

# NEWSLETTER

May 2022

Doña Ana County Historical Society

## May's Presentation Will Feature Live Music Come On Out As Zoom Will Not Be Available

In a step away from our normal monthly presentations, instead of a lecture, we will feature musician Dan Robert Crow performing live on the stage on May 19, 7 p.m. in the Good Samaritan auditorium. He calls his show, "SING THE LEGEND -- When the legend becomes fact, print (sing) the legend."

Dan is a Western singer/songwriter who is also a member of the Doña Ana County Historical Society. He will sing the legend of some of our iconic Old West personalities and is based on his new album "Sidekicks and Saddle Pals." The album is made up of original compositions dealing with the lives of and lies about Billy the Kid, The Fountain Murder Mystery, Boxer Bob Fitzsimmons, Stagecoach Mary Fields, Pat Garrett and more. He says it is a "musical multi-media event."

Some may know Dan for his work with children - he drops the Robert from his name for those shows. According to Wikipedia, Dan "is a performer of children's songs. He is best known for performing the theme song ("Walk Outside") for the movie "The Adventures of Milo and Otis," but also composed many Disney songs, most significantly for "Welcome to Pooh Corner" and "Dumbo's Circus." He also performed on a "Baby Songs" spin off video, and regular appearances on children's educational channels like Noggin and The Learning

Channel, as well as his own commercial video and audio recordings."

This experienced performer have given 5,000-plus concerts that have taken him all over the United States and to Europe, Asia, Australia, Canada and home again.

He is described as a "tall, lanky bearded

"kid" using music and stories to bring a love and respect for nature, a sense of humor and a deep appreciation for the value of friendship and sharing to the world."

Dan has a BA in education and a MA in communication. He is a former speech therapist, classroom teacher and track coach. His efforts in the areas of language,

reading readiness, vocabulary and communication skills development are internationally recognized.

Because DACHS does not have the equipment to bring you a musical performance via ZOOM, this will be an in-person only event. It just isn't going to work trying to capture it using the built-in microphone on our laptop computer.

So, NO ZOOM. The performance will begin at 7 p.m. on May 19 at Good Sam in the auditorium. The facility no longer requires visitors to wear masks - they are optional. The auditorium seats a few hundred people so there is plenty of room for social distancing.



# DACHS President Comments On Where We Stand In May

By Dennis Daily, President

Hopefully southern New Mexico's March and April winds have blown all your pandemic blues away! Going into May, things certainly are looking up, although I can't help but approach every day with a certain optimistic caution. The past couple years have taken their toll. But activities are much back to normal for DACHS.

We're happy that our spring speaker series has been a success, with some fantastic presentations. Turnout at the Good Sam auditorium has been pretty good and for those who have preferred, we've been able to stream our monthly meetings on the Zoom platform. Our final general meeting, before taking the summer months off, will take place on Thursday, May 19, and we're going to try something a little different. DACHS member Dan Crow is a renowned singer/songwriter who has been composing tunes lately about southern New Mexico and Western historical characters. Dan will perform songs from his new record at the May meeting. Because of technical limitations, this will be an in-person presentation only – no Zoom. So please plan to come out to the Good Sam for a night of great Old West music.

Thanks to everyone who came out to lend a hand at the Historical Society of New Mexico conference, held April 7-9 at the New Mexico Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum. DACHS members played

a crucial role in making this conference a success, managing the registration table and even bringing in some of our equipment to help with tech issues. Our own table provided information about DACHS to conference goers and we added a few new members. Several DACHSers gave presentations at the conference to more than 250 history buffs attending from New Mexico and Arizona.

We're happy to have filled two open at-large board positions recently. In case you missed the votes and announcements, Jerry Wallace and Heather Reed have stepped up to help out on the DACHS board.

Jerry is adjunct professor of history at New Mexico State University. Jerry gave a great presentation on the Bellamah housing additions in Las Cruces at our February meeting. You can watch it here - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-0Iq\\_RySEMA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-0Iq_RySEMA).

Heather Reed became executive director of the New Mexico Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum in November 2020. Heather has years of experience with museums, historic sites, and public history. We look forward to the new ideas that Jerry and Heather will bring to the DACHS board. Please thank Jerry and Heather (and all the other DACHS board members) for their service to the society.

We hope to see you at the May meeting to enjoy the great music of Dan Crow. Keep your eyes out for emails about DACHS activities during the summer.

## Mystery Of The Local Military History Cards Is Solved

In last month's newsletter I ran pictures of the front and back of a "history card" for Colonel Eugene Van Patten, a Civil War veteran. I wondered where they came from.

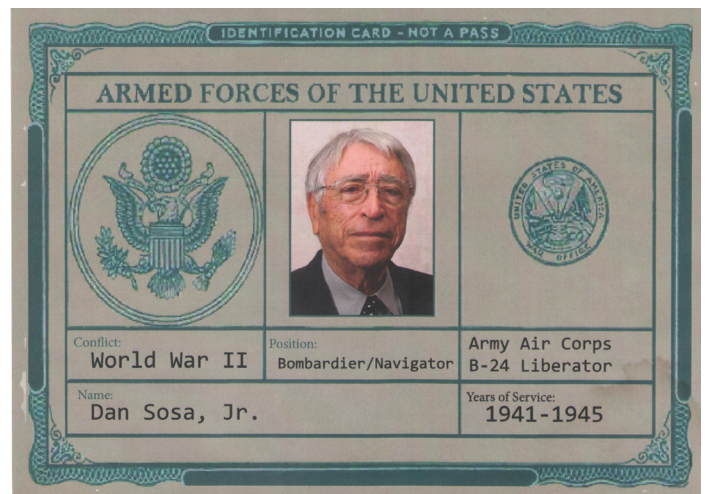
To the right is the front of another card. It is for Dan Sosa who was a B-24 Liberator bombardier and navigator in World War II.

On the back, it explains that after the war Sosa entered law school at the University of New Mexico. Graduating in 1951, he was elected district attorney in 1956. In 1975 he was appointed to the New Mexico Supreme Court. He would go on to be elected to the high court for 16 years.

Our DACHS vice-president Garland Courts, in his role as Acting Museum Administrator/Quality of Life/Las Cruces Museum System, sent this reply:

*"Those veteran cards you asked about in the newsletter came from the Branigan Cultural Center*

*when we had a military exhibit in 2016 featuring the collection of Kevin Dasing. Kevin had tons of stuff and we added those cards as giveaways during the exhibit from our own research on local veterans."*



# Anniversary Of German V-2 Crash In Juarez Is May 29

By Jim Eckles

Seventy-five years ago, this highly modified German V-2 rocket on the right, lifted off around 7:30 p.m. on May 29 from White Sands Proving Ground (now the missile range) and crashed a few minutes later just south of Juarez, Mexico. Luckily no one was injured and there was little property damage.

The four-ton vehicle probably struck going more than 2,000 miles per hour. The kinetic energy released in that impact created a crater estimated to be 25-feet deep and 50-feet across in rocky ground. The V-2 was reduced to nothing but charred shrapnel. Witnesses arriving soon after impact said there was still smoke in the air, the nearby bushes were burned and the ground was still hot. It was very similar to a large asteroid strike on the earth's surface.

The rocket was not part of the regular V-2 launches carried out by General Electric for the Army. Most of those carried scientific payloads high into the upper atmosphere. In fact, one carrying assorted instruments crashed near Alamogordo exactly two weeks prior on May 15. It broke apart before coming down and crashed near where the New Mexico Space Museum is now located.

The Juarez rocket was part of the Hermes II Project which had German Paperclip scientists and engineers trying to build a ramjet propelled vehicle. A ramjet will not operate unless it is already traveling at high speed. The Germans planned to use a V-2 as a pusher vehicle to accelerate their ramjet missile to the appropriate speed. The rocket at the right was number zero and had much larger fins than a normal V-2. The wings at the top were simulating the anticipated ramjet vehicle.

Because the Juarez rocket is not on the list of General Electric launches, some conspiracy theorists accuse the Army of trying to cover up the fact that a missile from White Sands landed in Mexico. These people apparently failed to see the front-page stories in the *El Paso Times* the next day with its photos and information about the incident. There are quotes from Lt. Col. Harold Turner, the commander of White Sands, and officials at Fort Bliss. Everyone was very apologetic.

Some in El Paso thought the crash was "too close for comfort." The president of the New Mexico Cattle Growers Association called for the Army to move missile testing to some other location - like



the Pacific Ocean. New Mexico Senator Carl Hatch wrote a letter to the secretary of war asking that the testing be moved elsewhere.

Most others were not too concerned. The *Las Cruces Sun-News* accused El Paso of overreacting and said there was very little chance of anyone getting hurt in Las Cruces. The Alamogordo Chamber of Commerce chimed in as well, asking Senator Hatch to withdraw his request. The chamber essentially said, "Who's afraid?"

The missile range did shut down V-2 launches for just over a month until they developed a better system of tracking the vehicles in flight. "Sky Screen" was developed and then used until 1949. Eventually radar information was perfected and used to show where the missile was at any given moment during its flight and where it was headed.

# Notes -----

✓ The Doña Ana County Genealogical Society is hosting a meeting to learn about Lineage Societies on May 11 at 2 p.m. in the Roadrunner Room at Branigan Memorial Library. By lineage societies we are talking about the National Society of the American Revolution, the Daughters of the American Revolution and the General Society of Mayflower Descendants. The presentation will be by Sarah Clark and Robert Dombrowski.

The event is available in-person and by Zoom. For non-members to get a Zoom invitation, you must email a request at least two days prior to the 11th to dacgslc@gmail.com. Please include your name and phone number.

✓ The Doña Ana County Historical Society is looking for original articles concerning Southern New Mexico history for its next annual *Review* (Volume XXX, January 2023). That's right, it will be the

30th *Review* published by the historical society. It is your chance to get in on a very special issue.

Biography, local and family histories, oral history, student papers and articles focusing on the history of the Southwest and Northern Mexico will be considered. Small monetary awards are available for some pieces.

Jim Eckman will be the editor again. All submissions must be made electronically as Word documents. Other formats can be negotiated. Also, we would like end notes instead of footnotes. To submit an article or to ask questions, contact Jim Eckles by email: 19dachs63@gmail.com or by phone at: 575-521-8771. Eckles will act as the middle man and continue to do the layout.

The deadline for final articles will be sometime in October.

More information is available on the society's website at: <http://www.donaanacountyhistsoc.org/HistoricalReview/Reviews.html>

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