

# CATRON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME 4, 2019

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**Don't miss Judith Avila  
Navajo Code Talkers**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Friday July 12<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 PM:** Tootie Ake at the Pie Town Community Center

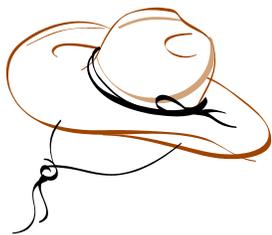
**Friday August 16<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 PM:** Judith Avila with history of Chester Nez, one of the Navajo Code Talkers at the Quemado Museum

**Saturday August 24<sup>th</sup>:** Booth at the County Fair in Reserve all day

**Saturday September 14<sup>th</sup>:** Booth at the Pie Festival in Pie Town

**Friday October 4<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 PM:** Dixie Boyle

### 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  
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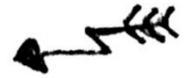
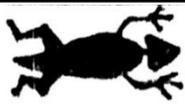
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### 2018-2019 CCHS OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

President Helen Cress (575)773-4177 helenwcress@hotmail.com; Vice-president Chris Hill;  
Treasurer Barb Adams (575)773-4694 badamssr603@yahoo.com; Secretary Maggie Hubbell (575)4770 hubbell@wildblue.net. Advisors: Doris Clymo, Nettie Carrejo, Bonnie Maldonado, Rhonda List.

[www.CatronHistory.Org](http://www.CatronHistory.Org)



**FROM THE PRESIDENT**

**W**ell, summer certainly came in with a big bang, or at least a big heat wave, and it is flying by with the afternoon winds. We have scheduled some good events, we believe, and are looking forward to sharing them with you.

First, let me say I am very grateful to Norm Maisel for putting me on track to contact the New Mexico Humanities organization. This kind of help I appreciate very much because we can get so much history from their selections. They have a wealth of information covering a large variety of topics available to non-profit organizations such as ours for a charge of \$100 per program; schools can get programs for \$50 each. I would invite all of you to go into The New Mexico Humanities web site and peruse their speaker's catalog to see how very much is available, and if you send me requests for subjects that interest you, I will try to accommodate those. And I welcome similar kinds of ideas, if you can recommend other interests.

The presentation we are having in July, on Friday the 16<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 PM, will be at the Pie Town Community Center, and the speaker will be Tootie Ake, wife of the late Marvin Ake, who ranched for many years in the Datil area. Her program should tie in nicely with the one given by Anita Hand recently about her father, because Johnny Hand came to the Datil area as a young man and worked for many years for Marvin Ake. We always have cookies and beverages at our presentations.

Our August meeting will be co-sponsored by The New Mexico Humanities, with the CCHS, and will be open to the public, which is great and is a requirement of the NM Humanities. It will feature guest speaker Judith Avila, from the Tijeras Canyon region east of Albuquerque in the mountains. Judith had interviewed one of the Navajo code talkers from World War II, by the name of Chester Nez, who was deceased in 2014. She wrote a book about that history, titled *Code Talker: The First and Only Memoir of the Original Code Talkers of World War II*. She will bring books with her to sell. These Navajo heroes are not widely reported on, and they played a huge role in helping win that war. Without their service, we might have all been speaking German. Her book won several awards: The New Mexico Press Women Zia Award, The New Mexico-Arizona Book Award, The San Juan College-Four Corners Community Read Selection, The NPR on-air Read, and Audible Daily Deal. Her web site is: <https://JudithAvila.com>. This should be a fascinating story, and I am so thankful it was recorded.

In late August, we will have a booth at the Catron County Fair, probably on Saturday, the last day of the fair. And in September, we will have a booth at the Pie Festival in Pie Town. And do not forget we have the museum open from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM the first and third Saturdays, through October.

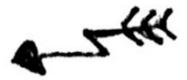
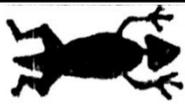
One sad bit of news is that we will be losing one of our members from the Quemado Lake area. John Griffin will be moving, I believe, to Las Cruces. John has been a loyal and generous member of CCHS for several years. He recently donated some wonderful old tools to the CCHS, and he will be sorely missed.



**CCHS PICNIC OUTING**

**T**he picnic took place Friday June 21<sup>st</sup> starting at 11:00 AM. It was rather sparsely attended, but the group was very congenial and compatible. It was not hot and really not windy, and there were no bugs. What I have believed for some time proved to be the case; that, with no consulting among the attendees ahead of time, a great combination of dishes were brought, without an excess of any one item, so we all enjoyed a variety of dishes without anyone having an excess of work. The real bonus was that Bonnie Maldonado brought a delicious chocolate brownie cake, and with a smaller gathering, each of us could return to the table for almost unlimited second helpings!





### UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday July 12<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 PM at the Pie town Community Center, Tootie Ake will give a history of her late husband, Marvin Ake, who was a long-time very successful rancher in the Datil area.

On Friday August 16<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 PM, The New Mexico Humanities will co-sponsor a program presented by Judith Avila, who is a graduate of Duke University. Judith will talk about Chester Nez, a Navajo code talker whom she interviewed and then wrote about in a book titled *Code Talker: The first and Only Memoir of the Original Code Talkers of World War II*.

On Saturday August 24<sup>th</sup>, the CCHS will have a booth at the Catron County Fair in Reserve, all day.

On Saturday September 14<sup>th</sup>, the CCHS will have a booth all day for the Pie Festival.

On Friday October 4<sup>th</sup>, at 1:00 PM, Dixie Boyle and associates will present a historical program at the museum in Quemado, dressed in costume representing that time period.



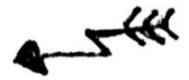
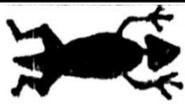
### ANNE HILLERMAN PROGRAM

**A**nne Hillerman spoke to a full house at the CCHS Museum on Tuesday June 18<sup>th</sup> in Quemado. She, a Santa Fe author, arrived with her friend Rebecca and had lunch in a very busy full house at the Horse and Buggy before moving on to the museum. With her were boxes of her five books that she has written so far since her father, Tony, died. Anne has continued his theme about the characters, Jim Chee and Joe Leaphorn, that he made famous. He had introduced Bernadette as a girlfriend of Jim Chee, and she was also a police officer on the Navajo Reservation, but he had not given her equal status with the other two law enforcement officers, but Anne has done that, making her equally efficient in her role. She has also had her marry Jim Chee.

She spoke warmly of her father, and of their conversations about writing. She spoke of each book, and of what she wanted to depict in each. She feels her writing has improved with each novel, because this was a new venue for her. What she had written previously was all non-fiction; a children's book, a book about many of the restaurants in her area, along with recipes contributed by each, a book about gardens in her area and the gardeners who created them. She had all her books for sale; four paper backs, *Spider Woman's Daughter*, *Rock With Wings*, *Song of the Lion*, and *Cave of Bones*. She also had her latest book in hard-back cover, titled *The Tale Teller*.

The audience, large as it was, exhibited huge enjoyment and; everyone gave their full attention and laughed frequently as she talked with great humor, and she was very entertaining. She sold most of her books, for which we apologize to the Round Valley Library, where she was headed to on leaving Quemado. It was a rare opportunity for the true book worms in the area. We on the Board of Directors were thrilled with the turnout and with the chance to meet with this charming and talented lady. Tomorrow she has to be in Tucson to present an award, so she is doing the things a successful writer is required to do. We are all richer for having had her speak here.





## HISTORY OF THE BUILDINGS CONNECTED TO THE MUSEUM

As told to Bonnie Armstrong by June Boardman Yates

*NOTE: Helen Cress, by checking with the Catron County Assessor's office in Reserve, obtained corroboration that the buildings were there on the tax records in 1920, and were indeed built by Ed Engle.*

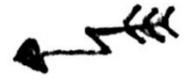
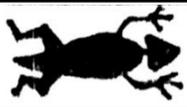
Ed Engle built or had built the buildings in 1931 that are known today as El Sarape, The Bar, The Museum, and Dia Arts Office. The El Sarape was a grocery store. The Bar was always a bar. The Museum was a confectionery. The Dia Arts Office in front was a Conoco Station and behind was a Garage.

The grocery store was owned and operated by Ed Engle, and later by his daughter and her husband who had been released from the military. They ran it and later sold it to Jim Hogg, who also was the Justice of Peace and operated out of his store. Sometime later, Mr. Hogg sold his business to a Mr. Armijo and his wife, Sally, who came to Quemado from Albuquerque area. The next owners and operators were their children, Irene and Jimmy Jaramillo, followed by Jerald and Dora Ward's daughter, Lacresa, and for a very short time later. (*Ed. The El Sarape is now the Horse and Buggy restaurant.*)

The bar was owned by a man named Stephens and his wife. Upon his death she sold it to H.J. Boardman, known as Punk Boardman, and his wife, Mary. Punk had someone operating the bar, but he was not happy with the way it was being run, so he and his wife took it over again. There were rooms upstairs that they rented out. Across the street, and behind the old motel, was a good size camp of CCC, an Army group of men stationed there. Highway 60 was being paved, so there was a good business going on. Mary even set up a small kitchen in the back and made lunches to go for the workers. During WWII, men and women were being hired to work in the airplane factories in California. There was good money paid, and the Boardman's, Blacks' and the Armstrongs were some who went to glean the good wages. They all begin to come back in 1944-1945. The Boardmans returned and took back the bar which had been leased. The bar was lively on Saturday night with local musicians playing, and dancing! In 1937, Punk and Mary built a beautiful house. While they were in California, Mr. and Mrs. Shough lived in it. That house is the house Nick Baca now owns and lives in. Point of interest, Mr. Shough (known as Pa), built the Country Store for his son, Dave, who later sold out to his brother, Tilman, Quemado's first fire chief. From there, Bill and Bonnie Armstrong bought it, and twenty years later in 1985, Carlton Armstrong took it over. Upon Punk's death, his wife, Mary, sold the bar to Manuel and Emilia Chavez who ran it for a while until Manuel Chavez died. Emilia sold it to Frank Montano and his wife. They were the owners for a short time, then Mr. Montano died. His wife sold it to Jona Ward, who revived it into a place known as Old Jona's. After his death, his family closed it and sold the liquor licenses. The building has remained closed and now belongs to Mike Bennett.

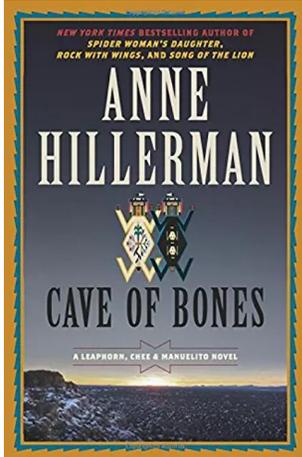
The Confectionery was run and operated by Billie Black. Her husband, Fred, was at a rancher and, at one time, a deputy sheriff of Catron County. Following Billie's ownership was Evelyn Wilson, who was a sister to Frank Wilson. Frank lived at Omega and married Elwand Brannon. Following her, the business was changed to not only a soda fountain, but the first drug store, with living quarters in the back owned by a new lady in town from "TexIOkla", Joe Tadlock. Joe was a wonderful asset to the community. Since there were no doctors, she helped many of the community with administering medication for strep throat, flu, colicky babies, advice of care, etc., and even delivered a baby in the car out in front of the building known as the La Fonda. Later she had the business built next to the Largo and moved there, which not only had better living quarters, but gave her room to carry more stock. Eventually, due to declining health, she had to close and move to live with her children. There hasn't been a drug store as such since in Catron County. The last ownership of that part of the building was Dia Arts, who gave the build-

(Continued on page 5)



BOOK REVIEWS

*Cave of Bones: A Leaphorn, Chee & Manuelito Novel*, by Anne Hillerman, reviewed by Laura Brush



I know, we normally don't do fiction but this one involves El Malpais today and its history, both its physical presence and its early residents. The book talks about the creation of the lava flows as described in both Native stories (e.g., Navajo, Zuni, Acoma, Laguna) and modern geology.

This book is the fourth by Anne Hillerman continuing the series started by her father Tony Hillerman about Navajo Tribal Police officers Joe Leaphorn and Jim Chee. In the current series, Leaphorn is mostly retired and the primary action involves officers Chee and Bernadette (Bernie) Manuelito.

The plot of this book is two-pronged: Chee is in Santa Fe for continuing education. While there he becomes involved with: a felon he sent to prison who is now released, a request to locate a man who has not been in touch with his family, and his sister-in-law who is in Santa Fe trying out an art school she'd maybe like to attend if she can get her act together. The other prong involves Bernie, who has agreed to speak to a group of

troubled teens taking part in a character-building program in the Malpais. When she arrives, however, one of the teens and a counselor are missing and a blizzard is on the way. I'll not spoil the fun by telling what happens from there, except to say that the two prongs do have some connection at the end.

What is not a spoiler is to say that the greatest pleasure in this series, at least for me, is the look into the lore and rituals of Navajo culture that it provides. Both Bernie and Chee are fairly traditional Navajo. Their attitudes and perspectives are different from the modern white ones, and provide a refreshing opportunity for broadening the reader's experience. In addition, this is obviously written by someone who knows the terrain—in this case the lava fields—and weather of this area. The author's research and her lifelong exposure to New Mexico and the Navajo are evident. Recommended. ◆◆◆

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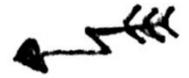
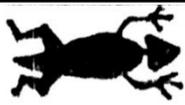
ing known as the La Fonda to the Catron County Historical Society to be used as a museum.

Dia Arts reserved a small room for their office, leaving two rooms upstairs and in the back where once was a garage business, and which is now part of the museum. Out front, at one time, was a garage, and a Conoco gas station. The gas station and garage was owned by Punk Boardman. After buying the bar, he turned over the gas station and garage to someone, (Mr. Wilson?), and he and Mary took over the other business full time. They're home prior to 1937 was where the double-wide behind the building now sets.

The cement foundation that is still visible east of these building was left after a fire burned down a bar known as 'The Buckhorn'. This business was owned by Jasper Hutzen. It was out front of this business that Mr. Wilson found the Garrisons in town. He pulled up in his vehicle, pulled out a rifle, and shot one of the men who was headed into the bar, and then the second one as he went in the bar. In a rage of madness, he went into the bar to continue shooting. When he ran out of ammunition, that ended his killing.

In back of the buildings were two generators housed in a big metal building and owned and operated by Punk Boardman and his partner, Ed Engle. This was the source of electrical power for Quemado until there was a fire that shut down the plant. Sometime later, maybe around 1945, Clarence Johnson, who had a service station and garage where the Quonset hut stands, bought the electric business and sold electricity to Quemado. This system was behind the Quonset. In 1953-54, Socorro Electric Coop was introduced to the whole rural area and bought out the Johnson power.

*(Continued on page 6)*



### 2019 SPONSORS

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### TREASURER'S REPORT

BALANCE 4-30-2019 .....	\$9,166.99
Expenses	
Museum .....	173.67
Supplies .....	86.56
Programs.....	50.00
Entertainment.....	11.33
Income	
Auction.....	138.62
DVDs, Calendars, Books .....	145.00
Donations .....	65.00
Memberships.....	110.00
Pottery.....	25.00
T-shirts .....	45.00
 BALANCE 6-25-19.....	 \$9,394.50



(Continued from page 5)

Another interesting story about the Baptist Church.

There had been an attempt to build a church by, as I recall, a man named Vernon. There were some cement blocks stacked and ready before he left. Gus Bogan had built a church in Pie Town and felt led to come over to Quemado and build the Baptist Church that still is active today. He worked many days there by himself. Gus Bogan had a different way of ministering. On Saturday night, he often went to the bar, ordered a Coke, sat with his feet on the bar rail, drinking his Coke and visiting everyone. Some didn't know how to take this! After drinking his Coke and visiting he'd say, "We'd be glad to have you fellows come see me tomorrow," meaning come to church. Punk really liked and respected Gus. One day he gave \$500 to build the church. He said he wanted that church built as a place for his three daughters to go to church. People criticized Gus for going into the bar and asked why he did it, to which he said he ministers where ever God led, and he knew there were people there who needed God!



### 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).**      \$\$\$