

# CATRON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MAY/JUNE 2017

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**Buy a Raffle Ticket to Win a Steer & Processing!**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

August 12—Grand Opening & Raffle Drawing

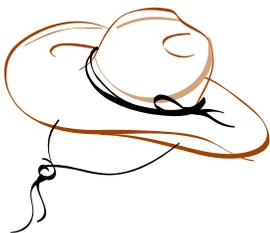
September 9-Pie Festival, Pie Town

September-Tour to Paleontology Site (Date TBD)

October—Paul Templeton Presentation

December 2—Christmas Party

## 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  
CCHS Business Membership   \$50/year

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## 2017 CCHS OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT: Sally Blum, 575-772-2539

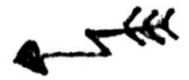
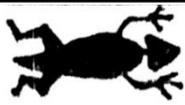
VICE PRESIDENT: Bonnie Armstrong

SECRETARY: Helen Cress • TREASURER: Barb Adams

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Shannon Donnelly • sdonnellyNM@gmail.com

### DIRECTORS:

Wayne Ashby, Lee Bond,  
Doris Clymo, Nettie Carrejo,  
Charlie McCarty



## **FROM THE PRESIDENT**

**O**ur directors have changed: Tommy Padilla has stepped down. He added so much to CCHS in the short time on the board. He also donated the steer for the raffle. In his place, Charlie McCarty of Reserve has agreed to be one of our directors.

### **GRAND OPENING OF CATRON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM**

I will begin with information from Eric Skrivseth, the first president and founder of Catron County Historical Society.

“Sally Blum asked me to write up what I remembered from the process of founding the Catron County Historical Society. I moved to Catron County in 2005 and became interested in the local history soon after. As I read and learned about it, I also spoke with county residents with similar interest. I especially remember conversations with Craig Crissinger, Bob Roland, Nick Baca, Frank Davila, my wife Margaret, and I’m sure there were many others. Mark Hubbell mentioned there used to be a historical society in Catron County and a relative of his, I believe his mom, was once involved. I began to wonder why a county that had so much history and so many interesting characters in its past (Butch Cassidy, Geronimo, etc.) didn’t have a current historical society.

In the Fall of 2007, I decided to gauge the interest for forming a historical society. I set up meetings, starting that winter, at different community centers around the county, where I gave a presentation about starting a historical society. We’d scheduled one in Glenwood that was cancelled at the last minute when it seemed that we’d have to drive 100 miles in an ice storm. I recall posting fliers at community bulletin boards in various places and getting a blurb published in the *Mountain Mail* about the meetings. I also talked it up with customers at the hardware store I was operating in Quemado.

The meetings had a fairly good turnout at Quemado, Pie Town and Datil, but only a few people at Reserve (it was pitch black and very cold that night), and I still regret the cancelled program at Glenwood. We had signup sheets that became the nucleus for the membership roster. I started a newsletter and began scheduling programs. I tried to have a monthly speaker and held the programs around the county so the CCHS would be accessible to all residents at least some of the time. Turnout varied, but the organization continued to grow. The old newsletters should be the best source for information about the speakers.

Rhonda List took over as newsletter editor, and I began soliciting other people to step into leadership roles. The recession hit in 2009 and eventually took my business with it. I left the county in 2010 to return to the rail industry, and Sally Blum stepped forward to take over as president. With her leadership team has done a lot to build a more formal leadership structure and incorporate as a non-profit. I am very encouraged by the CCHS taking the next step to open a museum.”

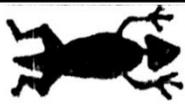
### **OUR JOURNEY TO THE MUSEUM IN QUEMADO**

When I took over as President, CCHS held their meetings at the Quemado Senior Center and local community centers. The Senior Center accommodated our meetings and along with the Quemado School hosted our annual Christmas Party. Always on the agenda was to have a building of our own to house an archives of historical recordings and videos of important ranches, owners and figures in Catron County, historical memorabilia, a place to hold fund raisers, and a place to have meetings. The board had buildings in Quemado offered to us but none seemed appropriate.

In 2014, Bob Roland became aware of a building owned by Dia Art Foundation on Highway 60 in Quemado which was occupied by the Lightning Field operation. Bob thought this would be perfect for a CCHS museum. Thus began the negotiations with the Dia Art Foundation. On February 23, 2015 Dia Art Foundation donated this building to CCHS. We are leasing 782 square feet of the building back to the Lightning Field operation, about 20% of the total square footage. The upstairs is perfect for our library and storage of historical memorabilia. The downstairs has the perfect room for all the Russell Lee photos donated to CCHS. We have 40 of the pictures framed and hung, but need framing for 100 additional historic Russell Lee Photos. In the main room, we could have as many as 100 or more attendees, and the building has an area at the back for restrooms and a kitchen

The museum has had much accomplished, but still needs work. The renovation for this historic building began in

*(Continued on page 3)*



**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**August 12 —Catron County Museum Grand Opening, 10 AM to 4 PM.** Bring your antiques for donation so we can display them. The board will be available to catalog your donations. Historical DVDs will be available, along with T-Shirts, Calendars of Historic Churches in Catron County, books by local authors, art by local artists and artisans, and a dinosaur display, Indian artifact display and framed Russel Lee photos donated and hung by Dia Art Foundation. Speakers from 2 to 4 PM. Raffle drawing for steer and processing at 4 PM. Ticket on sale all day. Refreshments.

**September 8—Pie Festival Booth**

**September—Doug Wolfe, White Mountain Dinosaur Exploration Center in Springerville.** Tour to Fence Lake to a paleontology site and will explain the geology of the area, including the Salt Lake. Date to be determined.

**October—Paul Templeton presentation.** At the Senior Center, and Paul will talk about his family. Date to be determined.

**December 2—Annual Christmas Party.** At the CCHS Museum. Paul Templeton will decorate and board will do the main course with desserts and appetizers by members.

*(Continued from page 2)*

April, 2015. Our façade was beautified with new windows, doors, stucco and cement. The backyard was cleaned during the 'Clean Up Quemado' on June 2, 2017, and the CCHS sign was hung on June 26, 2017. The frames for the windows in the back have been replaced thank to Nettie Carrejo.

Our first event at the museum was our annual meeting, April 15, 2017. Our speaker was Richard Melzer who talked about Gus Raney. We borrowed chairs and tables from the community center, held our silent auction and sold T-shirts, books and calendars. Since that time we have bought 14 tables, and six more tables were donated. We need to buy or find chairs.

We video all our programs and sell the DVDs to raise money. These videos will preserve our historical meetings for the future. We are already receiving donations of historical books and artifacts for the museum, and welcome any donation of furniture, desks, book cases, pictures, etc.

Besides the grand opening, we intend to have our annual Christmas Party on December 2 at the museum, and we have ideas for the future. We want to put up an overhang and keep with the tradition of the Western influence to make the outside look like a Old West store front. The neighboring building which shares a mutual wall has expressed an interest in working with us to portray the same image. We are in the process of restoring the restrooms with the help of TLC Plumbing. Construction of the infrastructure will begin soon with the help of a local person. We also plan on putting an "open sign" outside to let the public know our hours. The board is working on various displays of historical memorabilia and two display cabinets have been donated, one by Jim Bratten and one by Nettie Carrejo.

We have a website now at [CatronHistory.org](http://CatronHistory.org) and we are on face book thanks to Becky Bratten. We are on the move and need more donations to accomplish our goals. We hope to see you at the grand opening.

**PAST PROGRAMS**

On May 19, Ron Henderson spoke at the Senior Center. I was not able to attend, but Helen said it was one of the better talks and has written about it in this newsletter.

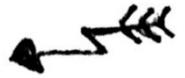
On June 24, the CCHS held the annual BBQ at our ranch and Helen did a write up on this.

June 26 was the hanging of the CCHS sign; thanks to Jeff Chapman, Gary Hegg, Gary Blum and Steve Haltom for helping. Those in attendance to celebrate: Carol Hegg, Sally Blum, Wayne Ashby, Bonnie Armstrong, Barbara Adams, Doris Clymo, Helen Cress, Nettie Carrejo, Kelly Gatlin, Ken and Sharon Bostick, Melody Fisher, the sign maker and her family. The sign hanging was also featured in the Catron Courier.

Our Fourth of July Celebration was held outside the museum with our tables of books, calendars, membership application and tee shirts, and we gave tours of the museum.

*NOTE: Check next issue for the continuing Homestead Series: The Putney Mesa Murders.*





## **RON HENDERSON ON THE U.S. FOREST SERVICE**

By Helen Cress

On May 19 at the Quemado Senior Center, and following a well-received and much-appreciated meal provided by the staff, Ron Henderson gave a wonderful, thorough history of the U.S. Forest Service, describing its origin and progression. Ron himself had a life-long career with the Forest Service. He spoke of the way the agency evolved in the West. After being educated in forestry and working in that field, he retired and became a historian. With his wife assisting him, they discovered some very old records in the Magdalena Forest Service, all dated prior to 1930. At the time, no one in the Magdalena office was even aware these records existed.

Ron showed a slide of a vast area of land in the western U.S., west of the Mississippi, that was owned by the Federal government. The government wanted to get rid of this public land, thinking it would be financially advantageous to the country if it were owned and developed, but very few could afford the asking prices of full market value and sales efforts failed in 1804 and again in 1841. The U.S. went to war in 1848 over a dispute with Mexico over this land.

The mining Act in 1872 allowed purchase of public land along with a claim. Mining was an important part of Forest Service history. In 1860, the first Homestead Act allowed anyone to claim 160 acres of land. The acreage was later increased to 320 and still later to 640 acres. In the 1880's, as the railroads were coming westward, for every six miles of rail that was laid, the railroad was given vast amounts of public land. Many in the South thought this land would be developed as large plantations, worked by slaves, but when the Civil War came along, that idea was defeated.

Until 1933, running livestock was done on a first-come, first-served basis and homesteaders competed as they could with ranchers over use of the land. By 1891, the Federal government was exerting some control over land use, though, setting up federal reserves. The first such reserve was Yellowstone, set up by Benjamin Harrison. The second was the Pecos. These reserves were under the control of the army. Before the actual Forest Service was established, Pinchot was put in charge of these federal lands. Being a friend of Teddy Roosevelt, he persuaded Roosevelt to transfer such lands from the Department of Interior to the Department of Agriculture in 1905. The following year, the Homestead Act was changed to give out only lands suitable for farming. Roosevelt came under fire for setting aside so much land as forest, and eventually his power to do so was restricted. He gave his agents two weeks, after which time they could reserve no more forest land. In that time, 16,000,000 acres of forest land were added.

Locally, the Gila National Forest was established in 1899, and stretches from Aragon to an area north of Silver City. It includes the ghost towns of Chloride and Winston. In 1906, the Magdalena Forest Service became a reality and included The San Augustine Plains, which were eliminated in 1907 because they were not timbered. The Big Burro area was made a part of the Gila. In 1925, part of the Crook in Arizona was added to the Apache National Forest.

Many small areas where forest offices had existed were closed, such as Datil, and those offices moved to more municipal areas. In the 1970's, the Apache-Sitgreaves areas were combined, and the Apache National Forest was changed to the Gila. Other federal lands were set aside, including BLM land, which was land no one really wanted, and also National Park lands, and there was much overlap in these federally-managed lands.

A highlight of Ron's talk was old photos he and his wife found in the Datil records, and an application for employment from 1909. This showed the hirer as the Secretary of Agriculture. Employees they had to supply all their own gear; horse, saddle, gun, etc. Pictures of Hubbell sheep at Snow Lake existed, and of lambing tents, of brush enclosures for counting sheep, where the brush was stacked in a "V" shape and sheep run through the small end of the structure, and a ranger counted them as they ran and jumped through; they went so fast that they were counted by fives or tens. One hand elevated counted the jumpers and the lower hand counted those running past. Sheep had to be watered at still waters as they would not drink from a running stream. The rangers ate with the herders, and hygiene sounded precarious. Goats were hated by foresters because they stripped trees, and that was an item ranchers and foresters could agree on as being too valuable to waste.

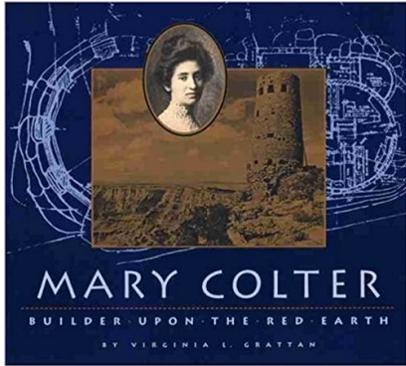
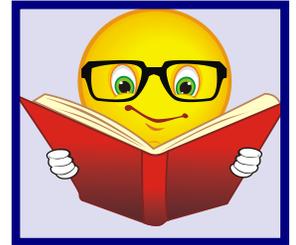
Early forest rangers wore a gun on their hip. They built roads, often on very rough terrain. There were no maps in those early years. They also built their own ranger stations. Rangers would get together at a site, build on the station during the day and have their meetings at night. Rarely were there female employees; if so, they were probably cooks or kept records.





### BOOK REVIEWS

*Mary Colter: Builder Upon the Red Earth*, by Virginia L. Grattan—Reviewed by Laura Brush



The story of Mary Elizabeth Jane Colter, architect and designer, is fully intertwined with that of the Fred Harvey Company and the Santa Fe Railroad. As a woman who was in the position of directing—and often correcting—the work of men, she was generally respected but not always liked. She was a perfectionist and could be cutting in her comments. She knew what she wanted and was forceful enough to, usually, get it despite resistance.

She was born in 1869 in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, and considered St Paul, Minnesota, her hometown, but her heart was taken by the Southwest and its history. She did her best known work there, designing hotels and restaurants in Santa Fe, Albuquerque, and Gallup in New Mexico; and in Winslow, Holbrook, Williams, and the Grand Canyon in Arizona.

During the 1880's, she apprenticed in an established architecture firm while attending the California School of Design in San Francisco. At that time there were few formal classes in architecture and little in the way of licensing requirements. There was also little room for a woman in the field. When she graduated in 1890, she found a job teaching high school drawing. In 1910 she was offered a design (architect and decorator) position, employed by both Fred Harvey and the Santa Fe Railroad. She retired from the Santa Fe in 1944 and from Fred Harvey in 1948, at the age of 79. She settled in Santa Fe, where she died in 1958.

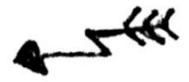
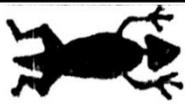
The book covers Ms. Colter's professional activities, but there is little about her personally. That may be an accurate picture as she had little family and traveled enough that her friends may not have been close. Her professional life was primary. Her philosophy that buildings should appear to belong to their surroundings, in style and material, was in the forefront of a move away from European traditions. That influence is still seen.

The book contains 31 illustrations, most full page; two pages of notes; four pages of bibliography; two-page listing of her buildings and their current (as of original printing in 1992) status; and five pages of index. Recommended.



Photos from the sign hanging at the CCHS Museum. At left is the artist, Melody Fisher, and below are those attending the sign hanging. Photos courtesy of Kelly Gatlin, La Luz Photography. Special thanks to Jeff Chapman, Gary Hegg, Gary Blum and Steve Haltom for helping. Those in attendance to celebrate: Carol Hegg, Sally Blum, Wayne Ashby, Bonnie Armstrong, Barbara Adams, Doris Clymo, Helen Cress, Nettie Carrejo, Kelly Gatlin, Ken and Sharon Bostick, Melody Fisher, the sign-maker and her family.





### 2017 SPONSORS

Apache RV Park  
 Mike & Chris Hill  
 Lobo Lane Enterprises  
 Bob and Nelcine Roland  
 Western New Mexico Land Company/Gary Blum  
 Garda Siocana Kennels-Molly Thomas  
 Dia Art Foundation  
 Jim & Joy Williams  
 El Ranchito Inn/Nettie Carrejo  
 Williams Windmill  
 Chapman Handyman  
 Cielito Lindo Ranch/Catron Courier  
 Crossfire Cattle Company/Greens  
 The Cactus Company/Barbara McCrimmon  
 Melody Fisher, Artist  
 John and Deborah Walker  
 \$\$\$

### TREASURER'S REPORT

by Barb Adams

BEGINNING BALANCE May 1..... \$5,028.94  
 Income..... \$100.00  
 (Calendars, DVDs, Membership, T-Shirts)  
 Expenses ..... \$362.94  
 (Museum \$220.00, Utilities \$142.94)  
 BEGINNING BALANCE June 1 ..... \$4,766.00  
 Income..... \$250.00  
 (Calendars, Membership, Silent Auction)  
 Expenses  
 Entertainment ..... \$226.23  
 Office Supplies..... \$33.04  
 Postage ..... \$52.00  
 Utilities ..... \$79.26  
 Web Site..... \$240.23  
 ENDING BALANCE June 30 ..... \$4,340.24

### ANNUAL CCHS BBQ

By Helen Cress

Saturday, June 24, marked the annual barbeque at the Blum ranch. It was well-attended; there were approximately 50 people present, and it provided the usual assortment of culinary delights, with an abundance of salads and desserts, along with other favorites, all brought by CCHS members. The meat; chicken, pork ribs, and brats, was provided by the CCHS, and was grilled by Gary Hegg, Gary Blum, and Steve Halton.

A highlight of the day was a native plant program led by Barbara McCrimmon, an herbalist, who gave the name of various plants on the property and talked about the medicinal uses of these plants. The party began at 4 PM, and it actually looked stormy, but no storm occurred and it cooled the atmosphere so that heat was not a problem.

In lieu of trying to find outside entertainment, Sally circulated the patio with a microphone, which she handed over to local people who would agree to share stories of their experiences, or those of their families of origin, in this area. And the chance to visit with friends provided excellent enjoyment. We hope to continue these very enjoyable gatherings, and thank the Blums for hosting them.



### 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. } } }