

CATRON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SEPT/OCT 2016

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UPCOMING EVENTS



December 3 — CCHS Christmas Party

January 20 at 4: 00 — Cattle Drives



Renew your Membership!

HOW TO RENEW, OR JOIN THE CCHS



Send a check or money order to:
CCHS, PO Box 263
Quemado NM 87829

Individual Membership \$20/year
Family Membership \$30/year
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2016 CCHS OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT: Sally Blum, 575-772-2539

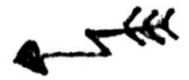
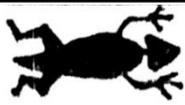
VICE PRESIDENT: Becky Bratten

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DIRECTORS:

*Doris Clymo, Bonnie Armstrong,
Nettie Carrejo, Wayne Ashby*



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Most families have a defining moment in their lives. Sometimes it is a graduation, a marriage, the birth of a child, or something not as monumental. I was thinking what events and influences did history first become important to me. Dad and Mom were both avid readers and our home always had a library of books on many subjects. My mom favored history of the West and my dad favored poetry, war and a varied array of topics. One of our trips to New Mexico we drove on the old Santa Fe Trail and explored historical places, especially in New Mexico. The family moved to New Mexico and my father commuted back and forth to Detroit. On weekends when my Dad was in New Mexico, my Mom would plan a trip centered on history. They even bought a travel trailer so we could visit national monuments. At first as a child I was not interested. I wanted to stop at every horse stable or pasture with a horse and find out if I could ride any of the horses. But as we traveled in our open Jeep or took our travel trailer with our Suburban (I think it was a Suburban) to many historical sites, I slowly became enthralled with history. My mom of course was enthusiastic and showed me books that were about the Southwest. One book I remember was *The Land of Enchantment* by Lilian Whiting. Eventually my mom and brother moved to Santa Fe from Ann Arbor. I married and moved to California and eventually moved to the ranch in New Mexico. My older brother, Doug, was already in New Mexico at the ranch. My Dad moved to Los Lunas and visited the ranch often.

When Eric Skrivseth was starting the Catron County Historical Society in 2008, I asked to be involved. This love for history that my mom cultivated led me to eventually become President in 2010 when Eric moved from Quemado. Now it is time for someone else to take on the Presidency with new ideas for the future of the Catron County Historical Society. We have the museum now and we need new enthusiasm for the many challenges ahead. Please step up and help preserve the history of Catron County.

MUSEUM—Bonnie Armstrong has been so helpful with the museum. New windows in the upstairs were installed as the old ones were ready to fall out. Bonnie coordinated having the cement in front poured and a handicapped ramp installed. He had cement poured around the back foundation as water was running in. We are getting ready for the Centennial June 4 through 6.

PAST PROGRAMS—We did not have a program in October but on November 4 Brenda Wilkinson gave a terrific talk on the Magdalena stock driveway. Helen has written about the program in this newsletter.



MAGDALENA STOCK DRIVEWAY TRAIL

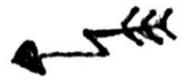
by Helen Cress

Brenda Wilkinson, who has been the lead archaeologist for the Socorro office of the BLM since 2002, gave a very well-organized and precise history of this historic sheep and cattle driveway at the Quemado Senior Center at 2:00 PM on Friday, November 4. She had put together an excellent slide show and had some wonderful historic pictures. This was of great historic interest to the few of us who had any personal experience with the trail or remember our parents speaking of their travel on that trail.

The trail, which ranked in importance with the Chisolm and Goodnight Loving livestock trails, was begun in 1865; as she pointed out, this was only 20 years after

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UPCOMING EVENTS

December 3—Annual CCHS Christmas Party Here is a little of what Lisa Blessing put in the invitation:

Santa had made it clear to the red nose and without any of his “Ho, ho, ho’s” that Rudolph had better be able to find the Quemado Senior Center this December. Santa remembered last year’s CCHS dinner with great fondness and was looking forward to his special plate from Paul this year. Visions of succulent roast pork jostling flavorful baked turkey nestled against smashed taters and yams and vying for space with hearty posole, red Chile and gravy made his stomach growl, his beard itch and his eyes swim.

Sweat popped out on Santa’s forehead as he happily remembered those delicious appetizers made by the board and that panoply of desserts brought by the members which made such a delectable parenthesis to the groaning main course. Fear that this year might be different creased Santa’s brow only to ease as a red dot in the night sky drew brighter and nearer. Mighty antlers shook as the word rushed from stall to stall, “Rudolph’s back from recon. We’re on again for this year!”

And so is the annual Catron County Historical Society Christmas party. Members will be called to merriment at 4:30 PM on December 3, 2016 at the Quemado Senior Center with plenty of time to munch on a bounty of appetizers. At 5:00 PM plates piled high with satisfaction will start flying out of the kitchen so folks can tuck into another feast for the memory books. Don’t forget, CCHS boys and girls of all ages, to transform those visions of dancing sugarplums into your best dessert to fetch to the feast tempting even those who can’t loosen that belt one more notch.

January 20, 4:00 PM Quemado Senior Center—Speaker Ethel Major on “Cattle Drives” (Editor’s note: You don’t want to miss Ethel’s talk—she not only has great stories, but is a great storyteller as well.) ◀◆▶

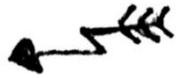
the end of the Civil War, and one year prior to the surrender of Nana and Geronimo. The reason for its onset at that time was that the branch of the railroad from Socorro to Magdalena had just been completed, so now stock producers had a way to ship their produce to market. Many more sheep than cattle traversed it. The railway was actually constructed for use in the mines around Kelly, to transport ore, but it became a big shipping center for all whom needed one. (I recall my parents driving the almost 90 miles there many times to receive freight.)

A new version of the Homestead Act, specifically for livestock-raising, was passed in 1916, and allowed those who filed a full 640 acres. The Division of Grazing agency provided for the driveway. It was the third such designated driveway in New Mexico. Because the area was initially not fenced, herds of animals overgrazed the land, and there were also insufficient watering areas. In 1933, Franklin Roosevelt initiated the CCC program as part of his New Deal, and able-bodied young men, aged 25 to 30 years, were employed to do such work as was needed for the driveway project. Fences were built. Wells were drilled at some point, approximately every 10 miles. Erosion work was done.

By 1935, 1936 and 1937, there was a significant increase in the grass growth within the driveway, which was from one to five miles wide, in various areas. There was a holding area near Magdalena, as different groups were arriving with stock and had to wait their turns to arrange delivery with the railroad.

Following the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, which regulated the use of public lands, that agency merged with the General Land Office in 1946. The Grazing Service received large budget cuts and so local driveway users formed the Stock Driveway Association, with H.B. Birmingham and other local stockmen, who col-





HOMESTEADING SERIES: MY HOMESTEADER GRANDPARENTS: JESSE C. BROWN & GROVER C. POWELL

By Bonnie Brown Armstrong

Grover Powell was the first to homestead in this area in 1914. He was approximately 16 miles north of Quemado, not far from Terchado Mountain. Bill and Karole Green now own his homestead.

He came from Clarinton, Texas. After he staked out his homestead, he went back to marry the love of his life, Maratha Litteral. Bernadyne Brown, my mother, was eighteen months old when they came back to New Mexico. This time coming in a covered wagon with their infant child.

My grandfather had to haul water from Marrianna Springs, which was guarded by Nation's riders in the daytime, keeping the homesteaders away as they were claiming as much land as they could by putting out these riders, giving them fees to complete the homestead file. My grandfather would later hand dig a well at his house.

My grandfather Powell was a cattleman and ran cattle on range that was miles and miles of open range. This ran all the way to the Narrows. Along with the cattle, the Hubbells later would run sheep. There was another big sheep rancher who ranched up toward the Narrows as well.

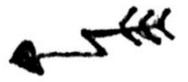
Bill Green shared a story with me about his dad, who was a close neighbor, and my grandfather. It was probably in 1931 when heavy snows started in November and their cattle were scattered all the way out toward the Narrows. Grover Powell and Fletcher Green tied a rope onto a wheel and each headed north to drag a trail to bring their cattle home so they could then house and feed and care for them. They were way up in the lava when Fletcher looked around and no Grover behind him, at which point he realized Grover, horse and all, had fallen into a lava cavity completely disappearing! By this time, the horse and Grover came plowing their way out with no harm to horse or rider! They gathered their cattle and headed home. A long day!

My grandfather, grandmother, my dad and six daughters came from northwest Oklahoma in 1926. My grandfather was a sharecropper in Oklahoma. He signed a promissory note to the bank for a friend who needed to buy seed. He was to be paid in the fall but the friend defaulted on the note! The bank came and took all of my grandfather's farm equipment and his team, leaving him nothing to make a living with.

The Fathrees, who were Brown's neighbors, had come to New Mexico sometime before this and had tried to get the Browns to come to New Mexico and file a homestead with them. After he lost his farm equipment, my grandfather told his family that it looked like now they had little choice but to go to New Mexico. They picked cotton in western Oklahoma and Texas, making their way to New Mexico. It must have been late fall when they got to Fathree's about eleven miles north of Quemado. There was an empty house near Fathrees where they stayed the winter. Grandma planted a garden when spring came. My grandfather and Dad located the place they would be homesteading and began to build their home. My dad was nineteen years old. The girls were from their late teens to about six being the youngest. They had left the little grave of a little girl back in Oklahoma. She was their oldest child and had died of diphtheria.

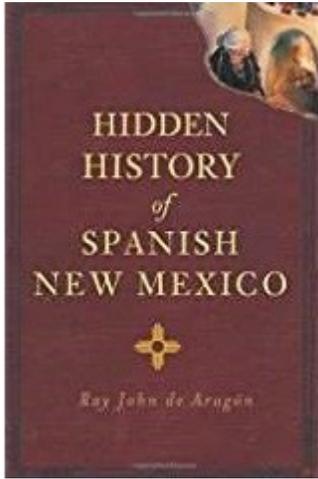
My Grandfather Brown was a farmer, so he put in crops of beans and corn. He got a small herd of cattle. He knew little about raising cattle and farming in dryland New Mexico was a challenge in itself. My other Grandfather Powell helped him with suggestions.

In 1931 when the heavy snows came, they took their cattle up on the high slopes of Veteado Mountain to eat the browse that the deer eat in winter. They had made troughs out of big logs and took tubs to melt snow over a fire, filling the troughs with water for the cattle to drink. This was the girls' job. Everyone was kept busy! My Aunt told me they didn't lose one cow!



BOOK REVIEWS

Hidden History of Spanish New Mexico by Ray Jon de Aragon—Reviewed by Laura Brush



About 300 years of New Mexico’s written history focuses on the Spanish, before the Anglos took over the narrative. That leaves plenty of time for “hidden history”. Unfortunately, this book spends most of the first third of its short length discussing the history of the Iberian peninsula and other parts of Europe and much of the second third discussing Native Americans, including those of various tribes in many parts of the country other than the Southwest (East Coast, northern Plains, Pacific Northwest, and elsewhere), with only tangential references to the Spanish. And much of both sections paints a far rosier picture than I think the Moors or Indians would recognize.



The final third of the book, titled ‘Death, Faith, and Life’, discusses aspects of colonial life which, if not hidden, at least don’t always make it into the official histories of the time. Religious faith in the Catholic Church was a key component of that culture. The author makes the point that that faith was a necessary part of the success of the

curanderas and *medicas*, local women whose use of herbs and other plants is compared favorably with the widespread practice of the time’s “civilized medicine”—bleeding, purging, opium, and other stressful approaches. There is an extensive discussion of the Penitente Brotherhood and the Carmelitas, providing a far more positive description than the usual understanding of those groups and their contributions to everyday life.

In short, this book is not scholarly, comprehensive, nor objective. It does provide another peek into the early historical life of New Mexico. The book is generously illustrated with 54 photos and other illustrations, many from the author’s own collection or, judging by the credits, from other members of his family. These illustrations may well be the most valuable part of the book; some are recently taken of churches and terrain, while others are historical. There is also a four-page bibliography, although no index.

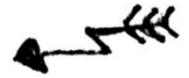
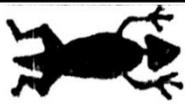


My Grandmother Powell loved writing and hurried with her house work so she could read. She left some of her poetry and a diary she had started in September 1931. In the diary she tells it was a dry summer and the rains didn’t come until September. She tells how it rained for days and everything was in her words, “simply too wet!” Frost didn’t come until after the rains, but too late to make feed.

She tells how Grover and Fletcher drove their steers to Thoreau to sell. They got a whopping 4.75 cents a pound! On the way, they had lost four head of Grover’s steers so they didn’t get home as quick as Fletcher, but found the lost steers and brought them home. It wasn’t too long before the snow fell; on November 22 twenty-six inches of snow fell on a land that had no summer rain and therefore no grass. They had to move their cattle where they could graze on the browse. They finally got some feed hauled in from Magdalena and survived a bad winter.

Both my grandfathers homestead within seven miles of each other, one in the shadow of Veteado Mountain and the other one a few miles from Terchado Mountain. As a child, I thought of the mountains being theirs. Such beautiful mountains!





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 Garda Siocana Kennels—Molly Thomas
 The Adobe Café and Bakery

SSS

TREASURER'S REPORT

by Barb Adams

Income (Aug, Sept, Oct).....	\$1,021.00
Expenses	
Printing	106.37
Construction	3,362.25
Utilities	225.01
Ending Balance 10-28, 2016	\$2,735.05



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lected fees for maintaining the driveway and purchased non-federal lands to supplement it when that was needed.

Beginning in the 1930's, some ranchers were trucking their cattle instead of driving them, though trucks were not always available due to WWII gasoline rationing. By the 1960's, the driveway began to receive attention as a novelty. The last herd of cattle driven over it was by Dave Farr in 1970. It was 120 miles in its entire length, with branches from Springerville, AZ along Highway 60, tie-ins on the St. Augustine plains from Reserve, Luna, Horse Springs, etc., and from Dusty and Winston, and Ms. Wilkinson has found some evidence of use from Zuni Salt Lake and the old San Mateo mining town of Rosedale.

The Magdalena stock pens have been maintained and are a historical site for all in this area to enjoy. Personal accounts were presented by a few local residents who have some memories about the driveway, and were very much appreciated and enjoyed by the rest of us: those were Bub Adams, Bonnie Armstrong, Matt Williams, and Billy Green.



CATRON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MISSION STATEMENT

The Catron County Historical Society was founded in January of 2008 and is an organization whose mission is to preserve, present, educate, and inform...by increasing the knowledge of Catron County history through outings, programs, oral history interviews, and a compilation of books pertaining to Catron County. We have recently become a non-profit corporation, and are in the process of locating a museum and visitor center, continuing with an oral history library and the book library, and constructing a website.

The future of the CCHS is in the members and volunteers who help to preserve the history of Catron County. } } }