



# NEWSLETTER

April 2012

## DACHS Vice President

Susan Krueger's Message

When it appeared that the DACHS might not be able to fill all of its officer positions for 2012, I agreed with Marcie that if she would serve as President I would serve as Vice President; and in spite of the absence of even a hint of Vice, I have stayed busy.

I was born and raised in Detroit, Michigan in the 40's when cars were made in Detroit and sold out of elegant showrooms along Jefferson Ave.



Susan Krueger  
DACHS Vice President

When it was time to go to college, it was natural both to take my undergraduate degree at the University of Michigan and then to move on to a different space, Boston MA, for my graduate degrees. In Boston, my studies ranged from a rambling class in Renaissance literature and art at Boston University (MA degree) to a concentrated course in Hamlet at Brandeis University, where I earned a Ph.D. I then shifted gears, married my college sweetheart and

**A note to our membership:** We have a new time and place for the DACHS Board Meetings. They are now held on the first Wednesday of the month at 3:00 p.m., at the Branigan Cultural Center in the Downtown Mall. You are welcome to join us on April 4th. ■

## Our March Program

April 19, 2012

I am a native New Mexican, I was raised in Albuquerque and Española. I graduated from the College of Santa Fe in 2006 with my bachelor's degree in secondary education with a focus on teaching history and social studies. Even then, I had a passion for New Mexican history and the landscape of the desert southwest. After graduation I worked as an educator, and the lessons I learned in the classroom continue to inform my attitude and approach to working



Amando Guzman

with the public as a historian. I began the public

**See Amando on Page 2**

## Sage Brush & Sand Dunes

An Anthology of Southern New Mexico History

The Doña Ana County Historical Society has completed publication of its first Anthology entitled "Sage Brush & Sand Dunes; An Anthology of Southern New Mexico History." It will be available to Society members at a special price of \$10.00 and to the general public for \$15.00 through Amazon. Included in the Anthology are a collection of articles published in the *Southern New Mexico Historical Review* that are especially interesting. This publication was done as part of the Centennial Celebration Project. More information will be available in the next Newsletter. ■

## Calendar

Thursday, April 19, 2012

**Amando Guzman;**

and his topic will be “water issues in the Mesilla Valley”

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.

### Susan continued from Page 1

moved to Omaha Nebraska to teach literature and history in a junior high school.

I first visited Mesilla when I stopped in town on my way up from San Miguel de Allende through Ciudad Juarez to Tucson, and I knew right away that someday I would live here. When we finally left Mexico to move to New Mexico, we started out in Arroyo Seco, just outside of Taos, living in a wood frame tent and cooking on an outdoor fireplace. The countryside was extraordinarily beautiful in every season, but way too snowy and cold in winter. Once the children had moved on to college, each in a different state, we decided to head south to Mesilla. We bought an adobe home on Estrada Road. and planted a small vineyard. So began the challenges of maintaining an adobe structure and at the same time meeting the Town’s architectural style requirements.

By the time I went to work for the Town of Mesilla in 1984, I was a novice student of adobe preservation, struggling along on my own. Two town events changed that. Pat Taylor held a series of adobe restoration workshops that included hands-on work on local residences. Then, using the expertise of Jon Hunner and Pat Taylor, the town started up an Architectural Styles Committee on which I served as the staff liaison. The association with Jon and the Taylor family led to membership in the New Mexico Historic Preservation Alliance. Through an Alliance outreach letter, which I wrote looking for preservation part-

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ners, I met Dona Eichstaedt, at that time the President of the DACHS. At her request, I gave a presentation to the Historical Society on November 20, 2003, on an historic structures survey of buildings on the Mesilla Plaza. In 2004, I signed up as a life member of the Society and became a member of the architectural awards committee where I continue serving today, enjoying thoroughly all the people we meet and all the learning that takes place as we sort out the award recommendations. ■

### Amando continued from Page 1

history graduate program at New Mexico State University in the fall of 2010.

Since starting the program I have tried to constantly engage with local history in southern New Mexico, especially focused on Doña Ana County. In an oral history class I recorded the life history of a former Bracero whose work at Stahmann’s Farms earned him his citizenship papers. I researched and wrote about life in the late-territorial period statewide but with an eye to representing southern New Mexico in preparation for a museum exhibit currently at Kent Hall museum. Studying documents from eighteenth-century El Paso I questioned why Spanish settlement was not successful established in the Mesilla Valley during the period.

I think my main motivation to study the region closely comes mostly from the differences between the Las Cruces area and my own home in northern New Mexico. The Rio Grande, always running and deep in Albuquerque and Española, runs dry here. The cottonwood and willow bosque that has been painstakingly restored and managed in the north has been replaced by cotton fields and pecans. Those radical differences motivated me to write my thesis. The final product of my time in Las Cruces will focus on the development of water and agriculture in the Mesilla Valley that was responsible for those changes. My research over the summer and into the fall and winter of this year will track the federal monitoring and management of water in the Mesilla Valley in the late-nineteenth century. I will use the Rio Grande Historical Collections at New Mexico State University as my main repository of documents, their collections of maps and Elephant Butte-related material will be invaluable to my investigation.

I have grown to love southern New Mexico and hope that my work will help to add to a growing body of literature on the region. ■

# Father Albert Braun

(Continued from March 2012 Newsletter)

By George Hackler

On April 21<sup>st</sup> of last year Dorothy Cave, author of "God's Warrior" the biography of of Father Albert Braun, Order of Franciscan Monks (OFM), talked about Father Braun at our regular membership meeting. George's book review continues:

Rations were increased, Red Cross packages were distributed, and priests were allowed to hold services. DAPECOL as it was called, was a work camp. Most of the convicts were moved to other camps and the pows were used to work nearby rice paddies, chop wood, dig ditches, or repair roads. The smuggling game resumed, but here the guards were more diligent and it was nigh impossible to smuggle any thing passed them wearing only a loin cloth, sandals and a coolie hat.. Father Albert bribed the Sargent of guards to allow his crew to search the the groves for coconuts by promising that if any one tried to escape, the Sargent could cut off his head. Father Al did confess that he did enjoy stealing. He located the guards cache of wine and stole some for celebrating mass. He really did have the reputation of being the most successful thief in camp.

Ten pows from another work crew did kill a guard and successfully escape. Recrimination was hard and swift. Rations were cut, work details were canceled ,services were no longer allowed red cross packages no longer arrived. Other escapes brought on even harsher recriminations. Opportunities to smuggle supplemental food and medicine were stopped. About this time malnutrition brought on a vicious attack of beriberi and sent Father Al to the hospital. Beriberi, caused by vitamin deficiency, damages the nerves to the legs, causes sever pain, and swelling of legs and feet.

Months became another year. Rations continued to decline. The Pows noticed that the Japanese were claiming victories in battles that were occurring closer and closer to the Philippines With each victory rations were cut. Work details were restarted after Christmas in 1943, but now they were clearing banana trees to create clear fields of fire, building trenches, fox holes and revetments. Bits and pieces of news reenforced the sense that the Allies were getting closer to the Philippines. Every one was aware that Japanese orders were clear, "no Pows were to be recovered under any circumstance". Early in June 1944 the first contingent of prisoners were herded on ships starting an evacuation to the north. To prevent any Pows from being retaken the Japanese launched massive evacuations to Manchuria and Japan. After a brief stop over at old camp Cabanatuan the voyage to Japan continued. The hell

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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 fees 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 575-526-9774 (May-Sept. 575-536-9728) or the President, Marcie Palmer, at 575-496-4736.

### Annual Membership/Sponsorship Rates

Individual \$20  Family \$25  Student \$8  Contributor \$40  Benefactor \$150  Life \$300   
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endured aboard the ships is beyond belief. Our story records that Father Al survived and helped many others endure and survive just as he had done in the camps.

They docked on the 5th of September, 1944 and were interned on a dredged up island in Tokyo Bay at Camp Omori. Discipline was ironclad, punishment swift and merciless, inflicted for any reason or no reason at all.

**To be continued Next Month**



**Sim Middleton**

The speaker at the Society's March 15 meeting was Sim Middleton, the President of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro

Trail Association - CARTA. Sim gave a very informative and interesting talk about the El Camino Real National Historic Trail. During the 1500's, New Mexico was tied to the outside world by a single route that descended fifteen hundred miles through the Rio Grande valley from Santa Fe to El Paso and onward south to Mexico City. This thoroughfare of commerce and travel was known as El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, the Royal Road of the Interior Lands. Some 500 years later, in 2000 El Camino Real was federally designated as a National Historic Trail. Soon after that, CARTA was established in 2003 to help promote, educate and preserve the cultural and historic trail corridor. ■

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