



# NEWSLETTER

May 2009

Doña Ana County Historical Society

## President's Comments

By: George Helfirch

Our monthly meetings/programs have been well attended with a variety of very good speakers. Our most recent speaker, Lynda Sánchez has offered to host a tour of Fort Stanton, some of which is not yet generally open to the public and George Hackler is working on the details.

Doyle Piland has created Compact Discs (CDs) of the SNMHR Volumes XIV and XV in PDF format and is going to start doing the same for the earlier issues that are out of print. We need several people to proof read the resulting discs as the scanning process that creates the electronic document has trouble dealing with some things like hyphenated words.

May will be our last of the Spring series of meetings as we do not meet during the Summer months of June, July, and August. We will start meetings and issuing the newsletter again in September.

The election of new board members will be held in November, so if you are interested in serving on the board, please let a board member know.

Be sure to see the information concerning the field trip to the Magoffin House covered elsewhere in the newsletter. Have a great summer, stay safe and stay healthy. ■

## Spring Field Trip

We have scheduled a tour of the Magoffin House in El Paso for Saturday, May 23, 2009. We will meet at the NMSU parking lot just east of the Pan Am center so that people wishing to carpool can be accommodated. We will meet at 10am. Bring a sack lunch and plan to eat at the museum in El Paso before the tour for which there is a nominal charge of \$2.00. DACHS will provide water and several coolers with ice for drinks. ■



Bob Alexander, speaker for the Historical Society's meeting on May 21, 2009

Award winning author Bob Alexander, a native Texan and veteran lawman, brings forth a fresh practical and no nonsense perspective highlighting the realities of life-and-death during the Southwest's turbulent frontier period. After a policing career that began in 1965 and retirement as a special Agent with the U.S. Treasury Department, Bob taught Criminal Justice courses at an area community college while actively pursuing his interest in writing Old West nonfiction. Well known for his lively writing style and prodigious research, Bob is the author of nine highly acclaimed books and numerous articles. Now, continuing his historical sleuthing full time, he resides in central Texas ranch country near Maypearl southwest of Fort Worth.

Bob's *Lynch Ropes and Long Shots* is a fascinating factual tale of the wild and woolly West. The holdup of a Southern Pacific train in southwestern New Mexico Territory on November 24, 1883, has all the ingredients of an old fashion spaghetti Western. Best of all it's a legitimate history, backed up by a plethora of primary source documents housed in the New Mexico State Archives in Santa Fe. ■

## Calendar

Thursday, May 21, 2009

Bob Alexander - *Deming Train Robbery*

May 23, 2009 Saturday 10:00am

Field Trip to **Magoffin House**, El Paso

June, July & August – Summer Break – **No meetings**

September 17, 2009

Berndt Kuhn – *Apache Depredations* \*

October 15, 2009

Tom Sullivan – Research on *Demise of Billy the Kid* \*

November, 19, 2009

Lynda Sanchez – *Eve Ball*

December – **No Meeting**

\* Not firm at this time

### Martha Shipman Andrews At Large Board Member and Coeditor of the SNMHR



A graduate of Wellesley College, Martha Shipman Andrews received her Masters Degree in Library and Information Science from the University of Pittsburgh. She is presently University Archivist and assistant professor at New Mexico State University, Las Cruces. She recently edited the award-winning book, *THE WHOLE DAMNED WORLD: NEW MEXICO AGGIES AT WAR, 1941-1945*. ■

**Award Series** - This third in a series of articles from the Banquet Program features one of the awards presented at the 2009 Banquet.

### Noteworthy Renovation-2009



**The Gregory & Linda Gendall Home**

Doreteo and Juliana Alderete established a farm, one of the earliest in the area, in 1849. Originally part of Mexico, and after the Mexican-American war, a territory of the U.S., it was not until 1907 that President Teddy Roosevelt signed into law the legal ownership of such land claims in what was called the Doña Ana Bend Colony. The Alderete farmhouse, now the Gendall home at 1107 N. Reymond St. in Las Cruces, was originally just one room. Several rooms have been added since that time and many owners have lived and renovated the original house. Evidence of its original dirt roof came to light when Greg and Linda renovated the home after buying it in 2004.

Through the years it may have served as a mortuary, an apartment house, an artist's studio, and perhaps even the residence of a ghost or two. The Gendall's have continued the renovation process, repairing and replacing the original tin ceiling and floor tiles and reinforcing existing adobe walls. They have also modernized the home with new heating and cooling systems, room additions, a new brick patio and exterior landscaping and iron gates. ■



**Different view of the Gregory & Linda Gendall Home**

## Amador Status

Nearly five months ago The City of Las Cruces awarded a contract to the Albuquerque architectural firm of Kells & Craig to develop a plan for the preservation and adaptive reuse of what was originally the Amador Hotel. The original objective was to develop a history museum in the Amador as part of the Las Cruces Museum System. After conducting a number of interviews here in late January, the study team presented a preliminary report to the City and the Amador Museum Foundation on April 8<sup>th</sup>. While the study team found that the building, considering its age, is basically sound and that there is universal feeling that the building should be preserved, there does not appear to be sufficient support in the community for its use as a history museum as such. Instead, there appears to be a possible need for a facility that can provide a community meeting place (receptions, weddings, celebrations, etc.), functions it provided in the past, that can also incorporate the historical significance of the hotel in its glory days. This conclusion results from a number of contributing factors including, existing or planned museum projects competing for funding, limited City resources, and the recent creation of a small history display in the Branigan Cultural Center, to name a few. In an attempt to resolve the issue related to where we go from here, the museum planning contingent of the study team will conduct a workshop on April 23<sup>rd</sup> to gather additional information. If you have any thoughts, concerns or comments, please submit them to us at DACHS, P.O. Box 16045, Las Cruces, NM 88004, Attn.: Amador Comments. ■

## SNMHR Future Plans

At the April 7<sup>th</sup> DACHS Board meeting, it was decided, starting with the next issue (2010 – Volume XVII), to proceed with plans to distribute the Society's Review electronically by placing it on the internet as well as on the DACHS web site for the reasons presented in last months newsletter. In addition to being available by computer, it will be made available in printed format to those members unable, or not desiring to access it electronically. It will also be available on a Compact Disc for continued distribution, although it will probably be necessary to charge for that and the printed version. ■

### SNMHR Volume XVI Distribution

On April 13<sup>th</sup>, Volume XVI of the Review was mailed to all members of record. There were approximately 85 copies of the Reviews mailed at the only rate available which is first class. The much lower media rate only applies when multiple copies, 3 to 4 or more, are mailed. If you have not received a copy, either at the Annual Banquet, a monthly meeting, or in the mail, please call 522-3477. ■

### Scholarship Endowment Donors

The Society and the Education Committee wish to thank the following donors to the *Mary and J. Paul Taylor Scholarship Endowment Fund*. This scholarship, for \$1,200, is given annually to a NMSU History student.

Lee Aguilar, Chris Buethe, Robert & Xandra Church, Gary & Nancy Goodger, George & Alice Helfrich, Alex Keatts, Roger & Celine Rothenmaier, Morris & Lorraine Southward, J. Paul Taylor, The Johnson Controls Foundation, and DACHS. ■

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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 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 the Treasurer, Xandy Church, at 526-9774 (May-Sept. 575-536-9728) or the President, George Helfrich, at 522-3477.

### Annual Membership/Sponsorship Rates

Individual \$20  Family \$25  Student \$8  Contributor \$40  Benefactor \$150  Life \$300   
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Now is the time to be working on that article about your favorite Southern New Mexico character, place or family member. Or maybe you have been meaning to record your memories of growing up in the Mesilla Valley or a particular event that you participated in that would be of interest to someone fifty or a hundred years from now. If any of this caused you to think "I should do that", then contact Rick Hendricks our Editor at (575) 650-3205 or email him at rhend03@comcast.net. For more information concerning the Review go to our Web site at [www.donaanacountyhistsoc.org](http://www.donaanacountyhistsoc.org). ■

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**We wish to thank our  
Corporate Sponsors**

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**Remember Snow? New Mexico  
A&MA (NMSU) circa 1950's - Photo  
courtesy NMSU PSL.**



**Lynda Sánchez with a Compass she discussed in her presentation**

Lynda Sánchez was our speaker for the April 16 meeting. Lynda gave a very informative and interesting talk on Fort Stanton. She covered the history of Fort Stanton over the years, and chronicled the ultimately successful efforts that took place to save it from becoming a housing development or other such uses. She discussed the ongoing preservation and restoration projects that are taking place, and plans for the future.

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