



# NEWSLETTER

September 2011

## President's Comments

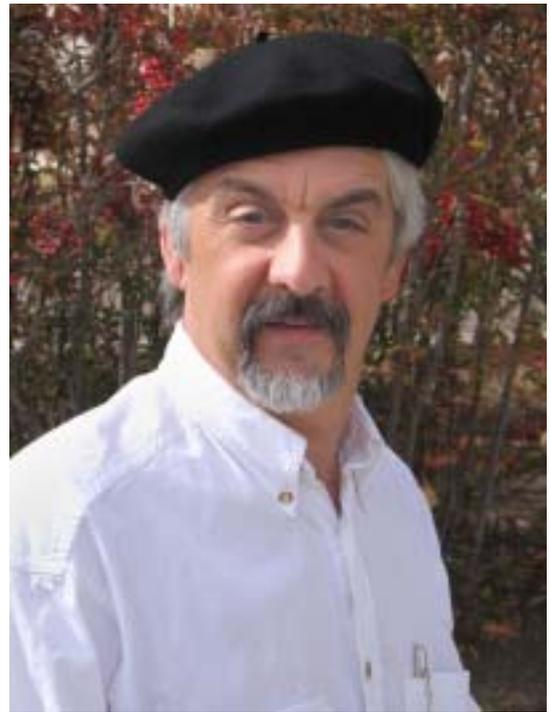
By: George Hackler

Summer play time is over, families are returning from vacations, school has started. We are planning the fall membership meetings, and gathering nominations for this years awards, and looking for ideas to mark and celebrate our states centennial anniversary coming up in five months.

Membership survey indicated that folks wanted more field trips so the Board approved two during the summer hiatus. The first field trip, on June 11th, was a visit to Fort Cummings. For readers that might not know, Fort Cummings was a large fortification near Cooke's Spring just north of Highway 26 between Hatch and Deming. The fort was established in 1863 to quell Indian attacks in the area.

The second field trip was a guided tour and lecture at the Saint Joseph's Mission church in Mescalero, NM. On August 13 members and guests gathered at the mission to hear Mary Serna share the history and explain the restoration of the church. Mary conducted a tour around the interior pointing out the unique blend of Apache and Christian imagery, all the while connecting it with the life of Father Albert Braun, the man who made it all happen. Newsletter editor, Doyle Piland will have more on the summer's trips later.

Our first membership meeting this fall will be September 22nd at 7:00pm in the auditorium at Good Samaritan. Our program speaker will be Rick Hendricks, on the subject of Fabian Garcia and Roy Nakayama and the research and development of the most famous chile in the world (according to our President). You may remember Rick while he was here at NMSU and gave several excellent programs to our membership meetings and was the Editor of the *Southern New Mexico Historical Review* for several years. Rick is now the State Historian. We are most fortunate that he can take time to come down and share his latest research with us. ■



**State Historian Rick Hendricks, the speaker for the Society's September 22nd Membership Meeting**

## Fort Cummings Field Trip

*Editor's Note: As George Hackler noted, on June 11th several Society members gathered at the Pan Am Center on the NMSU campus, loaded in our modern day wagon train and headed to Fort Cummings. After traveling up I-25 to Hatch, then along State Highway 26 for about 31 miles, we turned right then very shortly turned on a lightly used trail which led us to Fort Cummings. Upon arrival, we disembarked from our wagon train and walked a short distance to the ruins of the old Overland Stage Station, where George began explaining some of the history of the area. I have taken his notes and with some adaptive editing I'll include the first of the information*

**See Field Trip on Page 2**

## Calendar

Thursday, September 22, 2011 @ 7:00 pm

**Rick Hendricks;**

on the subject of Fabian Garcia and Roy Nakayama and the research and development of the most famous chile in the world.

Thursday, October 20, 2011

**Jim Eckles;**

speaking on the Doc Noss Treasure Hunt on White Sands Missile Range.

Thursday, November 17, 2011

**Irene Oliver Lewis;**

speaking on the History of the Las Cruces Public Schools System.

All meetings of the Society are normally at 7:00pm on the third Thursday of the months of Feb. - May and Sept - Nov. in the Good Samaritan Auditorium at 3011 Buena Vida Circle.

### Field Trip from Page 1

*below. The remainder will be included in later newsletters:*



Some of the Society members on the Field Trip, standing among the ruins of the Overland Stage Station, listen as George Hackler (arrow) talks about the history of the Fort Cummings area. Note the modern wagon train in the background.

Water, water, water, it's all about water

A few hundred yards to the west of the Stage Station, there was a marsh fed by a year round spring flow.

The surface flow all but ceased when the railroad boxed in the spring to collect water for locomotives in 1881. The black tank you see by the railroad stored the spring water. The spring house is hidden in the mesquite growth

The area around the Stage Station ruins is covered with evidence of continued and long Indian occupation. Long before the Europeans came, the Indians used the water source as evidenced by the many bed rock grinding holes, shelters, pot sherds and petroglyphs. From about 200 AD to about 1250 AD the Mimbres branch of the Mogollon people occupied the springs. The evidence indicates a gradual and orderly withdrawal. The lack of fortifications indicates a long and peaceful occupation. The Apache showed up about 1400-1500. The Spanish showed up shortly thereafter. Starting in 1780, Juan Baptista de Anza, Governor of New Mexico initiated a number of abortive attempts to find a trade road between Santa Fe and Sonora, Most of them passed thru here.

In 1800 Indians led Col. Carrasco to the rich copper deposits that would become Santa Rita. Others would develop the mines and have to build the fortress to protect the miners from marauding Indians. The traffic to and from the mines, immigrants, mountain men heading to the mine would pass this way.

The Mormon Battalion came this way over the winter 1846-47, on their way to California. By the time the Battalion reached here, it was made up of 339 men, 4 women, 15 wagons and a large herd of cattle and sheep. They were building a wagon road to support General Steven Watts Kearny and the Army of the West on their drive to take California during the war with Mexico. Kearny, in a great hurry, left his supply wagons on the river road and departed the river just below present day T or C. Led by Kit Carson, he struck out across the Black Range to Santa Rita. Phillip St George Cooke, leading the Mormon Battalion, aided by scout Jean Baptiste Charbonneau, (*Charbonneau was the little baby that Sacajawea carried to the Pacific Ocean with Lewis and Clark*) picked up the wagons but could not follow Kearny over the Black Range and so moved further south departing the river road just north of Garfield at Loma Parda (Grey Hill). Cooke arrived here at the springs on the 16th of November, 1846. He found a muddy marsh surrounded by reeds and tules. The next day they moved a few miles through

**See Fort Cummings on Page 4**

## 2011 Award Series

At the Annual Banquet held the 29th of January, the Society's Awards Committee presented several awards. With this issue, we continue featuring some photos and the award stories for various people and/or places honored with awards.

### ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDING

*This category recognizes a building distinguished by its age and historical significance, which may include a noteworthy architectural style.*

#### The Provencio House, Mesilla

Located on the west side of Calle del Arroyo between Calle de Parian and Calle de Santiago in Mesilla, the Provencio house is listed on the New Mexico Register of Cultural Properties as a "contributing" structure within the Mesilla Historic District. It is a rambling, unplastered adobe situated on a large lot just east of the Acequia Madre (the main ditch).

The rooms closest to the ditch are the oldest, probably dating to the 1850's. An adobe vernacular with elements of the unadorned Territorial style, the building appears endangered as a result of abandonment and neglect, with one wall of the façade already down. The Architectural Awards Committee identified the building as the former residence of Dan Butler, now deceased.

Both the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the New Mexico Heritage Preservation Alliance annually list endangered sites. When successful, a listing provides educational and advocacy tools that help property owners, citizens and public officials to focus on finding ways to address threats to historic resources. It is the hope of the Architectural Awards Committee that the Provencio property will be eligible for a Noteworthy Restoration Award in the very near future. ■



Marcie Palmer at the Historical Society information table that she arranged to have at the Salsa Festival held on Sunday, 29 August. The Festival was held on the newly completed north end of the Down Town Mall.

-----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 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 Hackler, at 521-4458.

### Annual Membership/Sponsorship Rates

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## Fort Cummings from Page 2

yonder canyon (Cooke's Canyon) to the other side of the hills and camped at Frying Pan Draw, where the water was cleaner.

A few years later, 49ers would use this road pursuing dreams of riches in the hills of California. Some of the 49ers would come by ship to the coast of Texas, then across Texas by way of San Antonio to El Paso. They made their way up river on the old Camino Real thru Doña Ana and on to the river crossing at San Diego (Tonuco). The trail followed the west side of the river to Santa Barbara, just north of present day Hatch and then turned west to intercept Cooke's wagon road to here (Cooke's Spring).

**To be continued in the October 2011 Newsletter.**



**Doug Hamilton after his talk and PowerPoint slide show at our 19 May 2011 membership meeting**

At our 19 May 2011 meeting, the program was Doug Hamilton who gave a talk and slide show on "The Apache Kid" a highly respected First Sergeant of Scouts with the Army. Unfortunately, in 1887 he and other scouts were in-

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involved in a fracas at the army post at San Carlos, Arizona Territory. They were arrested, tried in court in Globe, and Kid was unjustly found guilty of assault with intent to commit murder

In his presentation Doug described events leading up to the trial, and discussed the escape, the events that occurred afterward, and what became of the Kid. Images of the principal participants and the escape site were shown

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