NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT’S DESK

Dr. Jon Hunner

Greetings from your absentee president. I am still on the road visiting our national parks during their centennial year. Since the middle of May, I have driven about 10,000 miles and visited around fifty parks and historic sites. Google my blog (drivinbyhistory.blogspot.com) to follow my travels.

I had some incredible visits with parks and peoples. Here’s an example. On August 25--the actual 100th birthday of the National Park Service--I was at the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. I wished all the park rangers that I ran into a Happy Birthday which they appreciated. Then a Girl Scout troop sang “This Land is Your Land” under Lady Liberty’s watchful eyes, and rangers held up cue cards with the lyrics on it. Many of us sang along. I asked later why they chose that song and was told that the parks are all our lands. Then I spent the rest of the day at Ellis Island, marveling at the stories of the immigrants who passed through there. Enjoy the fall, and I will see you all in November.

From the Vice-President

Kimberly Miller

Welcome back to DACHS! This year will again be filled with appealing programs, fun and educational field-trips, and a delicious awards banquet. Our fall presenters include Elephant Butte Irrigation District Manager Gary Esslinger speaking in honor of the Elephant Butte dam, and Sally Kading, a great genealogy researcher who will present information on how to do your own family research. I encourage you to check out Jon’s blog, drivinbyhistory.blogspot.com, in which he presents history and his adventures as he explores our National Park System in honor of its 100th anniversary (1916 was a busy year!) Mark your calendars for 7 p.m. on the third Thursday of September, October, and November for our interesting meetings. I look forward to seeing you there!

The Doña Ana County Historical Society’s fall program series will begin at 7:00 pm. on September 15, 2016, at the Good Samaritan Auditorium, 3011 Buena Vida Circle, Las Cruces.

Gary L. Esslinger, the Treasurer-Manager of the Elephant Butte Irrigation District (EBID), will be the presenter, speaking in celebration of the 100 birthday of the Elephant Butte Dam and Reservoir.

Gary is a third generation member of a pioneer farming family, who grew up in the Mesilla Valley and who has maintained his roots in farming and agricultural based industries. After receiving a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Northern Arizona University in 1973, he worked for six years in Los Angeles for a large west coast flour milling corporation as the officer manager. Tiring of city life, Gary returned to the Mesilla Valley and began working for EBID in 1978. He began his District career as Purchasing Agent. He has also served as Maintenance Chief and Assistant Manager, taking on his current position in 1987. He served
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on the Doña Ana County Flood Commission from 2002 to 2006 and has been involved with the Family Farm Alliance and the Natural Water Resource Association. Gary lives in La Mesa on the family farm with his wife and children.

Elephant Butte Dam and Reservoir

Elephant Butte Dam and Reservoir, originally called Engle Dam, is on the Rio Grande, seventy miles north of Las Cruces. It can store over 2 million acre feet of water to provide irrigation and year round power generation. Construction of the Dam was authorized by the United States Congress on February 25, 1905. The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation built the dam. Construction began in 1908 but was delayed because of difficulty in obtaining reservoir land. Construction began again in 1912 and was completed in 1916. It is a concrete gravity dam 301 feet high and 1,674 feet long with a maximum irrigation capability of 178,000 acres of land.

CALL FOR PAPERS

The Doña Ana County Historical Society is looking for original articles concerning Southern New Mexico history for its next annual Review (Volume XXIV, January 2017). 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.

We prefer submissions electronically as Word or simple text documents. Other formats can be negotiated. To submit an article or to ask questions, contact Jim Eckles by email at nebraska1950@comcast.net or by phone at 575-521-8771.
**ANNUAL AWARDS**

The next Doña Ana County Historical Society Annual Awards Luncheon will be held on Saturday, January 28, 2017, at noon at the Double Eagle Restaurant. The DACHS Board is asking for your help in the form of suggestions for people, places and things to receive awards. Full details on each of the awards and past recipients appear at the DACHS website: www.donaanacountyhistory.org.

What follows here is a list of awards with brief explanations to jog your thoughts about possible recipients. All suggestions are welcome and appreciated. Please send them to the Society’s email address: 19dachs63@gmail.com, and for more information, contact Susan Krueger 525-0654.

**Object, Phenomena or Tradition:**

Old Timers Award, an object, natural phenomenon or cultural tradition prominent in the heritage and physical character of Doña Ana County.

**People Awards:**

1. Hall of Fame Award recognizes a person known for an exceptional contribution to the preservation of the history and culture of the Mesilla Valley.
2. Heritage Award recognizes a person whose actions have contributed to the historical or cultural heritage of Doña Ana County and who is not a professional historian.

**Author Awards:**

1. Pasajero del Camino Real Award is given to the author(s) of a significant historical publication about events, persons or places in Doña Ana County.
2. The Gemoets Prize is awarded to the author of the “outstanding article” in the current year’s Southern New Mexico Historical Review (SNMHR).
3. The Katherine B. Stoes Prize recognizes outstanding writing and editing in the current issue of the SNMHR.
4. The Hiram Hadley Prize recognizes the best article on pioneer history in the current issue of the SNMHR.

**Architectural Awards:**

1. Building Worthy of Preservation recognizes a building in Doña Ana County that is significant for its age, historical character or architectural style.
2. Building Adhering to Regional Architecture recognizes a recently built building that follows the historic style characteristic of Doña Ana County architecture.
3. Noteworthy Renovation recognizes a renovation of an historic building in Doña Ana County.
4. An Endangered Building with a Noteworthy History recognizes an historically important building considered to be endangered.

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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 Past President, Susan Krueger, at 575-525-0654.

**Annual Membership/Sponsorship Rates**

Individual $20  [ ]  Family $25  [ ]  Student $8  [ ] Contributor $40  [ ]  Benefactor $150  [ ]  Life $300  [ ]

*Southern New Mexico Historical Review* Sponsorship $50  [ ]

**Is this a change of information?**  Yes  [ ]  No  [ ]

A check for $ _________ is enclosed. Date _________

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Name(s) _____________________________________________ Phone #_________________

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| How would you like to receive your copy of the *Southern New Mexico Historical Review (SNMHR)*? |
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CARTA Announces Fall Speaker Series: !Escucha! True Stories from el Camino Real

El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro Trail Association, or CARTA, is hosting a speaker series starting September 11, 2016. !Escucha! True Stories of el Camino Real will highlight three major stops along one of America’s oldest roads — Doña Ana, Las Cruces, and Mesilla.

On Sunday September 11, 2016 at 3 pm the series kicks off with a presentation by former state Senator Mary Jane Garcia at Nopalitos Galeria. She will describe the restoration process of one of the most critical and historic stops along El Camino Real, Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria, or Our Lady of Purification. Built in the 1800s, the church was restored in the 1980s, a process spearheaded by Senator Garcia. She formed the Doña Ana Conservation Committee which recruited 40 at-risk youths to assist in the restoration. Come and hear how the restoration process connected these youths to their heritage and their community.

On Sunday, October 9, 2016 at 3 pm in La Casa Camino Real, local author and storyteller Denise Chavez will weave La Llorona and Dia de los Muertos stories with local family histories and traditions at her bookstore, La Casa Camino Real.

Lastly, on Sunday November 13 local author and restaurateur Buddy Ritter will talk about his new book Mesilla Comes Alive which will be available for sign-

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