



# NEWSLETTER

## February 2017

Doña Ana County Historical Society

### Annual Awards Banquet Honors Many

By John Hunner, President

On January 27, the DACHS held its annual luncheon and awards ceremony at the Double Eagle. This was the 50th time that we have honored the people and places important to the history of the Mesilla Valley.

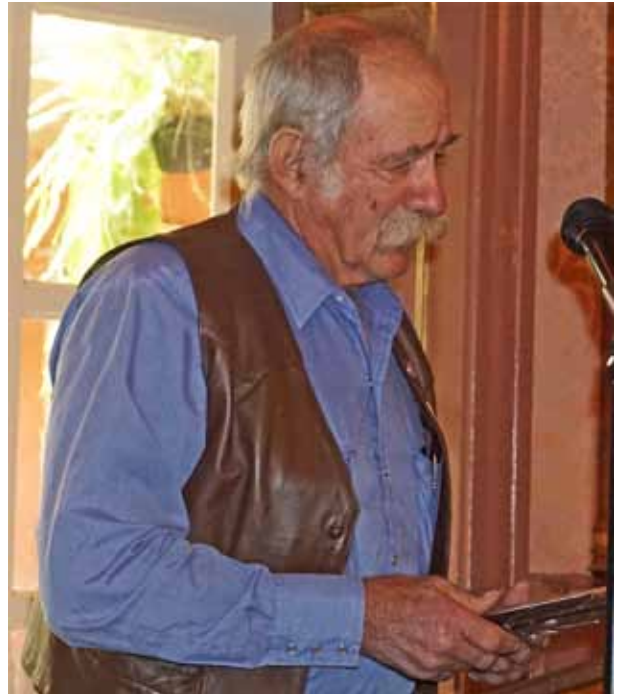


Andy Hume, left, accepts the Old Timer's Award from Jon Hunner on behalf of the city of Las Cruces for the Plaza de Las Cruces.

As you read in the last newsletter, the DACHS started in 1963 to help save Fort Selden and in 1967, began the tradition of holding an annual meeting and award ceremony. I have to give a tip of the hat to Madeleine Vessel's history on the beginnings of the DACHS which I used in my opening remarks at this year's luncheon.

In addition to the awards announced in last month's newsletter, we also recognized Dr. Joseph Sanchez for his article on Don Juan de Onate in this year's *Southern New Mexico Historical Review* as well as thanked Doyle and Lutisha Piland for their work over the years with the society and this newsletter.

The luncheon launched the new year with good food and good friends, and we look forward to seeing you at our upcoming lectures on the 3rd Thursday of each month.



John Smith thanks the Historical Society after being inducted into its Hall of Fame. He said his work with Friends of Ft. Selden is about honoring those who have gone before.



Doyle Piland, Sara Wagner and Lutisha Piland pose for photos after lunch.

**More Photos On Page 3**

# First 2017 Program Will Look At History Of NMSU

Born and raised in the Albuquerque area, Santiago Martinez moved to Cruces to attend New Mexico State University. He received his B.A. in History and is now in his first semester of Graduate School. He is pursuing a Master's in Public History and concurrently earning a Certificate in Museum Studies.

Santi is very interested in New Mexico History and has researched the origins and development of public funding in New Mexico's education system, particularly how some of these processes shaped NMSU's progression and development. His presentation will cover the growth and transformation of

New Mexico College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts into New Mexico State University, as well as some of the challenges that were faced along the way.

Please join us to hear Santi speak on "Extensive Efforts Towards Extension Education: the Early History of the New Mexico College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts."

**FEB. 16 AT 7 P.M.**  
**GOOD SAM AUDITORIUM**

## Lyon-Bowman Letters Promise A Look Into The Local 1880s

By Jim Eckles

On November 21, the historical society received an email from Curtis Hunt up in Albuquerque. He said, "I have recently completed transcribing a large volume of letters that may be of interest to the Las Cruces historical society. They were written during the period of 1882 through 1889 by William Lyon and Corie Bowman, early residents of Mesilla and Las Cruces. If you are interested, I would like to send you a copy."

I said yes and he forwarded the two PDF files containing the letters. He gave us permission to share the files with others, so the plan is to post the two volumes of letters on the DACHS website sometime this month so anyone can access them.

At first, the letters between the two were sporadic but in April 1882, William moved to Albuquerque and the letters started flowing almost daily. The letters do mention local events and people, but they are also love letters that tell a more intimate story.

Corie and William were then married on Sept. 14, 1882 and the new couple moved to Albuquerque. For a while Corie returned to Mesilla for long stretches to be with her family. During these periods, the letters resumed. Unfortunately, only the letters from William survive.

After five years in Albuquerque, the couple moved south but took up residence in Las Cruces.

According to Hunt, the letters were first transcribed from the originals in the 1960's by Corie Connell, the granddaughter of William and Corie. During 2015 and 2016, Hunt manually entered Corie Connell's typewritten transcriptions into Microsoft

Word files and compared them to the original letters, correcting a number of mistakes and omissions that were made in the original transcription. He also added a number of comments, clarifications and identifications to the transcriptions.

Also, Curtis mentioned the original letters were still in the family and were looking for a good home. We were able to put the family in touch with Dennis Daily, the new head of Archives and Special Collections at the NMSU Library. Arrangements are being made for the university to house the originals.

To whet your appetite, here is a tidbit from Corie's letter sent on April 18, 1882. You can see Curtis' quite useful annotations to identify people: "*Last night we were all at Judge Bristol's and had a very pleasant time. If I did not intend not to put a word of sentiment in this letter I would tell you that I missed you woefully. The party didn't seem at all complete without you. Others missed you too. Mrs. Bristol asked for you and said she hoped you would come down and be there with us. A good many of those she invited were sick, but still it was quite a company as there were nineteen there, including Judge and Mrs. Bristol. Mr. Parker [Frank W. Parker] went with us, making ten from our house, then there was Ida [Jones] and Sammie [Jones], Mr. Lane [Nathan D. Lane] and Jennie [Casad], Mr. Fountain [Albert J. Fountain] and Alberto [Albert Fountain, Jr.], and Mr. Bond [Ira Bond]. I was very much surprised to see the latter gentleman enter as I imagined they ignored his existence entirely. I wonder what he will have in the "News" next week. [Ira Bond was publisher of the Mesilla News].*

## More Photos From The 50th Annual Awards Banquet



*Southern New Mexico Historical Review editor Keith Whelpley announces his selection of Dr. Joseph Sanchez for the Hiram Hadley Award.*



*Alice Pinkston thanks the Historical Society on behalf of the Friends of Ft. Selden for the Heritage Award.*



*David Thomas, left, accepts the Pasajero Del Camino Real award from Jon Hunner for "Screen With A Voice: A History of Motion Pictures in Las Cruces."*



*Margaret and Buddy Ritter enjoyed the company.*



*Friends of Pat Garrett accept the Old Timer's Award for the Pat Garrett Murder Site. From the left: Sally Kading, David Thomas, Susan Krueger, Frank Parrish, Karla Steen, Jon Hunner and Bob Gamboa. The group is attempting to get official recognition of the site in Alameda Arroyo before it disappears and the information is lost forever.*

# Does Our Newsletter Need Some Sort Of Name?

By Jim Eckles

One thing that struck me recently is that the Dona Ana County Historical Society's newsletter is simply called "Newsletter." It seems to me that is kind of like having a dog and calling it "dog."

I checked our online collection of DACHS newsletters which goes back to 2006, well before I joined, and the pub seems to always have been called "Newsletter." Old-timers, was it ever called anything else?

I also edit a joint newsletter for the missile range's Historical Foundation and the range's Pioneer Group. That newsletter, because it involves two organizations with similar goals, is called "Hands Across History." The Historical Society of New Mexico puts out a newsy item called "La Cronica Quarterly Newspaper."

I will admit other historical groups tend to be as straight forward as us. Los Alamos simply has "Los Alamos Newsletter" at the top of theirs. But you kind of expect that from a bunch of physicists

and mathematicians. The Socorro County Historical Society calls their publication "Membership News."

Soooo, I'm thinking, do we need a name for our newsletter other than "Newsletter?" If so, what are some possibilities? I'm thinking maybe "Southern New Mexico Historian" or maybe "Sandstorm Chronicle." How about "Dona Ana History Connections" or something really simple like our initials DACHS followed by the word "Bulletin" or "Report?"

If you think of a possible title for the newsletter, let me know what you have. You can email me at: 19dachs63@gmail.com or call me at 575-521-8771 or talk to me at the next program at Good Sam - I'll be the guy setting up the projector.

If you think "newsletter" is a perfectly reasonable title for a newsletter and changing would be a dumb idea, let me know that too.

**DON'T FORGET  
DUES ARE DUE**

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