



# Newsletter

September 2006

**Dona Ana Historical Society**

## **PRESIDENT' STUFF**

**NEXT MEETING : DR. BEN BROWN WILL SPEAK ON :**

***LEON TROUSSET: AN ITINERANT PAINTER IN NEW MEXICO.***

**GOOD SAMARITAN AUDITORIUM, 7PM THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2006**

George will have great news and will report on the particulars of the Amador Hotel project in this issue. Our work in creating a history museum is not done by any means, but we do have a building!

I would just like to say that in dealing with the City and County Administration, our three-man committee ( Buddy Ritter, Chairman, George Helfrich, and myself) felt that we were given every opportunity to tell our story of preservation and the need for a history museum. There were times when communication was not as perfect as it could have been, but we expect that when dealing with so many and diverse entities. There were Councilors and Commissioners that went to bat for us and were enthusiastic from the start. Others had concerns and, after carefully considering the issues, came on board. I expect good help from all concerned in the future. We had only one negative vote. So from the depths of my heart THANK YOU to all of the City and County officials that backed us in this quest and please know that we will do all in our power to make this museum second to none. The County Historic Buildings Advisory Committee met many times early on and did much ground work when we were considering all options. The Sun -News was very supportive in helping publicize the issue and helped convince many who might have had doubts along the way. In short, there have been many people and organizations involved and I am not sure we could have succeeded with out all of you working with us.

The intrepid 40 members that came to the picnic braved a bit of rain, no mosquitoes, and no wind. Good food and drink and conversation was abundant. Will Tichnor reported on the City's efforts to update and organize the museum's collections as well as some of the plans for the future. So, as they say, "a good time was had by all."

There are several organizations that have asked us to help them publicize their meetings and programs, so look for those announcements as well.

The Branigan Cultural Center will host the King Tut Exhibit October 13 through January 2007. There will be a dire need for many volunteers to help with this wonderful collection. If you can spare some time please call Holly Bethune, Volunteer Coordinator, at 541-2322. There will be some training requirements for volunteers since so many people will be needed. The museum will need 12- 15 volunteers per day. It will be open 1pm-7pm weekdays and will have weekend hours also. We have had a day assigned to the Historical Society where we will furnish some 12-15 volunteers. The date is Friday, October 20th. Call Marcie Palmer (523-0621) to sign up.

Although Egypt is a long way from New Mexico, the civilization and culture had impact on our world. I am sure this will be a fascinating way to spend some volunteer time.

Thanks for your continuing interest and concern for our heritage and history. *Chuck*

## **Meet another DACHS Board Member:**

Charles Winfield Ritter  
3135 Good Shepherd Road  
Las Cruces, NM 88005

C W. Buddy Ritter is a fifth generation native of Mesilla and Las Cruces. He attended High School at New Mexico Institute and majored in Banking and Finance at Tulane University in New Orleans. Buddy received his BA

from New Mexico State University and entered Michigan State's graduate program becoming the first Certified Hotel Administrator in New Mexico. He served with the U. S. Army Military Intelligence Group at Ft Meade, Maryland.

Buddy has been in the hotel and restaurant business for 47 years, owning four hotels, eleven restaurants and two breweries in New Mexico and Arizona. He served two terms as President of the New Mexico Hotel Motel Association and served on the National Board of Directors of the American Hotel Association for 4 years. He served on the International Board of Directors of Holiday Inns for 6 years and on their University Board of Regents for 4 years.

New Mexico State University has honored him with the President's Award for Service, after serving as Chairman of the President's Associates and of the NMSU Foundation. He was the Distinguished Alumnus of the College of Business in 1981 and one of the Outstanding Centennial Alumnus of the College of Business in 1988.



He was Chairman of the Dean's Business Council, Chairman of the tri-culture Traders monument committee and founding Chairman of the State Economic Forum of the College of Business. In 1984 he was Citizen of the Year of Las Cruces in recognition and appreciation for his outstanding service to the community.

He was founding Chairman of the Las Cruces Forum of community and business leaders. He has served as State Crusade Chairman of the New Mexico Cancer Society and as Co-chairman of the New Mexico Bicentennial Commission. He enjoys studying New Mexico's History, Art and Culture and served 2 terms as President of the Board of Regents of the Museum of New Mexico and as a Trustee of the Museum of New Mexico Foundation Board. He has served the past six Governors on Boards and Commissions. He was inducted in the New Mexico Tourism Hall of Fame in 2003.

Buddy's office is in the 150 year old historic Double Eagle and Peppers building on the Plaza, which was his grandmother's grandfather's office, who was one of the first surgeons in Mesilla. He married Margaret Bonnell, a fourth generation New Mexican, who attended the University of New Mexico and received her BA from New Mexico State University. They have three children; John, who lives in Las Cruces, Elizabeth who lives in Las Vegas, NV and Winfield who is Assistant Manager of the Double Eagle.

## Amador Update

On August 21st the City Council voted to accept the Amador property from the County with the understanding that a Foundation will be established, as proposed by the Historical Society, to raise the necessary funds to renovate and adapt the building to facilitate it as a museum. On August 22nd the Doña Ana County Commissioners voted to authorize the County Manager to negotiate transfer of the property to the City of Las Cruces. The DACHS Amador Museum Committee has been developing the necessary plans to establish an independent Amador Museum Foundation to raise funds from a variety of sources including Federal, State, non-profit, corporate and private



organizations and individuals. It has been proposed that a "Friends of the Amador" organization be established to assist in local fundraising and provide volunteer assistance to the City Museum Department. Efforts to remove the old bank drive-thru structure and follow-up action related to application for National Register designation are among the near term high priority concerns of the Committee. Mr. Buddy Ritter, Chairman of the DACHS Amador Museum Committee, has initiated the legal actions needed to create the Foundation and obtain 501C3 non-profit status. Once the property has been transferred there will be numerous opportunities for our members to take part in this long awaited project.



### **A Reminder to submit Candidates for the Annual Doña Ana Banquet Awards**

**Our members are encouraged to submit names of individuals, buildings, objects or cultural traditions in our area that are worthy of recognition. The following awards are considered:**

**Hall of Fame Award** -The Hall of Fame Award is designed to recognize an individual who is known for his or her exceptional contribution to the preservation of the history and culture of the Mesilla Valley.

**Old Timer's Award** -The Old Timer's Award identifies a cherished object, natural phenomenon or cultural tradition prominent in Mesilla Valley heritage.

**The Pasajero del Camino Real Award** - The Pasajero del Camino Real Award is given to the author or authors of a significant historical publication about events, persons, places or issues in Doña Ana County or in the nearby vicinity.

**The Heritage Award** - The Heritage Award was "established to be given to a person whose actions or deeds have contributed to the historical or cultural heritage of Doña Ana County and who is not an avocational or professional historian."

**The Gemoets Award or Prize** - This award identifies an individual who has made a significant contribution to the publication of *The Southern New Mexico Historical Review*.

**The Katherine B. Stoes Prize** - This award was established by the officers of DACHS in 2003 to recognize outstanding writing and/or historical editing.

**The Hiram Hadley Prize** - This award recognizes the best article in pioneer history.

**Building Worthy of Preservation** - This award is given to recognize a building in Doña Ana County that is distinguished by its age and historical character, significance or architectural character.

**Building Adhering to Regional Architecture**— This award recognizes a building in Doña Ana County built recently that follows the historic architectural style characteristic of New Mexico and the Southwest.

**Noteworthy Restoration**—A restoration of an historic building in Doña Ana County, not necessarily adhering to strict preservation standards.



**We welcome new Members:**

Judy Vaughn  
Michael Wilson



*A Note from Karen George:*

I spoke to a BLM person who wants me to remind our members who plan to attend the presentation at Dripping Springs that there is a \$3.00 parking fee for each car parked in their lot.



Please renew/enroll my/our membership in the Doña Ana Historical Society. A check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Fees:**

Individual \$ 15      Student \$ 8      Benefactor \$ 150

Family \$ 20      Contributor \$ 40      Life \$ 300

Memberships are active for the calendar year of enrollment. Membership in the Society is deductible within legal limits for Federal and State income tax purposes. If you are unsure of your status, please call Membership Chairman, George Helfrich, at 522-3477.

**Doña Ana County Historical Society**

**P.O.Box 16045**

**Las Cruces, NM 88004**

**[www..zianet.com/dachs](http://www..zianet.com/dachs)**

**2005 Officers:**

President - Dr. Chuck Murrell

Past President – Austin Hoover

Vice President – Roger Rothenmaier

Secretary – Donna Eichstaedt

Treasurer – George Helfrich

Historian – Karen George

Board Members-at-Large -

Marcie Palmer

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Buddy Ritter

Wanda Tourney

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**We wish to thank**

**our Corporate Sponsors:**

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