



NEWSLETTER

January 2017

Doña Ana County Historical Society

It's Time For The Annual Awards Banquet

According to Historical Society records this will be our 50th Annual Awards Banquet. We seem to use the word "luncheon" as well. See the story about the first banquet below.

The banquet will be held on Jan. 28, starting at noon, in the Double Eagle Restaurant on the east side of the square in old Mesilla. It is time to make your reservation so we can provide the restaurant a firm count about a week before.

A reservation form is in this newsletter on page 3. You'll note the cost is \$26.50 and can be paid by check in advance or at the door.

The menu includes the following:

- ✧ Spinach Salad with Cranberries, Almonds and Feta Cheese
- ✧ Cucumber, Tomato, Onion Vinaigrette Salad
- ✧ Macaroni Salad
- ✧ Seasonal Fresh Vegetables

- ✧ Garlic Mashed Potatoes
- ✧ Green Chile Cheese Enchiladas
- ✧ Sliced Roast Beef w/ Bordelaise Wine Sauce
- ✧ Fresh Baked Rolls and Butter
- ✧ Ice Tea, Coffee and Water
- ✧ Chefs Assorted Dessert Table

As of the end of December, the awards to be given out during the luncheon include the following:

- ✧ Pat Garrett Murder Site - Old Timer's Award
- ✧ John Smith - Heritage Award
- ✧ New Las Cruces Plaza - Old Timer's Award
- ✧ Abandoned Picacho cemetery - Endangered Historic Property
- ✧ Friends of Fort Selden - Hall of Fame

If you have questions about the banquet or payment, please contact past president Susan Krueger. Her phone number and email address are included on the form on page 3.

DACHS Awards Began Half A Century Ago

According to Madeline Vessel's history of the early years of the DACHS, the Historical Society was formed in 1963 to save the vandalized and melting adobe that was Fort Selden. However, the DACHS was also born into the controversial era of Urban Renewal, a national program that greatly clashed with the society's goals.

The program was supposed to revitalize downtown by reviewing all buildings bounded by Picacho St., Lohman St., Campo St. and the Las Cruces lateral west of Water St. If structures didn't meet standards of appearance and structural soundness they were to be razed.

Former DACHS president J. Paul Taylor remembered going to a meeting representing the Historical Society. Later, he said, "I had to

speaking out for saving those buildings. It was a terribly emotional time."

To counter Urban Renewal's powerful push, the DACHS board of directors came up with a plan to identify historically significant buildings in advance of their demolition. They decided to hold a hall of fame banquet and create a publication to publicly recognize significant buildings and make a plea for their preservation. According to Vessel, the first Annual Hall of Fame Banquet was the DACHS's "public protest."

During banquet planning the board decided to create a few awards which became the basis for all the rest. Vessel said they, "decided that a building should be named as a Build-

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First Awards Banquet Set A High Standard

ing Worthy of Preservation, that another building should be named as a Building Adhering to Regional Architecture, and that a person should be named to the Hall of Fame.”

The banquet attracted 100 members and their guests. It was held in the Milton Student Center at NMSU. Charlotte Priestly delivered a speech entitled, “The Years Behind Us; The Year Ahead.”

This is how Vessel describes the various awards in her history “Two awards were given for buildings worthy of preservation. The first award went to the Nestor Armijo Home. The first two-story home in Las Cruces, it reflects the best in both indigenous construction and Victorian design. Spared by Urban Renewal, it remains on the corner of Main Street and Lohman to this day.

“The second award went to the Nelson Funeral Home which was formerly the home of Martin Lohman, the first Mayor of Las Cruces. The home, flush with the sidewalk, was in a U-shape around a central courtyard. When the award was given, “the mellowed vigas and latillas in the funeral home chapel were exposed and the original fireplaces and mantels were still in place.” This building was eventually razed by Urban Renewal.

“Taylor remembered in 1994 how devastated he was by the loss of the Nelson Funeral Home: *I always said, ‘Please bury me from Nelson’s Funeral Home, because it’s so homey.’ It was a home, and it had latillas. It didn’t bother me that when the box was open, dirt would fall on my corpse. That’s part of it. The Nelsons always seemed to do the right thing to acknowledge people’s sadness. There was always compassion. I tell you, when that house went, it just really got to me.*

“Awards for buildings adhering to regional architecture were given to two buildings: The Thomas Branigan Memorial Library and the Ernst and Eugenia Artschwager home. In the pueblo design and now known as the Branigan Cultural Center, the Thomas Branigan Memorial Library was built downtown during the administration of Mayor J. B. Newell in 1935. The Ernst and Eugenia Artschwager Home was built in 1946 in territorial design with twenty-four inch walls, and vigas and latillas in the roof. The vigas, latillas, and front doorway were originally part of the old George Griggs home and museum in

Mesilla. The Artschwager home has an exceptional entry way. According to J. Paul Taylor, “It is the perfect territorial Las Cruces area home.”

“The first person to be named to the Hall of Fame was Elizabeth Armendariz who had kept things which belonged to her family and had started the Gadsden Museum. Taylor remembered in 1994:

“When we honored Mrs. Armendariz, she was very surprised. Her family came and sang to her. They were a wonderful group. . . . They had wonderful voices. It was a rejoicing kind of moment. Because there was so much wonderful feeling at that banquet, the banquet became an annual DACHS event.”

Dues & Support Of The Southern New Mexico Historical Review

Yep, it is dues time again. As you fill out your renewal form found on page 3, please note there is a block to check and make a \$50 donation to help publish the *Southern New Mexico Historical Review*. If we get it in time, your name will be listed as a supporter in the Review and the awards banquet program. This issue of the Review looks like it will be a fat one and will be more expensive to print than in the past. Your help will be appreciated. THANKS

A Note From Our Vice President

By Kimberly Miller

As I look out the window, I wonder if I’m writing this greeting for a winter newsletter or one in the spring! This may turn out to be our shortest winter in many years, but DACHS does not have a shortage of great events planned for this year. First up is our Annual Awards Banquet on January 28th, which you can read about in this newsletter. Remarkably, it is our 50th Awards Banquet, so be sure to attend this once-in-a-lifetime event!

During our Spring Speaker series, some of the topics we’ll have the opportunity to learn about are Clyde Tombaugh and the WWI training camp by Deming. There will be a field trip, which is in the planning stages, as well as the regular opportunity to visit with others who share your love of history and learning.

Wishing each of you a wonderful 2017!

**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

News Concerning Historical Society Publications

First of all we have to give a big THANKS to Doyle Piland who is stepping down as editor of the monthly DACHS newsletter and designer of the *Southern New Mexico Historical Review*. Not only was Doyle responsible for making sure there was a product for you to see, he is the one who digitized the past Reviews, Madeline Vessel's history and the last several years of newsletters so they could be posted on the DACHS website. That is why he was inducted into the society's Hall of Fame at last year's banquet.

THANK YOU Doyle.

Keith Whelpley is back as the volunteer editor of the *Southern New Mexico Historical Review* this year. Keith is taking time from his busy publishing business to help us out.

Finally, Jim Eckles has volunteered to take over Doyle's tasks on the monthly newsletters and the design of the Review. Jim is also our webmaster which is a nice fit for our publications since we post them all there at: <http://www.donaanacountyhistsoc.org>

If you have any comments, suggestions or criticisms of the newsletter or Review or the website, you can reach Jim at the society's email address which is: 19dachs63@gmail.com or give him a call at home: 575-521-8771

Also, if you have any contributions to the newsletter or the Review, get hold of Jim and discuss it with him.

THESE WERE OUR CORPORATE SPONSORS FOR 2016. IF YOU WISH TO JOIN THEM IN 2017, LET A BOARD MEMBER KNOW.

Thanks to our 2016 Corporate Sponsors

We encourage our members to patronize their businesses

**Double Eagle Restaurant & Peppers Cafe
On The Mesilla Plaza
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www.donaanacountyhistsoc.org

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