



NEWSLETTER

May 2024

Doña Ana County Historical Society

On May 16, Four Speakers Will Take A Look At J. Paul Taylor And His Outstanding Legacy

The May 16 DACHS presentation will be a little different as we will have four different presenters lecturing on different aspects of J. Paul Taylor's life and his many contributions to the Mesilla Valley. As usual the meeting will be at 7 p.m. in the Good Samaritan auditorium at 3011 Buena Vida Circle. Because of the complexity of having so many presenters and the panel then answering questions, we don't know if we will be able to Zoom this event.

The four presenters are: 1) Dennis Daily is our current president and head of the NMSU Archives and Special Collections. Dennis will provide a broad look at Taylor's life which will set the tone for the others to focus on particular stories in the Taylor history.

2) Alexandra McKinney is the instructional coordinator for the J. Paul & Mary Taylor Historic Site. She will talk about the history of the home in Mesilla and what is going to happen now that it is a state historic site.

3) Eric Ahner is the head administrator

at the J. Paul Taylor Academy. He will talk about Taylor's decades as a teacher and administrator in the area schools.

4) George Helfrich is one of the originals when it comes to the Dona Ana County Historical Society. George worked with Taylor on DACHS projects as J. Paul was a founder who served the society as president twice in those early days.

According to our vice president Jerry Wallace, who put this together, the hour-long event will be a memorial and tribute to J. Paul Taylor. Jerry wrote, "I would say it is a panoramic of his life with each speaker discussing his contributions and lasting legacy within the community."

Taylor always had a great appreciation of our local history. One reason might be his own family history. He was a descendant of Miguel Romero y Baca, whose family came to New Mexico with Oñate, and Josefa Delgado, whose family came to New Mexico in the 1700s. Deep roots there.



This is the NMSU graphic announcing J. Paul Taylor's death. The photo at left is Taylor as a high school student. He was editor of the Valley High School newspaper and got to meet Eleanor Roosevelt in 1938 when his journalism class traveled to El Paso when she visited.

Its A Long Summer Ahead....Think About An Article Or Essay

The Doña Ana County Historical Society is looking for original articles and essays concerning Southern New Mexico history for its next annual *Review* (Volume XXXII, January 2025). Biography, local and family histories, oral history, student papers and articles focusing on the history of the Southwest and Northern Mexico will be considered. We have started accepting essays as well as they tend to provide a very personal insight into historical events. In fact, the outstanding article in the 2024 *Review* was an essay. Small monetary awards are available for some pieces.



We will only accept submissions electronically as Word or simple text documents. No one is going to retype a 10-page article. Other formats can be negotiated. Also, we require end-notes and not footnotes.

To submit an article or to ask questions, you can contact Jim Eckles by email at 19dachs63@gmail.com.

The deadline for final articles is October.

More information is available on the society's website. You can also review past issues of the *Review* to see what kind of material we have used. Past issues are on the website.

DACHS Members Man Information Table At Farmers Market

On April 20th, three members of the DACHS board of directors manned a table during the Las Cruces Farmers Market. Sal Patricolo did the leg work and was present the whole time. He was helped by Garland Courts and Dennis Daily.

The goal was to meet as many people as possible and tell them about the Doña Ana County Historical Society and that membership helps to educate the community about the historical legacy of the Mesilla Valley and preserve it for future generations. And, of course, DACHS pays tribute to those in the area who play important roles in saving our history.

One couple joined on the spot and others took

away membership forms to possibly mail in later.

The table was set up on the grounds of the Branigan Cultural Center, just off the street. The plan is to do this in the future but probably only once a month or so.

The same three people shouldn't have to do this each time. If you'd like a volunteer two hours of your time to man this table at the next or some future time, send Jim Eckles your name, email address and cell phone number. We'll be in touch.

The requirements are not onerous - just be friendly, answer questions about Las Cruces and the historical society and give them a membership form.

Make A DACHS Award Nomination Now.....

This fall DACHS will again be reviewing nominations for the various awards that the society gives out each year at its January banquet. It is not too early to make a suggestion for an award as it takes several months for the process to work before January.

The categories and awards are outlined on the DACHS website along with detailed descriptions for each. There are two "people" awards - the Hall of Fame and the Heritage Award. The hall of fame is pretty straight forward but the heritage award is given to a person or persons whose actions or deeds have contributed to the historical or cultural heritage of Doña Ana County and who is (are) not an avocational or professional historian.

Then there are the building and place awards. They are: 1) Building Adhering to Regional Architecture; 2) Building Worthy of Preservation;

3) Buildings and Properties with Historical Significance; 4) Noteworthy Restoration; 5) Endangered Historic Property; 6) The Old Timer's Award. These are pretty obvious except for the old timer's award which is not for a person. This award recognizes a cherished object, natural phenomenon, or cultural tradition prominent in Mesilla Valley heritage.

Finally, there are the four author awards. Only one of these relies on input from the membership. That is the Pasajero del Camino Real Award which honors an author or authors of a significant historical publication about events, persons, places or issues in Doña Ana County or the nearby area. The other three are decided by the historical review editor or the board of directors.

More information on the awards, as well as lists of past winners, is found on the website. Also, forms to follow for a nomination are there.

Get Up Early For Sunrise Saturday At Fort Selden

Here is something a little different for the membership.

Join Fort Selden Historic Site staff to see the sunrise over the historic ruins and the Robledo Mountains. The site will open at 6 a.m. for birding, photography, painting, wildlife viewing, and the cool, fresh morning air. At 9 a.m., take a walking tour of the site to learn all about the different species of rabbits and hares found surrounding Fort Selden Historic Site and Southern New Mexico.

Mescalero Apache Lecture Scheduled For Lincoln, NM On May 4

Maybe you don't want to get up well before sunrise on Saturday. But, maybe you'd like to take a leisurely drive to Lincoln instead for an afternoon lecture and a nice lunch or dinner somewhere.

You are invited to join Lincoln Historic Site for a new season of the Lincoln Lecture Series. Held on the first Saturday of every month from May to October, these lectures delve into fascinating topics from guest lecturers throughout the state and take place in

All programming on this day is included as part of general admission of \$5 per adult. Children 16 years and younger are free. Call 575-526-8911 for more information.

This will be this Saturday, May 4 with the site opening at 6 a.m., Ranger-guided tour, 9-10 a.m.

The staff feels sunrise over Fort Selden's adobe ruins offers visitors a beautiful glimpse of the site in the morning light. Visitors can enjoy the landscape and wildlife viewing.

the iconic San Juan Bautista Church.

This month's program is by lecturer Starlyn Bigrope who will present "Ndé (Mescalero Apache) History: Our Story, Our Experiences."

The lecture will be in the San Juan Bautista Church at Lincoln Historic Site, 988 Calle La Placita. It is scheduled for 1 - 2 p.m.

For more information please contact: Christina Claassen at 505-946-7149.

If You Go To Lincoln, Be Sure To Take In The New Signs

According to a news release from the NM Department of Cultural Affairs, Lincoln Historic Site is excited to announce the installation of nine new building signs featured throughout Lincoln, New Mexico, with more to come. The new signs point out the buildings and landmarks of this historic town, where desperados like Billy the Kid once walked along "the most dangerous street" in America in the 1870's and 1880's during the Lincoln County War.

"These signs will greatly aid our guests in orienting them through the historic town of Lincoln. We are hopeful that they will encourage guests to learn more about the architectural history of the area and the people who made Lincoln a community," said Dr. C. L. Kieffer Nail, New Mexico Historic Sites' Historic Preservation and Interpretation Specialist.

The new signs were created in partnership between New Mexico Historic Sites and the Museum Resources Division who collaborated with the New Mexico Historic Preservation Division and the Lincoln Historic Preservation Board. They aim to improve visitor experiences in wayfinding throughout the historic town.

Lincoln Historic Site is on the National Register of Historic Places and has 14 structures ranging

from the Lincoln County Courthouse and the Tunstall Mercantile to the "Convento" and the frontier church, San Juan Chapel.

Lincoln Historic Site is located along US Highway 380 in Lincoln, NM and is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday through Monday. Admission is \$7 for adults, children 16 years old and younger are free. New Mexico residents with a valid ID are admitted free on the first Sunday of every month.

New Mexico Historic Sites is a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs, under the leadership of the Board of Regents for the Museum of New Mexico. Programs and exhibits are generously supported by the Museum of New Mexico Foundation and its donors. The New Mexico Historic Sites system was established in 1931 by an Act for the Preservation of the Scientific Resources of New Mexico. The eight Historic Sites include Bosque Redondo Memorial at Fort Sumner, Coronado, Fort Selden, Fort Stanton, Jemez, Lincoln, Los Luceros, and Taylor-Mesilla. Learn more at nmhistoricsites.org.

At our lecture on May 16 we should learn more about when the Taylor home will be opened to the public as it is part of this system now.

The Back Page -----



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