Cody, the World War I training camp once located just northwest of Deming - it only existed for two years. Also speaking will be Mark Santiago and Annette Tombaugh Sitze.

The Joys of Doing Historical Research On the Web

By Jim Eckles

I've been working on an article for the next Southern New Mexico Historical Review on Camp Cody. The idea of a WWI training camp housing 30,000 troops in tiny Deming, N.M. intrigued me.

After I finished it, I needed photos for illustrations. Thankfully there are many available on line at places like the Library of Congress and state historical society websites. Took a few seconds to download - way better than doing it the old fashioned way with multiple letters and phone calls.

But the best source was the archive at the Deming Luna Mimbres Museum. They have lots of photos, some scanned and some stored in boxes and envelopes. The problem is that many of the photos are unidentified. Because they are all grouped under a Camp Cody label, one assumes that is where they are from.

Take this photo below. It is a pretty good image and I thought about using it. But there was no indication it was actually taken at Camp Cody.

I liked the tag line that these soldiers, with their mess kits out, are being served from the "slum wagon." So what does that mean?

Doing the research from the comfort of my home office, I quickly learned "slum" was slang for

slumgullion stew, a rich mix of meat and potatoes. Soldiers called their Army cooks "slum burners." Thus it follows that an Army field kitchen was called a "slum wagon."

Next there is the name of the photographer at the bottom right - W.H. Horne. I found him with a few mouse clicks. He had a studio in El Paso during World War I and photographed activities in our area. In fact, he was the first photographer to reach Columbus, N.M. after the Pancho Villa raid. He sold photos of the aftermath all over the country. At one point he was printing thousands of postcards a day. They were like the email of the day. Soldiers could write a short note and send a current photo home.

At this point it was looking like I had a Camp Cody photo. Then I enlarged it to read what was printed on the wagon. It says "8th Mass. F.K. 1." Oops. At first I thought it was probably the Massachusetts unit at Columbus that served with the New Mexico unit during 1916. But records posted on the web showed it was the 2nd Massachusetts Infantry at Columbus. It turns out the 8th Massachusetts was stationed at Camp Cotton in El Paso in 1916 during the great National Guard call up after the Villa raid.

In the end, I found the photo won't work but it didn't take weeks to figure it out and I learned a lot.



**You are invited to the Dona Ana County Historical Society's
Annual Awards Luncheon to be held
Saturday, January 28, 2017, Double Eagle Restaurant
On the Mesilla Plaza, 12:00 noon**

Seating for the Annual Awards Luncheon will begin at noon with the buffet lunch to be served at 12:15. The cost is \$26.50 per person payable in advance or at the door. For your convenience, a reservation form appears below. It includes spaces to list guests as needed. You may email your reservation to Susan Krueger at skrueger575@msn.com. Or, if you prefer, you may print it, fill it in and mail it to Susan Krueger c/o DACHS; P.O. Box 16045; Las Cruces, NM 88004.

The installation of Board Members and the Awards program will take place following lunch. If you have questions, please call Susan (575) 525-0654.

RESERVATION FORM DUE BY MONDAY, JANUARY 23, 2017

Name _____ Name _____

Name _____ Name _____

Address: _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: _____

\$26.50 per person TOTAL enclosed

Will pay at the door

**If you haven't already renewed your membership for 2017,
Please renew your Membership Today. See form below.**

Cut along dotted line-----

Doña Ana County Historical Society, P. O. Box 16045, Las Cruces, NM 88004-6045

DACHS Membership Form

Please renew/enroll my/our membership in the Doña Ana County Historical Society. Memberships are active for the calendar year of enrollment and fees are deductible within legal limits for Federal and State income tax purposes. If you are unsure of your status or have questions regarding membership, please contact Susan Krueger, at 575 525-0654.

Annual Membership/Sponsorship Rates

Individual \$20 Family \$25 Student \$8 Contributor \$40 Benefactor \$150 Life \$300

Southern New Mexico Historical Review Sponsorship \$50

Is this a change of information? Yes No A check for \$ _____ is enclosed. Date _____
Check # _____

Name(s) _____ Phone # _____

Address _____

E-mail address _____ Newsletter via E-mail Yes No

How would you like to receive your copy of the *Southern New Mexico Historical Review* (SNMHR)?
Printed Version Society Website Version PDF on CD Version



DACHS Historian Talks Genealogy

Sally Kading, left, talks to attendees after her presentation about the connection between history and genealogy.

Sally is the historical society's historian and is just coming off an effort, which she led, to digitize the Mesilla Valley's church records. Called the Mesilla Valley Pioneer Project, Sally and her volunteers have recorded the births, marriages and deaths of a huge number of Mesilla Valley residents from 1850 to 1900. Those records which were once hard to view, are now available to the public at Branigan Library's Genealogy Department.

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