

La Crónica de Nuevo México



Published since 1976 ~ The Official Publication of the Historical Society of New Mexico

April 2013

Issue Number 95

USS New Mexico - Glorious Past, Awesome Future

by Dick Brown

Many New Mexicans realize the U.S. Navy once had a battleship named after the state, but few appreciate just how amazing she was, especially considering her actions in the Pacific Theater during WWII. Her legacy lives on today in a new, but very different, warship.

USS New Mexico (BB-40) was commissioned on May 20, 1918 and joined the fleet in September, too late for combat in WWI. She was the Navy's first electric-drive battleship, a standout among her direct-drive sisters. Nine oil-burning boilers delivered steam to two giant turbine-generators which powered four electric motors, one for each propeller shaft. With such an efficient power-train, New Mexico could reach a top speed of 21 knots. Built at a cost of \$21M, she was 32,000 tons of engineering wonder, 16 feet longer than any other battleship in the naval inventory, and possessing formidable firepower with 14-inch guns mounted in four massive 3-barrel turrets, plus batteries of 5-inch guns, anti-aircraft guns, and two 21-inch torpedo tubes below the waterline. If there was one ship that brought fear into the eyes of an enemy, it was the New Mexico!

She sailed in peace through the Roaring 20s, becoming the very first flagship of the Pacific Fleet and participating in exercises and competitions with other first-line battleships. She won the coveted Battle 'E' pennant for superior gunnery, engineering and battle efficiency in 1920-21, 1927-28 and 1929-30. She became known Navy-wide as the "Queen of the Pacific Fleet," some say because of her winning record, others claim it was her frequent flagship designation. To her crew, she was simply "The Queen".

Life at sea continued through the Great Depression and the rest of the 1930s as New Mexico conducted routine patrols and goodwill tours in the Atlantic and Pacific. During a reconstruction period, her propulsion plant was converted to geared turbines, her caged masts were replaced with towering superstructure and her steel armor was vastly increased. By the late 30s, she was operating out of San Pedro, California and Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

In April 1935, a young hard-charging lieutenant reported aboard New Mexico as the ship's new Assistant Engineering Officer. He was a submariner and a fierce



USS New Mexico Battleship (BB-40) in high seas
(Photograph courtesy U.S. Navy)

competitor, bent on continuing the Queen's winning ways. Sure enough, the old battleship won three consecutive annual engineering 'E' awards for

efficiency, in part due to the lieutenant's fanatical power-saving measures, including shorter showers for junior

continued on page 2

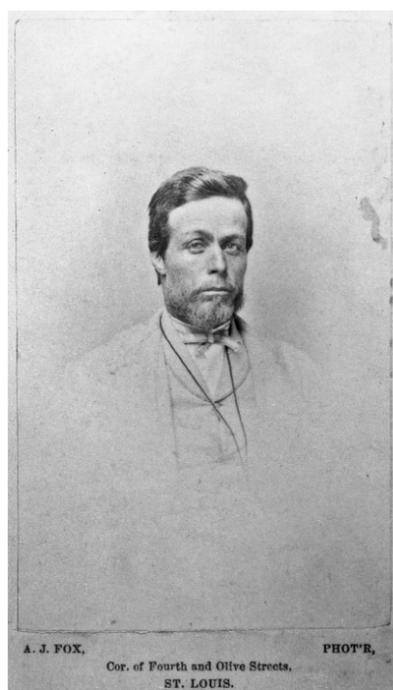
Southern New Mexican Don José Martín Amador: The Roots of His Success

by Terry R. Reynolds

In the last three decades before the railroads made wagon freighting obsolete on the northern portion of the Camino Real, at least one southern New Mexican developed a relatively successful freighting, wholesale and retail business. His name was Don José Martín Amador.

With ten to twelve wagons usually pulled by mules he moved freight from St. Louis to Juárez and beyond, from El Paso and Las Cruces to Silver City and Casas Grandes. He also brought needed provisions to U.S. forts in southern New Mexico. The profits he made from freighting, wholesaling, and retailing transported goods were invested in land and buildings both in the Mesilla Valley and in Silver City.

By the time the railroad came to southern New Mexico in 1881, in addition to his freighting and mercantile business he had a large, newly-built house for his family, a retail store selling general merchandise, a stable and livery offering local and regional transportation and a building soon to become a temporary home of the Doña Ana County courthouse in Las Cruces. He had purchased several sizeable pieces of farmland in the Mesilla Valley and raised alfalfa, grains, fruit and vegetables. He owned rental property in Silver City. He was active in the political life of Doña Ana County running for public office and being elected County Treasurer in 1878. He was instrumental in getting county roads and bridges improved. He also was active in community life especially in supporting and developing education opportunities. Financial support for the



Don José Martín Amador, photograph was taken in St. Louis in 1868 when he was 32 years old (NMSU Archives #ms00040001)

Loretta Academy that his children attended and assisting in the development and the funding of a public school system were some of his priorities. And most improbable, he sold part of his farmland to the Las Cruces Town Company in order for the railroad to have a depot and right of way along the southern edge of Las Cruces.

One of the most interesting questions about this man is how did a poor boy from Juárez become so successful in

southern New Mexico as Anglos gradually dominated the area economically. Don Martín did not have a background of wealth or power. When he was born in Juárez in 1836, his uneducated, landless, widowed father was a musician from distant San Buenaventura, Chihuahua. He had brought his youngest daughter to his new marriage in 1832 and had five children by his new wife. He died before Don Martín was seven. His uneducated Juárez wife was left with four surviving children and no land for their support. She soon married a distant relative, who also was widowed with a child and farming across the Rio Grande at Ysleta. She moved her children there, but within three years this husband also passed away and the family again had to move.

In 1847 they went to stay with old neighbors of theirs from Juárez, the family of José María Costales, in the newly settled colony of Doña Ana in southern New Mexico. Don Martín was a close companion of the Costales son, Yrenio. They went everywhere together and soon Don Martín was introduced to the U.S. Dragoons stationed at Doña Ana and became involved in tending their horses. Don Martín's older sister became engaged to Yrenio and married him in 1850.

His mother once again remarried in 1849 to a widower from Juárez. He had adult children to whom he gave his holdings in the Juárez area. In order to provide for Don Martín's mother and her children, the newly wedded couple soon moved to Las Cruces where a new town was being established and there was an opportunity for land. The family fortunes

seemed to be changing, but it would be another decade before Don Martín would gain the skills, knowledge and financial base to become a successful freighter and merchant.

Don Martín had very little formal education in Juárez and Ysleta, but he did have personal traits that helped him to be successful. He was very intelligent, ambitious and courageous. He was flexible in this thinking and shrewd in his decision-making. He was honest, took his responsibilities seriously and paid his debts. He was a practical business visionary and had energy to take advantage of the many opportunities offered as southern New Mexico developed. He also was endowed with European good looks, which were extremely important among the privileged in Juárez as well as among the Anglos moving to southern New Mexico. But most important to his success was the mentoring he received from both Mexicans and Americans with whom he interacted on both sides of the Border and the extensive network of business associates he built.

His association with the U.S. Dragoons continued when they moved to establish Fort Fillmore, south of Las Cruces. Local people helped build the fort and farmed for it. He not only tended livestock, but also began working for the post sutler, George Hayward. He learned important things about store keeping, retailing, wholesaling and provisioning of the Fort. He also learned English from the soldiers

continued on page 3

USS New Mexico... (continued from page 1)



USS New Mexico Battleship (BB-40) shelling Okinawa
(United States Navy photograph)

officers! This enterprising BB-40 officer would later become the man who ushered the Navy into the nuclear age - Admiral Hyman G. Rickover.

In early April 1941, Admiral Husband E. Kimmel was ordered to release three battleships, including New Mexico, one aircraft carrier, four cruisers, 17 destroyers, and 16 auxiliaries to the North Atlantic where the situation was critical in preventing Britain from falling to the Germans. These ships, a significant portion of Kimmel's fleet, would add to the safety of convoys supplying Britain. New Mexico departed Pearl Harbor in May. Her assignment to neutrality patrols in U-boat-infested waters is the reason she was not at Pearl Harbor when the Japanese attacked on December 7, 1941.

With the United States entering the war, "The Queen" returned to the Pacific where she served with distinction throughout WWII, providing shore bombardment in support of amphibious assaults by our marines. For her valuable contributions in the Aleutians, Gilberts, Marshalls, Marianas, Philippines and Okinawa, she earned six battle stars. Near the end of the war, she was hit by two kamikazes, one on January 6, 1945 (Statehood Day) which killed the captain and many more, the other on May 12, 1945 off Okinawa. She was present in Tokyo Bay when the Japanese surrendered on September 2, 1945.

After the war, the battle-scarred veteran returned to the East Coast for decommissioning and scrapping. Only a few treasures remain of this great battlewagon: the wardroom's 56-piece Tiffany silver service at the New Mexico History Museum, the ship's helm at the University of New Mexico Naval Science Building, and the ship's two bells on the UNM mall and in the lobby of the New Mexico Tax and Revenue Building in Santa Fe.



Submarine flying New Mexico flag from bridge

(Photo courtesy of Newport News Shipbuilding)

Six decades would pass before another warship would be named USS New Mexico. The Navy League's New Mexico Council petitioned the Navy for five years to name its next nuclear submarine after the state. Finally, on December 6, 2004, under Navy-grey skies, in a special ceremony at the National Hispanic Cultural Center in Albuquerque, Navy Secretary Gordon England officially announced that the Navy's next submarine would carry the name New

Mexico.

To construct New Mexico, it took 14 million manhours by thousands of highly skilled craftsmen during the period 2004-2009. Her price tag was 120 times the cost of our old battleship. She is comprised of one million parts from 4,000 suppliers. There were 8,000 drawings representing her 140 shipboard systems. If she were placed in one of our university football stadiums, she would extend from end zone to end zone and beyond. She is manned by 134 young professionals, average age 22. She was commissioned into the fleet on March 27, 2010 at Naval Station Norfolk.

For the past two years, New Mexico has received major equipment upgrades (to capitalize on technology advancements not available under her 2004 construction contract) and has spent considerable time at sea, training and testing. Underway time has included reactor safeguards examinations, weapons systems testing, tactical readiness evaluations and certification as being fully operational and surge-deployable. Early this year, in an international exercise called Friendship 2012, the Royal Navy's HMS Astute went head-to-head with USS New Mexico. On board these two extremely "high-tech" nuclear submarines were the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Jonathan Greenert, and First Sea Lord, Admiral Mark Stanhope, both top naval officers and submariners in their respective navies. For the eight torpedo exercises, Astute scored two hits, New Mexico five hits and one miss. At present, "our" submarine is home-ported in Groton, Connecticut and preparing for her first 6-month deployment.

The home support team for our undersea warriors is the local Navy League's USS New Mexico Committee. While the committee's initial activity was sponsorship of all events surrounding the commissioning ceremony, its current activities include educating the officers and crew about the Land of Enchantment by sponsoring visits to the state, raising awareness among New Mexicans about our namesake submarine through statewide publicity and presentations, and supporting the crew through such activities as instilling New Mexico themes in the décor of onboard living quarters, and honoring the top sailors with special award plaques. The committee has supplied 130 sets of locally fabricated Southwest-style bunk and passageway curtains, 15 sets of double-door locker panels featuring panoramic views of hot air balloons and New Mexico landscapes, and five crew's mess tabletops in the design of the state flag, with one paying tribute to the 86 battleship New Mexico sailors killed in kamikaze attacks. La Posta de Mesilla Restaurant near Las Cruces has adopted the galley and trained its culinary specialists in New Mexican cuisine, in fact, every other Tuesday is Fajita Tuesday. It is fair to say, through this magnificent submarine, there is a very strong, long-standing relationship between land-locked New Mexico and our blue water Navy.

In an effort to involve the submarine in our Centennial celebrations, the committee has supplied the crew with centennial T-shirts and a centennial license plate, SSN*779, displaying the submarine's hull designation and number. And true to the state having only rear license plates, the special plate is mounted at the aft end of the sail when in

port. The committee also developed a special USS New Mexico first day cover to help mark 100 years of New Mexico statehood. The "Submarine Mail" was cancelled in Santa Fe on January 6, 2012, has been to sea aboard the submarine, and has been signed by the commanding officer, CDR George Perez, certifying that it has been to test depth. These special collectibles are available by contacting the committee through its website.

The naming of submarine New Mexico perpetuates the memory of all who served aboard "The Queen" and is a living tribute to all New Mexicans who

have served, and are serving, in our Armed Forces. With her motto "Defendamos Nuestra Tierra", USS New Mexico is a key sea power resource in executing the Navy's core missions, in deterring those who seek to engage us in war, in safeguarding our democratic freedoms, and in ensuring our nation's economic well-being by protecting our interests throughout the world. She is also a sea-going ambassador for our state, carrying our name worldwide while instilling a sense of pride among citizens statewide.

~DB



Dick Brown, Albuquerque Historical Society speaker at the Albuquerque Museum
(Photograph by Carleen Lazzell, June 17, 2012)

Dick Brown is chairman of the USS New Mexico (SNN-779) Commissioning Committee. He is a frequent speaker at community events. The group sells a badge depicting the crest, designed by New Mexico student Emilee Sena, a first day issue postage cancellation dated January 6, 2012 from Santa Fe, lapel pins, coffee mugs, tee-shirts and other memorabilia.

Ship's galley has been adopted by La Posta de La Mesilla and named *La Posta Abajo del Mar* (La Posta Beneath the Sea). A scale model of the submarine New Mexico is on display at La Posta Restaurant located on the Plaza in Mesilla, New Mexico.

Mr. Brown is a Cold War submarine veteran, having served with the US Naval Submarine Force from 1961 to 1967, with assignments ranging from missile launch technician on our Navy's first missile-carrying submarine to reactor operator on one of our early ballistic missile submarines.

He has served as national director and region president of the Navy League of the United States, the national civilian support organization dedicated to educating

Congress and the American people about the importance of strong sea services our Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard. In 2010 he received the Navy League's highest honor the Distinguished Service Award.

He spearheaded the statewide grassroots initiative that successfully convinced the Navy to name the sixth Virginia-class fast-attack nuclear submarine after the state of New Mexico, and has continuously chaired the USS New Mexico Committee the submarine crew's home support team for the past 13 years.

Brown's proposal to the April 2013 NM-AZ Joint History Conference in Las Cruces has been accepted by the program committee. He will be presenting a paper & PowerPoint on the story of USS Arizona (BB-39) and USS New Mexico (BB-40) and their respective legacies, Arizona Memorial and Submarine New Mexico.

For additional information about USS NEW MEXICO (BB-40) and USS NEW MEXICO (SSN-779).

www.usnewmexico.net.

Dick Brown, USS New Mexico Commissioning Committee

Membership Benefits Historical Society of New Mexico

- *La Crónica de Nuevo México*
(Quarterly Official Publication)
 - Annual Awards
 - Speakers Bureau
 - Scholarship Programs
- Annual New Mexico History Conference
- Cultural Property Review Plaques

Remember Friends & Family with
Gift Memberships
To Join see www.hsnm.org.

Amador ••• (continued from page 1)

and Hayward presented him with an English dictionary in 1852.

Fort Fillmore was built on land leased from Don Hugo Stephenson, born in Kentucky, who married a woman from a prominent Juaréz family in the late 1820s. With her dowry and family connections plus his hard work and industry as a freighter, merchant, farmer and mine developer, he became very wealthy. He lived part of the time near Fort Fillmore and became impressed with Don Martín's abilities. Soon the young man was working for Stephenson at the ore smelter he operated near the Fort. Ore for it came from Stephenson's silver mine in the Organ Mountains. Within a short time Don Martín became the paymaster for the mine and the manager of the smelter. By the late 1850s he had amassed a small fortune from his work for the Fort and Stephenson. He also had learned a great deal about freighting, provisioning, wholesaling and retailing. Moreover Don Hugo Stephenson, not only mentored him, but also provided him with a role model of how to be a successful entrepreneur in the Border region.

Through Don Hugo he also gained a long friendship with his son, Horacio, only a couple of years older than he. The son and his wife moved to Las Cruces after Don Hugo died in the early 1870s. Their wives would become close friends for life. Both Don Martín and the son were active in town and county political life in southern New Mexico and both held office.

While at Fort Fillmore, Don Martín also became acquainted there with one of the up-and-coming businessmen in the Mesilla Valley, John Lemon was born in the East a few years before Don Martín. After being a hotelkeeper in California, he and his wife settled in the town of Mesilla two or three years before the Civil War. He started a retail and wholesale business with a store in Mesilla and provided supplies and livestock feed to U.S. Army forts in southern New Mexico. He would contract with the Army to supply specific commodities and then sub-contract their procurement and freighting to others. Don Martín probably began sub-contracting with John Lemon after Don Hugo sold his Organ Mountains mining operation in 1858. Don Martín knew local men to help in cutting hay and had a wagon or two with teams to transport it to the forts.

John Lemon was an excellent role model and mentor to Don Martín. W.W. Mills wrote of him, "Of all the men of the frontier with whom I have been associated I liked John Lemon best, and I think the most admirable character of them all. He possessed all the best qualities of the frontiersman with none of their vices. He was with us, but not of us.

He was strictly temperate, perfect in habits and morals, and yet a genial, sympathetic companion and faithful friend, and behind a manner almost as modest and quiet as a Quaker's there rested a personal courage and resolution equal to that of Andrew Jackson."

When the Civil War came to the Mesilla Valley, John Lemon was arrested and jailed by the Confederates. They scheduled him to be hung. He escaped and returned to Mesilla only after the Union troops arrived. He began once again to provision the forts and Don Martín once again sub-contracted with him to supply hay for U.S. Army horses. Lemon also was elected to the position of County Judge and became very important in southern New Mexico politics. Through John Lemon's business and political activities, Don Martín would have met and dealt with many of the important Anglo businessmen in southern New Mexico. By the time of John Lemon's untimely death in 1871, Don Martín was already freighting for himself and other merchants to St Louis, to southern New Mexico forts, to mining camps, and getting his own contracts with the Government to provide provisions. He would soon be the only Hispano merchant with a store in Silver City. This was his second store as he already had established one in his family's property in Las Cruces.

Perhaps through Don Martín's association with the Don Hugo, he met a prominent Juaréz businessman Don Juan N. Ruiz and his family sometime around 1860. His relationship with the Ruiz family was to be the most important social/economic/political connection he was to make. The Ruiz family was part of one of the oldest, important and prominent lineages in Juaréz, the García de Noreigas. They were freighters on the Camino Real and the Santa Fe Trail; merchants selling throughout northern Chihuahua; large livestock producers; politicians in local, state and national offices; the holders of the Santa Theresa land grant and involved in military affairs both locally and nationally.

Ruiz had married into this lineage and carried on with their merchant, freight, and agricultural interests. He freighted and wholesaled, not only to Chihuahua City, but also to the mines in northern Chihuahua. He invested in land and mines with other prominent merchants and bred livestock on his land.

When Ruiz was accused of crimes by Confederate sympathizers in an early 1861 Mesilla newspaper, he appealed to Don Martín to help him deny the charges. Don Martín was courting one of his twin daughters, Refugio. With the coming of the Confederate Army to the Mesilla Valley a little later in the year, Don Martín

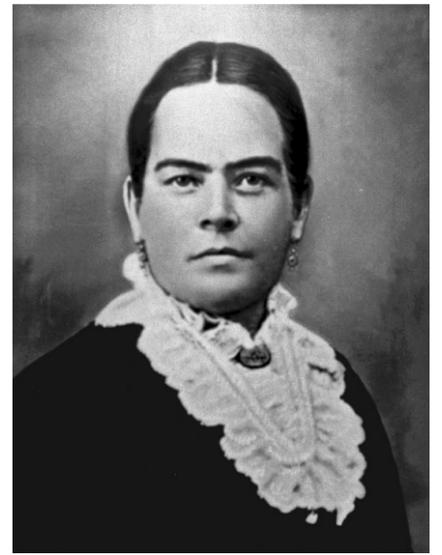
decided to go to Juaréz with his teams and wagons. His old affiliations with Union troops and his business dealings with John Lemon put him in danger. By leaving for Mexico he not only would avoid being arrested, but he would save his wagons and animals from confiscation.

Like his old mentor, Don Hugo Stephenson, he married into a prominent Juaréz family in December. Refugio Ruiz was very much in love with him. Her dowry was substantial enabling Don Martín to invest in more wagons and teams. After his marriage he began freighting with his father-in-law from Juaréz to Chihuahua City and participating in various business dealings of Don Juan. He worked directly with him for over a year. When the Union troops were once again firmly in control of the Mesilla Valley, he returned to Las Cruces in early 1863. He was a great deal wealthier than when he left. Moreover, he had acquired a highly educated wife, who would assist him in running his business affairs while he was freighting and would be his financial manager.

Because he and his father-in-law had a disagreement over a joint business venture Don Martín conducted in 1864, it is unclear as to how much Ruiz involved him in his liberal political activities. Ruiz provided President Benito Juaréz' troops in Chihuahua with guns and material to make armaments. In 1865 he gave the President a sizeable sum of money that was sent through Santa Fe to the Mexican Ambassador in Washington, D.C. for Mexican prisoners in Paris. President Juaréz stayed with the Ruiz family in 1866 when he was in town. When he moved on to Chihuahua City, Don Juan provided more supplies to him. Don Martín did provide a close link for Ruiz on the American side of the Border and the rift between them seemed to be healed early in 1865. It would not have been terribly difficult for Don Martín to get the money for the French to Santa Fe or to help with supplies for the Mexican troops.

Don Juan did give all kinds of advice and information to Don Martín regarding freighting: what to tell customs officials; how to care for teams of mules and oxen; where to get the best prices on produce to sell; who to use as teamsters and wagon master and how many armed men to send on dangerous trails. By letter, he often told Don Martín of his business dealings, of his political activities and of various extended family affairs. He sent goods and produce for Don Martín to sell. In return, he asked Don Martín to provide various manufactured items of cloth, clothing and shoes for his family.

Through the Ruiz family, Don Martín had access to wealthy Juaréz merchants, freighters, bankers, landowners, clergy and civic leaders. The Ruiz network also extended to politicians, businessmen and military leaders in Chihuahua City and



Refugio Ruiz de Amador when she was in her late 20s or early 30s (NMSU Archives #ms00040171)

Mexico City. Don Martín and his wife received social, business and moral support from members of this network for their entire lifetimes.

Don Martín's early mentors and their networks enabled him to be successful before the railroad would change forever business prospects in southern New Mexico. Don Martín then would take advantage of the new opportunities, but his business ventures would be based still on transportation.

He continued to sell retail, but now the merchandise for his store was brought by rail from both coasts. He still sold wholesale, but now the produce from his farms was shipped by rail throughout northern Mexico and southern New Mexico. He maintained short distance wagon freighting for rail-carried merchandise and mail. He developed a taxi service to and from the railroad depot for travelers to Las Cruces and Organ. He developed a hotel for travelers and a hall for presentation of troupes of entertainers reaching Las Cruces. He purchased rental properties in Las Cruces for newcomers to town.

Yet, the roots of his success in all these new ventures still lay in what he learned from his mentors and the opportunities they provided; in his connections to the social, economic and political networks that overlapped and reinforced one another and in the talent and skills he had to make use of the knowledge, influence and assistance the mentors and networks provided him. He was not a self-made man nor did he succeed solely on his own. Like all successful men he had a hand up from others. ~TRR

This paper was presented at the New Mexico History Conference in Ruidoso in 2011. Reynolds is a trained anthropologist and works mostly in ethnohistory. She has also done research on the tornado and floods that almost destroyed Las Cruces in 1875. Terry R. Reynolds, Ph.D. is a retired Curator at NMSU Museum.



HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO



Membership Services

FROM OUR PRESIDENT

We are already seeing a huge influx of early registrations coming in for the 2013 Arizona/New Mexico Joint History Conference (Las Cruces, April 18 -20)--perhaps half from our Arizona friends! This will be a terrific conference and a great opportunity for all of us to extend our historical boundaries to our partner state. Be sure and save the dates for the 2014 New Mexico History Conference to be held in Las Vegas on the campus of New Mexico Highlands University, May 2-4. This will be an exciting conference focusing on the history of Las Vegas and northeastern New Mexico.

By the time you read this issue of *La Crónica de Nuevo México*, all of you who are members will have received your ballot for election of HSNM Officers and Board members. This is my last of two terms as President (and my last "President's Note"), and I'm very pleased that Janet Sayers, currently the President of the Albuquerque Historical Society, has agreed to be the candidate for President. Janet will bring a great deal of energy and enthusiasm to this position, and I am looking forward to her tenure.

Our other four officers are on the ballot as candidates to continue in their positions for the next two years (Don Bullis as 1st Vice-president, Bruce Gjeltema as 2nd Vice-president, John Ramsay as Treasurer, and Baldwin G. Burr as Secretary). We are also very fortunate to have a great slate of candidates for At-large Board positions, including three incumbents, Carleen Lazzell (your Editor of *La Crónica de Nuevo México*), Deborah Slaney, and Stephen Zimmer. There are

also two former Board member candidates, Fredrick Friedman and Margaret (Maggie) Espinosa McDonald (a past-President of the Society also) and two fresh faces, Andrés Armijo, a program manager for academic programs at UNM, and Linda Tigges, a retired land planner specializing in historic properties. This will bring the Board up to its maximum of 25 members and will be an exceptionally strong group.

We all want to thank Martha Liebert, who is going off the Board, for her service to the Society. As many of you know, Martha is the "godmother" of Sandoval County history. According to some knowledgeable sources, Martha is the person most responsible for building the Sandoval County Historical Society up to be one of the largest and strongest historical societies in New Mexico.

Finally, I want to express my personal thanks to the support of all of you and especially our Board for what has now been twelve years serving as an Officer on the Board, first as Treasurer, then as 1st Vice-president, and now finishing as President. I will be supporting Janet Sayers as President and the Board however I can as the "Immediate Past-president", but also hope to have time to work on some book projects that have been languishing and deserve attention.

Sincerely,
Michael Stevenson

This Newspaper is published by
HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO
P.O. Box 1912
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504

EDITOR

Carleen C. Lazzell
Ronald R. Hadad - Associate Editor

OFFICERS

Michael Stevenson - President
Don Bullis - 1st Vice President
Bruce Gjeltema - 2nd Vice President
John Ramsay - Treasurer
Baldwin G. Burr - Secretary

DIRECTORS

Martha Shipman Andrews
John Porter Bloom
David L. Caffey
Henrietta M. Christmas
Doyle Daves
Kathryn Flynn
René Harris
Kermit Hill
Carleen Lazzell
Nancy Owen Lewis
Martha Liebert
Richard Melzer
Kate Nelson
Janet Saiers
Naomi Sandweiss
Dawn Santiago
Deborah Slaney
Robert J. Tórréz
Stephen Zimmer

Ex-Officio Rick Hendricks - State Historian
Ex-Officio Frances Levine - NM History Museum
Ex-Officio Craig Newbill - NM Humanities Council

The opinions expressed in signed articles are not necessarily those of the Historical Society of New Mexico. Mention of a product, service or profession in these columns is not to be considered an endorsement of that product, service or profession by the Historical Society of New Mexico
Printed by Tri-State Printing

La Crónica de Nuevo México



Number 95

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO

Post Office Box 1912

Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

TO:

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID

Santa Fe, New Mexico
87501
Permit No. 95



The Amador Hotel, at the corner of Water and Amador in downtown Las Cruces was originally constructed by Martín Amador in 1866 as a residence for his family. After building a new home across the street in 1878, the original home became a hotel. Because of its success, the family added a second floor, a balcony and lobby in 1885. The above photograph was taken in the 1930s when it was a white Territorial style. Since that time, it has been remodeled to a Pueblo Revival style. In 1970, Citizens Bank purchased it from the Amador family.
(Photograph courtesy of www.las-cruces.org)



La Posta Restaurant, 2410 Calle de San Albino, Mesilla Plaza is known for its New Mexican cuisine and Southwestern ambiance. Early records indicate that the La Posta Compound was originally constructed in the 1840s. After the Civil War, the buildings became a stop on the Butterfield Stage Line. In 1939 Katy Griggs Carmunez opened La Posta de Mesilla Restaurant. Today the business is owned and operated by her great niece Jerean Camunez Hutchinson and her husband Tom, retired U.S. Navy captain. A model of the USS New Mexico submarine is on display at the restaurant. The lobby has large bird cages with macaws, toucans and cockatoos to entertain the customers.

New Books for Your New Mexico History Bookshelves

Compiled by Richard Melzer

Barbara Ansel and Steve Fitch. **Sun, Sticks and Mud: 1000 Years of Earth Building in the Desert Southwest.** Madrid, New Mexico: La Sombra Books, 2012.

Lyn Bleiler and Charles Strong. **Santa Fe Art and Architecture.** Charleston: Arcadia Press, 2012.

Anne M. Butler. **Across God's Frontiers: Catholic Sisters in the American West, 1850-1920.** Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012.

Kathleen P Chamberlain. **In the Shadow of Billy the Kid: Susan McSween and the Lincoln County War.** Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2013.

Catherine Colby. **Kate Chapman: Adobe Builder in 1930s Santa Fe.** Santa Fe: Sunstone Press, 2012.

William W. Dunmire. **New Mexico's Spanish Livestock: Four Centuries of Animals, Land, and People.** Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2013.

B. Sunday Eiselt. **Becoming White Clay: A History and Archaeology of Jicarilla Apache Enclave.** Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2012.

Ralph Estes. **The Autobiography of Billy the Kid: As Told to Ralph Estes.** n.p.: Black Rose Writing Books, 2013.

Bruce A. Glasrud, ed. **African American History in New Mexico: Portraits from 500 Years.** Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2013.

José Hernández. **Mexican American Colonization during the 19th Century: A History of the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands.** New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Bill Johnston. **Early New Mexico License Plates.** Organ, New Mexico: n.p., 2013.

William S. Kiser. **Dragoons in Apacheland: Conquest and Resistance in Southern New Mexico, 1846-1861.** Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2013.

Matthew Liebmann. **Revolt: An Archaeological History of Pueblo Resistance and Revitalization in 17th-Century New Mexico.** Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2012.

Jane Mahoney. **Albuquerque's Huning Castle Neighborhoods.** Charleston: Arcadia Press, 2013.

Ana Pacheco. **Legendary Locals of Santa Fe.** Charleston: Arcadia Press, 2013.

Katherine M. Pomonis. **Uncovering the History of the Albuquerque Greek Community, 1880-1952.** Santa Fe: Sunstone Press, 2012.

Among the Dust of Thieves History Comes Alive in Local Film Production

By Carleen Lazzell

On January 31, 1896, fifty-seven year old Colonel Albert Jennings Fountain and his eight-year old son Henry left Lincoln to return to their home in Mesilla, a three-day journey. Driving a buckboard with a team of horses, the pair arrived at Chalk Hill, a site near White Sands on February first and they have not been seen since that day.

Circumstantial evidence at the scene indicates they were murdered, although their bodies have never been located. To learn more, see *The Life and Times of Colonel Albert Jennings Fountain* by A. M. Gibson (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, first printing 1965; reprinted 1975 and 1986) and *Murder on the White Sands: the Disappearance of Albert and Henry Fountain* by Corey Recko (Denton:

University, of North Texas Press, 2007).

Filmmakers Sean Pilcher and Matt Wilson, both graduates of the Creative Media Institute at New Mexico State University undertook the ambitious task of visualizing the mystery. They began their project in January 2010 by doing research, writing a script, deciding on New Mexico locations and selecting a cast of local actors. Tim Maloney plays the part of Albert J. Fountain.

The forty-three minute film titled *Among the Dust of Thieves* was shown at the Fountain Theater, Mesilla, in mid-January 2013. A DVD has been produced, which is available at the Mesilla Book Center and at various other shops on Mesilla Plaza. It can also be purchased over the Internet. ~CCL



Historical Society of New Mexico! www.hsnm.org