

# NEWSLETTER

## March 2023

Doña Ana County Historical Society

### March's Presentation By CSTi On Their Ground Penetrating Radar Work At Old Picacho Cemetery

During the historical society's brief ownership of the old Picacho Cemetery, many individuals, organizations and companies pitched in to clean up the burial ground and find out more about it. The DACHS lead on the project, Sally Kading, enlisted genealogists and historians to look for records of burials in the cemetery. They were able to document 34 individuals. However, local residents said there were many more, maybe hundreds more..

To assist, Construction Survey Technologies, Inc (CSTi) stepped in to offer free ground penetrating radar imaging of the cemetery. CSTi is a professional land surveying and subsurface mapping company headquartered in Albuquerque and with an office in Las Cruces.

Over a period of several visits to the site, CSTi personnel went over approximately two acres of probable graveyard. It is divided into a north section with a wall marking off the south section. The results are impressive.

The March 16 monthly presentation will feature a spokesman from CSTi talking about those results and how they were obtained. As always, the meeting is open to members and non-members and begins at 7 p.m. at Good Samaritan, 3011 Buena Vida Cir. If the presentation can also be made available via Zoom,



*CSTi employee David Acosta, from the Las Cruces office, runs the company's ground penetrating radar over the old Picacho cemetery.*

members will get the Zoom invitation along with an email reminder a few days before the 16th.

### Sign Up For NM History Conference

The Historical Society of New Mexico is now taking registrations for its 2023 history conference in Silver City, March 30 - April 1. Many DACHS members will be presenting to include: David Thomas, Dylan McDonald, Dennis Daily and Jerry Wallace. On Friday night, there will be a special presentation by former U.S. Senator Jeff Bingaman called "Roots of Dysfunction in the U.S. Congress."

You can sign up on the NM Historical Society webpage at: <https://hsnm.org/history-conference/> The deadline for registration is March 20 and costs vary depending on how many sessions you sign up for.

# Latest Info On Trost Clubhouse / What Can Be Done To Help

By Jo Ruprecht

Dear Friends of Historic Preservation: First of all, a confession, I am a new member of DACHS. Many of you have supported the Historical Society for years through your efforts and financial contributions. Thank you for enriching our community by sustaining a tangible reminder of the value of history in our lives. It's time for me to do the same by joining DACHS as a member.

With that introduction, I need your help with ongoing efforts to document the Trost-designed Clubhouse at the Las Cruces Country Club. At the 2020 DACHS Awards luncheon, this building was rightly named as "Worthy of Preservation" by the Society. Now, I'm making two appeals to you and the DACHS network - one is a request for snippets of personal history, the other is a modest appeal for money (\$5 from each reader or friend to reach a goal for community participation).

**An update** - in January the City's Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) designated me to work with the developers regarding the Clubhouse. Steve Newby, a locally known architect who is experienced in working with developers, offered to assist me. We have explored many possibilities for saving the Trost Clubhouse but haven't found a feasible way to preserve the physical building.

Given the condition and nature of its materials and significant modifications made to the Trost & Trost design, moving the structure or even moving the facade, is risky and quite costly. Leaving the Clubhouse in place to become part of the Royal Crossing project at North Main and Samaritan Drive is contrary to the plans of the developers.

During the recent 2023 DACHS Awards Banquet I remarked that we had one last "Hail Mary" left

for saving the Trost Clubhouse. That referred to our outreach to an interested party who, since December, had expressed interest in buying and adapting the building. Despite contacting that party directly and through other individuals, we aren't aware of any offer made. This option was actively pursued with the understanding that the interested party would be anonymous, and now remains so.

**Our fall-back position** is to document the LCCC Clubhouse as fully as possible given limitations of time and local resources. A demolition permit issued by the City in January has dictated our time line. The permit appears to contain no conditions despite requests made by HPC in a meeting with the City Manager. HPC's requests seemed to be within the City's power for oversight and in line with existing City Ordinances and Codes.

**Here's my first pitch to you** as DACHS members and interested others — Standards for historic preservation have evolved over time to more broadly consider a building's context and use. We have begun networking to learn more about the Country Club's history. We are asking you to contribute brief stories about the Club and Trost Clubhouse. Fond memories, as well as less positive experiences - we need your confidential contributions. The DACHS Board has expressed support for this part of the Trost project and Dennis Daily and Deb Dennis, both respected professionals, have offered us their assistance. Please contact us by email at the address set up for this purpose: [trostclubhouse@gmail.com](mailto:trostclubhouse@gmail.com)

We will reply by email with more details. Please share this appeal and email address with friends and neighbors.

**Here's the second pitch** — In January we launched a GoFundMe campaign to cover estimated expenses of documenting the Trost Clubhouse. We've been fortunate to have volunteers who jumped in to clear the building of debris and rubble that had been allowed to accumulate over the past decade. This work facilitated completion of 3D LiDAR scans of the building's interior by Carlos Aguilar of Nava Tech. He has also performed computerized 3D imaging of the exterior. Donicio Madrid's firm SnappinHomes has done a series of drone photos of the existing roof.



*A recent photo of the front of the old club house.*

**SEE, Broad Support Needed, page 3**



## Broad Support Needed — CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

We anticipate additional costs for gathering historical information and assembling documentation packages for archival purposes. As we near completion of the project, we hope to hold public presentations describing our process and findings.

We are within budget but short of our GoFundMe goal by \$200. Part of our fundraising purpose is to show the developers and the City that there is BROAD SUPPORT for local historic preservation projects. To this effect, I am asking that you each make a \$5 contribution to our campaign (that's the minimum set by GoFundMe).

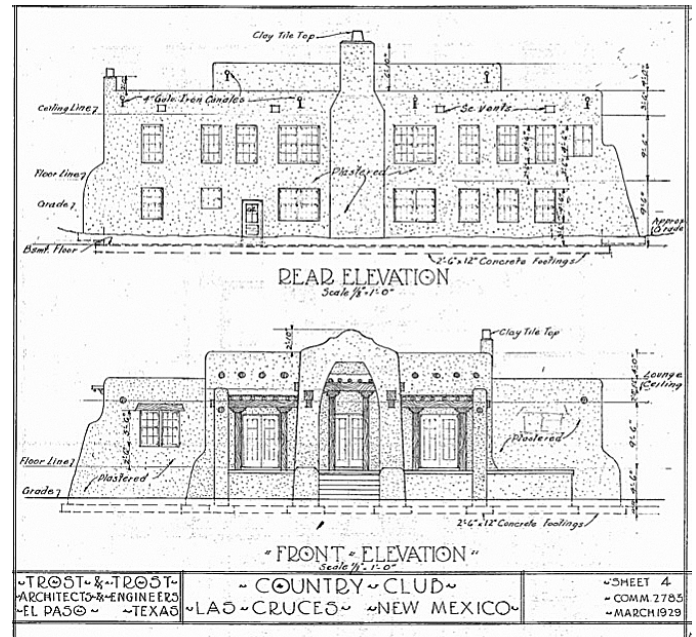
Contributions can be made anonymously. Payment through PayPal is an option. All contributions through GoFundMe are secure and will be acknowledged by an emailed note of thanks. The steps to participate are:

- 1) go to GoFundMe site online
  - 2) use search terms: Trost Clubhouse
  - 3) read our blurb / follow GoFundMe guidance
- Remember, the goal now is PARTICIPATION.

**We need large NUMBERS of donors rather than a couple of large contributions.** Please help us show that our county's supports the preservation of

culturally historic structures.

Many thanks for your consideration. If you have questions, I can be reached by email at: [ljruprecht@icloud.com](mailto:ljruprecht@icloud.com)



*Trost and Trost elevation drawings for the front and back of the old clubhouse - from 1929.*

## A Last Look At St. Genevieve's Offered On DACHS Website

Morris Drexler has created a slide show about the last days of St. Genevieve's church that once stood on Main St. and was a Las Cruces landmark since its dedication in 1887. The structure was put on top of a previous church which might account for problems that would plague the building into the 20th century.

Morris documents both the interior and exterior of the church with a hundred images. In many you can see why the building was condemned as huge cracks run through the walls and steel rods were used to try and hold the walls in a vertical orientation. In some of the photos there are signs on a wall warning visitors to not use an area of pews because of the danger of falling plaster.

The slide show is narrated by Morris and has been turned into a video so it can be shown on YouTube. That means you cannot manually advance the slides but you can move the slider button if

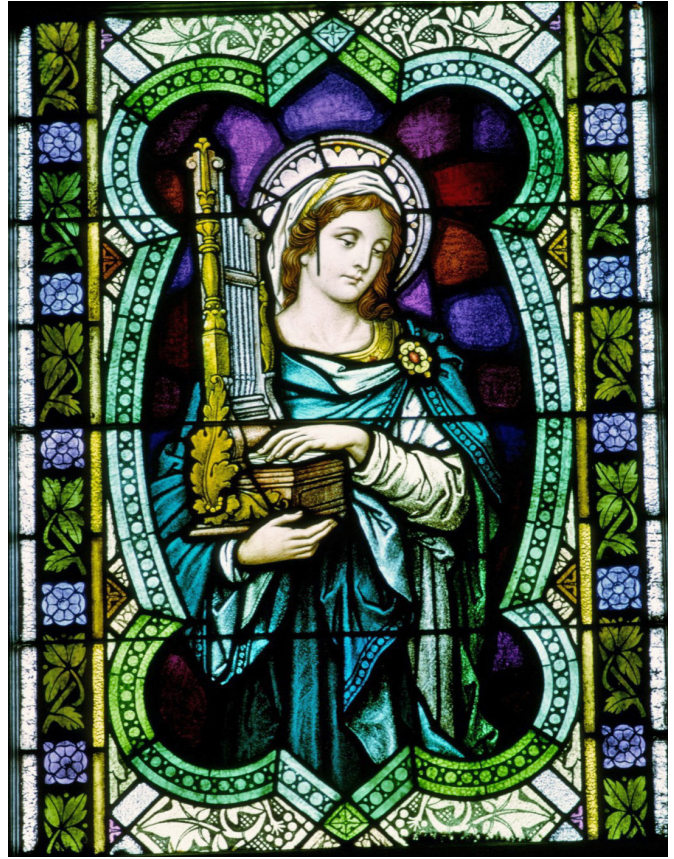
you want to fast forward. You can find the link to the YouTube video near the top of the DACHS homepage. Don't want to go there? That link is: <https://youtu.be/F2qzw339t0o>



*Morris Drexler took this photo of St. Genevieve's church on Main St. in September 1967. He also took pictures in 1966 - all 35mm Kodachrome slides.*

# The Back Page -----

*One of Morris Drexler's slide show photos of St. Genevieve's church. This is one of the stained glass windows that were still in place in 1966 during his visit. It portrays St. Cecilia who was a patron of music. She lived in the 3rd century and died a martyr. The windows were made in Belgium and date to the early 20th century.*



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