

# CATRON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME 3, 2018

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

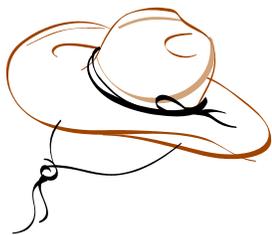
July 14 at 1:00 PM Susann Mikkelsen, Graham and Baldwin families, Datil Community Center

July 21 at 1:00 PM Kathy Klump on "The Last Cattle Drive at the Y Ranch" at the Quemado CCHS Museum in Quemado.

Look for a presentation on the McKee family of Pie Town in August, and CCHS at Pie Festival on September 8.



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Send a check or money order to:  
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Quemado NM 87829

Individual Membership      \$20/year  
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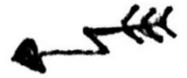
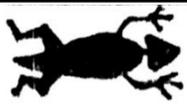
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## 2018-2019 CCHS OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Helen Cress, president 575-773-4177; Bonnie DeFoor, vice president; Maggie Hubbell, secretary;  
Barb Adams, treasurer.

Advisors are: Nettie Carrejo, Shannon Donnelly, Doris Clymo.



**FROM THE PRESIDENT**

I had a recent wonderful experience. Friends told me there was a very interesting older lady who resided at Millie’s Assisted Living Facility in Silver City, who had written a book called *How To Hypnotize a Chicken*, and she gave me twelve of her books that we will sell for her. Because she is very elderly, I decided I could not put this off, so, accompanied by my friend Kathy Garceau, I drove to Silver City one hot day. I had called the lady, Jan Sherman, a few days previously, and asked her if we could pursue this project. Her reply was, “Just a minute; let me check my calendar.” Shortly, she returned to the phone and said, “Saturday will be fine.” After conversing a few minutes, she said, “Maybe we could go out to lunch afterward.” I answered, “You bet we can.” Her thoughts seemed clear; she did not ramble, but made her statements clear and concise. She seemed not at all hard of hearing. She informed us that she and her brother, Bud, had grown up in Mogollon, along Silver Creek. When we arrived at her care center, she had a friend assisting her, as well as her son, Jeff, and they told us it had been arranged that we would do our filming and recording of her interview at the Heritage Center, and we followed them to that location.

Her presentation was flawless. She told her stories in a very entertaining and informative manner and never got off course. I had worried when she informed me that she was 96-years-old about asking her to go to Glenwood to give a presentation, because I feared it may have been too stressful for a person that age, but I now feel certain she would have been up to that and more. We took her to lunch at La Cocina, and after we ate, she asked that we come back to the care center and visit awhile, which we were delighted to do. This was very enjoyable for us.

I invite you all to inform us of anyone in the county that you know of, even if they are not as functional as this lady. This interesting local history needs to be sought out and preserved, and that is a chief focus with us. Please notify me, or any board member you know, and help us arrange an interview. We will be happy to go to them, if they are unable to come to us. And if they are able to travel to their nearest town, we will arrange to have them present their story in a Senior Center or Community Center.

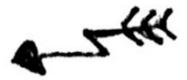
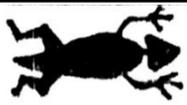
I also implore you to get involved as members of our historical society, and to bring others with you. It goes without saying that those of you who are still in the work force have a limited amount of time, but this is very important, and it helps everyone when we come together to get to know each other and share stories. I look back on my personal experience and realize that I put off seeking stories from old-timers who are now gone, often their stories with them. This was even true of my parents, and as soon as they were both gone, I started trying to get histories from their families, but found that they knew less than I did. My mother’s siblings were younger than she, and were involved in their own experiences, and knew little of her life. So please help us bring some of this fascinating history to life. ◀▶▶

**KATHYRN MCKEE ROBERTS TALK**

By Maggie Hubble

Catron County Historical Society held an all members meeting at Community Center in Pie Town on May 19, 2018. Featured Speaker was Kathryn McKee Roberts. Mrs. Roberts attended school in Pie Town and Quemado School, earned a degree in education and taught in Albuquerque, Bosque Farms and Las Lunas. Mrs. Roberts presentation was on the history of Post Offices in Catron County, covering thirty-two post offices that once existed in Catron County, although not all were active at the same time. Lots of great history on location and people that worked in these post offices. Look for her book on the history of these of post offices coming soon.

(Editor: Other books by Kathryn McKee Roberts include, *From the Top of the Mountain: Pie Town, New Mexico and Neighbors!* and *Dust to Dust: Cemeteries in Northern Catron County.*) ◇◇◇



**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**July 14, Saturday, at 1:00 PM** Susann Mikkelsen will be speaking on the Graham and Baldwin families of Datil. The presented will be held at the Datil Community Center

**July 21, Saturday at 1:00 PM** the CCHS will have Kathy Klump talk on "The Last Cattle Drive at the Y Ranch". This will be held at the Quemado CCHS Museum in Quemado on Highway 60.

In August, we hope to have a presentation on the McKee family of Pie Town, but do not have a date yet.



**FRANK WILLIAMS**

By Helen Cress

**F**ewer and fewer people remain in this and the surrounding area who will remember Frank Williams. He was a person who would be recalled for no spectacular or ostentatious acts he performed, but rather for his goodness, empathy, integrity, kindness, and patience. He was a hard-working, very competent rancher, who knew and loved the cattle under his care, but did what he had to do to provide for his family, which included a chore he absolutely deplored; the job of shooting an animal for meat for his family. He would haul a beef he had fattened off well away from the house to do that, and he said many times, "I think, when the day of judgment comes, I will be faced with all the cattle I have had to kill". He loved children and dogs, a sign, I believe, that he was loved and trusted by both. He was definitely not a man who believed that, in order to impress others with his "manhood", he had to fight and brawl. He never had a fight, to my knowledge, but on one occasion, when a short little arrogant man from town was trying to tell him how to work cattle in a corral, he came very close to punching the guy, who, incidentally, had a severe case of "little man complex".

My dad enjoyed his children, and we loved working with him. Peewee rode with him before any of the rest of us were big enough to go along. Matt, at an early age, became our dad's "right-hand man" and remained there. When we all rode off horseback together, we immediately took on our secret roles and became outlaws, and I'd bet my dad originated the game. Names that I recall that we "morphed" into were Jake, Shorty, and Slim; the other name I have lost in memory. But we called each other by those names until we reached home at night. I have since suspected that, growing up as an only

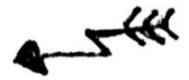
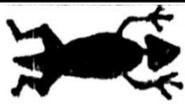


child, he didn't get enough time to play, so he created the chance when he had his own children. He later doted on his grandchildren. Nan's children were raised in Arkansas and only visited once a year, so my daughter Nicole came along next, and he adored her. He had serious health issues in the last years of his life, and when he was hospitalized, the nurses had *better* ooh and aah over the photos of Nicole he always took with him to the hospital. He also knew and loved Jimbo well, because he lived nearby; unfortunately, none of the younger grandchildren were old enough to really remember him, as far as I know.

His patience was legendary. As we younger children got a little older, he allowed each of us to rope calves to drag in to be branded, and must have had the ultimate amount of tolerance because he stood by as we missed loop after loop that we threw, and just waited and gave us all many attempts to catch our calf. All of us have since marveled that he could do that without having a stroke and have said we did not have that kind of patience.

Our dad suffered years of coronary artery disease before he died while running the tractor with a saw on the back, cutting wood for winter. It was December 4, 1974. He had reached a point that would not allow

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## GROWING UP WITH COYOTES

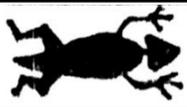
By Ethel Majors

I grew up on a family ranch south of Quemado, New Mexico in the late 30s, 40s and 50s. My mother built the big lodge-like house in 1936 using hand cut and hewed lodge poles from the National Forest to the south. The house was built on the west side of the Largo Creek, across from a large grove of Mountain Cottonwoods. The Largo drains a large area of the Colorado River drainage and heads from the nearby Continental Divide. For years we were seven miles from town on what became, when wet, a very slick clay dirt road and if the creek was running more than a trickle we could not cross it to go into town. In a good spring runoff year we might have to leave a car on the other side and either wade across or later cross a high scary footbridge that had no rails. Sometimes a board or two might break and I knew one of us would fall into the flood water below sooner or later. With heavy rains upstream, the creek might come down 20 feet deep or more at times, washing out everything in its path and more, floating entire trees and dead cows and who knows what. We were warned to never play in the creek, but of course we did. It might at times be dry here, but rain hard many miles up the creek. Several footbridges were totally washed out and replaced over the years. Along the banks of the creek, coyotes liked to dig out their dens. We had a good well but no telephone until the 1960s. We used the dependable kerosene lamps for quite a few years. I loved their warm, soft light. Many a story was told and many a book was read while sitting in front of one of the fireplaces over the years. Then in the early 50s we got a wind charger with direct current for some years before Rural Electric came along in the mid 50s or so. We had a large garden, milk cows, many chickens, goats, saddle horses and a nice herd of Hereford range cows running on private land and a forest allotment running up east and southeast to the 9854 foot Escondido Mountain and over the mesa to the west. The land now is not so different than it has been for the past many thousands of years. Before us there was open range until the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 when there was no more free range and grazing permits were allotted to adjoin private lands. In the late 1930s, fences were built and wells were drilled so cattle didn't need to devastate the riparian areas along creeks. The underground water level has fallen from 50 feet to well over 100 feet or more in places. The 1950s were very dry with endless strong dry winds which blew deep sand dunes. Tall rabbit brush took over the blown out sand areas, as it is one of the rare shrubs that thrive in sand. Now it is holding the dirt and sand together, and the grass and weeds returned.

As a towheaded child I was molded in this unpredictable and dry land. I fell in love with it at an early age. I was free to go pretty much wherever I wanted. I have never been lost. In summer I would love making nests in the tall rabbit brush and wandered endlessly along with my great collie/shepherd cross dog Buster. Buster had his own story to tell. He was born the same year as I was and sometime, once out of puppyhood, he had the misfortune of getting caught in a coyote trap, of which there were many around. The government, in their great wisdom, had decided coyotes and bobcats needed to be exterminated as they were bad animals, competing with man. So government trappers were hired, especially in winter, to exterminate the varmints! Some trappers checked their traps, others did not. So Buster in order to survive (as coyotes do at times) chewed his right front leg off above the trap and came hobbling back to the house. He spent the remaining 15 years or so hobbling around on three legs with a rather sad but pleasant look on his sweet face. I was too young to have remembered the incident.

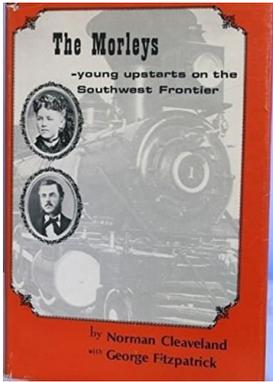
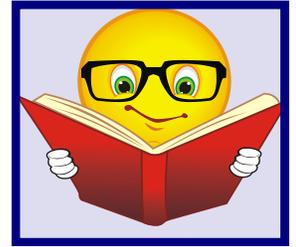
Our house was always known to have good meals served regularly and people in the country always knew they could "drop in" at any time and be welcome and an extra plate or more could always be set. So on this one particular Sunday a nice couple who worked for a big ranch to the east dropped by before we ate, their names were T-Bone and Maude. Maude got out of the car once we walked out to greet them.

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BOOK REVIEWS

*The Morleys—Young Upstarts on the Southwest Frontier*, by Norman Cleaveland with George Fitzpatrick, Calvin Horn Publishers, (1971) reviewed by Laura Brush



Norman Cleaveland was the son of Agnes Morley Cleaveland (author of *No Life for a Lady*) and grandson of William Raymond Morley and Ada McPherson Morley. The latter two are the focus of this book. Morley, who went by Raymond, died well before the author was born, so the stories of him are based on what the author heard from his Granny, Ada Morley, and from various documents and others' recollections he was able to find along the way.

The two were married in 1873 and came to live in Cimarron, New Mexico. They both were concerned with political and social reform. Ada over the course of time founded New Mexico societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals and to children and was active in the temperance and women's suffrage movements. However, their most important target of reform was the Santa Fe Ring, a political machine comprised of powerful attorneys and land speculators. They, along with Ada's mother, Mary McPherson working in Washington DC, were instrumental in breaking its back in 1878.

Trained as a civil engineer, Raymond went to work for the Santa Fe railroad, surveying routes in Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, and Sonora, and supervising the construction of rail lines over those routes. There are exciting tales of his efforts in getting the Santa Fe into the best route through Raton Pass and into Royal Gorge in Colorado. Shortly after his success in building a line from Guaymas (Sonora) to Nogales (Arizona), he was killed in an accidental rifle discharge in 1883 at age 36.

Ada was left to raise their three children. She moved to the ranch in Datil which was about all that she was able to receive from her husband's estate, since most of it was tied up in court by his Santa Fe Ring opponents. Despite much financial privation she saw to it that her children were educated and that she continued her efforts in social and political reform. She died in 1917 at age 65.

The book contains chapters involving the author, his mother, and his Uncle Ray in addition to his grandparents. There are 19 photos, a very helpful map, and an index. An enjoyable and welcome addition to local and regional history.

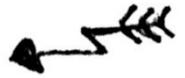
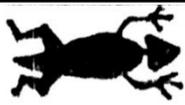
(Editor—If anyone is interested in where to get older, out of print books such as this, Abebooks.com and OldWestBooks.com are excellent resources. )



*(Continued from page 4)*

She gave us a big hug. Buster as usual was doing his big aggressive barking thing. T-Bone was eyeing Buster and would not get out of the car as we were encouraging him to do. About that time he asked "What happened to that dog's leg?" Someone told him the dog had been caught in a coyote trap and when no one came along to help him out he proceeded to chew off his leg above the trap in order to survive. T-Bone's eyes got even bigger and he replied "Lawd God, if he would chew off his own leg, what in the world would he do to mine?" Once Buster quit barking, T-Bone was successfully persuaded to come on in, and we all enjoyed a chicken dinner.

I don't remember learning how to ride a horse, it "just happened", the same as learning to talk. I usually rode and explored alone unless helping with the cattle work. I loved cows about as much as I loved horses. Early on I learned to know each cow and her calf by markings and expressions and always knew who belonged to who, a talent I expanded on the Colorado ranch I married into in 1956 where there were many more cows and much more cow work!



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### TREASURER'S REPORT

by Barb Adams

BEGINNING BALANCE 4-30-18 .....	\$6,776.74
Expenses .....	300.75
Income Silent Auction .....	285.00
Income (other).....	301.00
BEGINNING BALANCE 6-30-18 .....	\$7,349.24
Expenses Utilities.....	226.75
Income BBQ .....	288.00
Income (other).....	226.00
JULY 1-8	
Income.....	267.00
ENDING BALANCE 7-8-18 .....	\$7,616.24



(Continued from page 3)

him to walk from the barn up a slight grade to the house, a distance of 150 yards, perhaps, without making several stops to take a sublingual dose of nitroglycerine. The medical care for this condition was in its early phase, and almost unavailable in this area. He was found by my mother, who had driven into Quemado, and when she returned, soon realized she was hearing the tractor motor, but not hearing the saw engage. She found him, already gone, with his bottle of nitroglycerine in his hand.

He is still sorely missed and often referred to by his children. He was the epitome, for me, of unconditional love. He lacked real bias, and, had he spent time with any human being, I believe that person, regardless of race, age, or any other trait, would have become his friend. He stood up resolutely for what he believed in. He had one son-in-law from the South who was very prejudiced against the black race, and he never would be convinced by the guy that blacks were inferior; Bill later told me, "Your dad was stubborn. I never could convince him of what I believed about the blacks".

I hope he has a special place somewhere that honors the kind of human being he was. ▶◀

### 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. Learn more at [CatronHistory.org](http://CatronHistory.org).

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