

Socorro County Historical Society

Post Office Box 921
Socorro, New Mexico 87801

Membership News • Summer 2019

Printed periodically

SCHS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization



The Socorro County Historical Society once again will host its annual Oktoberfest festivities at the Hammel Brewery and Museum (500 6th Street) in Socorro from 11 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Open to SCHS members and the public to enjoy good food and entertainment in our shady wintergarten.

THE LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

- 11:00 a.m.** – Dr. Comstock’s **Oompah Band** puts us all in that Oktoberish mood.
- 12 Noon** – The **Roon Band** and their great selection of variety music
- 1:00 p.m.** – **Tuesdays @ 2** with their guitar, banjo and fiddle foot stompin’ music

THE GRILL COOKED FOOD

Menu: Your choice of: beer cooked brats or hamburgers/green chili cheeseburgers with BBQ beans, sauerkraut, and all the fixin's.

Meal Tickets: \$10/person; \$7 under age 16
\$2 hotdogs for the kids

Meals served 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

BEER ON TAP

This year's beer will be **Santa Fe Oktoberfest Brew** – on tap – \$4 per glass and served by Bodega Burger & Lounge. Last call at 2:00 p.m.

REMEMBER ... Oktoberfest is at the Hammel Museum in the shady wintergarten
Socorro Fest has many activities on the plaza following Oktoberfest.

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New Website Items

- SCHS Home Page
<http://www.socorro-history.org>
- The Rosedale Mines and Town**
New contributed photos from the Comstock family and the Correa/McInnis family added to Rosedale pages
<http://socorro-history.org/HISTORY/Mines3/pg.html>
- San Marcial history & photos (updated)**
Ralph Lane photos added to San Marcial pages
http://socorro-history.org/PHOTOS/smarcial/smar_002.htm

Your SCHS Board of Directors:

President	Chuck Zimmerly
Vice President	Hannah Brower
Treasurer	Prescilla Mauldin
Secretary	Paul Harden
Board Members:	
Jon Spargo	Roy Heatwole
Kay Krehbiel	Claudette Gallegos
Bob Eveleth – Past President Ex-officio	

Visit Us: www.socorro-history.org

In Remembrance

Harold “Hal” Quinn

Harold “Hal” Quinn, 83, passed away August 16, 2019. Hal was a long time supporter and life member of SCHS.

Harold, and wife Carmen, came to Socorro from Deming, NM in 1969 to run the Rasco store (where Brooks grocery is now). A few years later, in 1975, they purchased Brownbilt’s Shoes & Western Wear, then a small store on the Socorro plaza. They quickly enlarged the store by moving to the building next to the Loma Theater on Manzanaras Avenue – the Brownbilt’s most of us remember.

Hal was an avid rock hound and history buff. He loved to hike outside of Socorro, Magdalena and Kelly where he found everything from arrow heads, old advertising signs, to antique mining tools, giving Brownbilt’s its old west motif. Many of Hal’s items are on display in the Hammel Museum.

He was an active Board member in the early days of SCHS, shortly after the Hammel Brewery building was given to SCHS by Clarence Hammel. He was

involved in getting the propanel roof installed, building the stairs to the second floor, and installing the fence around the property, improvements we all enjoy today.

Hal was always serving the Socorro community as an ardent SHS Warrior supporter, member of the Lions and DAV, helping other organizations where he could, and even served on the City Council.

Harold and Carmen sold and retired from their beloved Brownbilt’s store in 1999, shortly thereafter stepping down from the SCHS Board of Directors to enjoy retirement and do some traveling. Hal’s contribution to the Historical Society and Socorro cannot be understated and will be long remembered.



Harold Quinn 1936–2019

MEMBERSHIP EXPIRED? Final Reminder

We have 15 members that have not renewed their SCHS memberships for 2019 (and a few from 2018). Memberships run from April to April. We urge you to please renew soon by mailing a check for \$20 to:

Socorro County Historical Society
P.O. Box 921
Socorro, New Mexico 87801

or, renew by **PalPal** or a debit card on our website:

<http://www.socorro-history.org>

We’ll be purging our membership and mailing lists shortly of all inactive members. We just don’t want this to be your last newsletter if you have not renewed your SCHS membership.

Visit our **Facebook** page at:
www.facebook.com/HammelMuseum/
for periodic updates, information and photos

The Piro's Visit Socorro

SCHS welcomed a small group of Piro to Socorro – their ancestral homeland. The Piro (or *Atzigues* in their native tongue) were the original inhabitants of Socorro County, living in pueblos along the Rio Grande. The Piro fled with the Spaniards to the El Paso area during the 1680 Pueblo Revolt, never to return. There are still remnants of the Piro living in the Las Cruces and El Paso areas today, trying to preserve their culture.

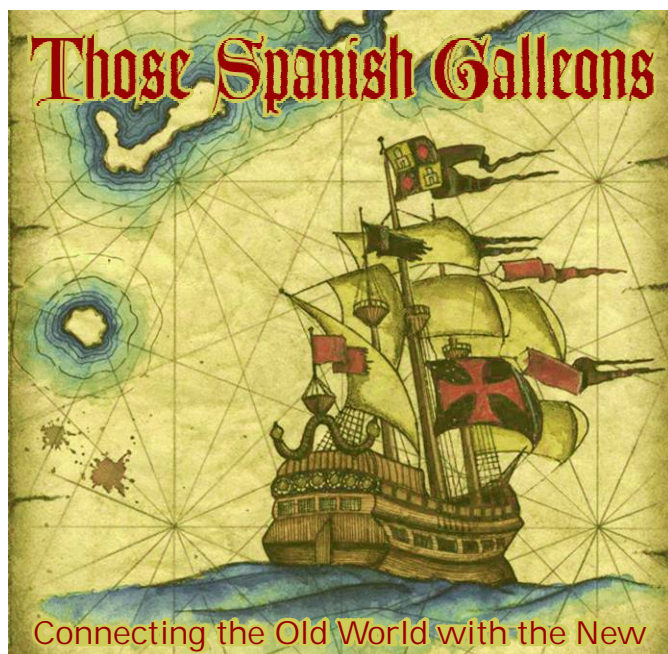
They were escorted to two pueblos by SCHS members Paul Harden, Hannah Brower and Bill Holmes to see their ancestral homes and learn their history. They know little history from “Piro North,” as they call it, as most of their oral history is after the



Piros exploring the Veranito pueblo – their old home.

Pueblo Revolt. SCHS has been helping them document their pre-revolt history to share with future generations and to gain tribal recognition. It was the first time this group had been to Socorro.

Some of the Piro documents are located here:
<http://socorro-history.org/PIRO/pg.html>



Today's New Mexico were home to the first European settlements in North America. In 1540, Coronado explored the southwest for gold and riches (unsuccessfully). The first colonists arrived about 60 years later with Juan de Oñate, bringing with him about 400 colonists in 1598. *Nueva España*, or "New Spain," was open for business. Over the next 225 years (until the Spanish Empire fell), tens of thousands of Spanish colonists, soldiers, and Franciscan friars arrived in New Mexico, bringing with them their native language, food, music, religion, and culture.

Which raises the question, "How did people in Spain get to New Mexico in the 1500s through the 1800s?" They certainly didn't arrive here on an Aero España flight. They arrived New Mexico via a fleet of Spanish galleon ships and El Camino Real trail. While the role of the famous trail is well known, the role of these Spanish ships are not.

SPANISH GALLEONS

Early ships were small and powered by oars and a single sail. They were used for fishing and coastal operations and not suitable for the open ocean.

By the 1400s, larger ships with two or three masts were built for longer voyages. Called the *Caravela* class, these were the first to travel the oceans. Christopher Columbus' ships, the *Pinto*, *Niña*, and the larger *Santa Maria*, were *Caravela* class ships.

With the "Age of Exploration" beginning mid-1500s, Spain needed armed ships capable of transoceanic travel with lofty sails for speed, room for a sizeable crew and passengers, and cargo holds that could transport tons of supplies to the New World colonies, and return tons of riches to Spain.

The first galleons were actually built as heavily armed war ships. These *man-o-wars* carried 64 cannons. Despite their fire power superiority, those participating with the Spanish Armada were defeated in 1588. The British ships simply out maneuvered the heavy galleons. King Phillip III changed the approach for his "royal ships." He trimmed down their armament to 30 cannons, made them a bit longer and sleeker for better maneuverability and with emphasis on carrying passengers, soldiers, food, supplies and riches between Spain and the New World territories.

As shipments of Incan and Aztecan gold in the 1500s increased – came another problem: Pirates. These treasure laden galleons, weaving between the Caribbean islands enroute to Spain, spawned the pirate industry. To counteract this threat, Spain devised the flotilla concept of having numerous ships traveling together across the Atlantic escorted by a heavily armed man-o-war galleon. This was very successful. Though history is filled with legends of ruthless pirate attacks and dramatic at-sea battles, very few galleons were sunk due to pirates or rival navies. Instead, most were sent to the bottom of the sea by Mother Nature in the form of violent Caribbean storms and hurricanes instead.

Pirates attacked the lesser weaponized and solitary ships instead, such as the Dutch and French ships, allowing Spain to have clear superiority of the seas.

Galleons were typically 210 feet long, from 500-1000 tons in weight, three masted sails with top and lanteen sails for sailing windward (against the wind). They were the main ships used for the long voyages needed as Spain colonized the Americas to the Philippines. They carried 300 tons of cargo to and fro across the oceans (such as the Incan gold).

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Violent ocean storms and hurricanes claimed far more Spanish galleons at sea than did pirates or enemy war ships. Hurricanes were not well understood, catching hundred of galleons off-guard and sending them to the ocean bottom, along with their crews and treasures.

The galleons had a crew of about 100-150 and could carry 100 passengers. Most bore 30 canons for armament. The war ships used for escorts were more heavily armed with a crew of 180. Over a thousand galleons were built by Spain and Portugal for their exploration and colonization fleets.

These flotillas, escorted by the warships, were known as the *Spanish Treasure Fleet*.

Not all galleons built were “royal” ships, that is, belonging to the King of Spain or the Spanish Navy, though all did sail under the Spanish or Portugese flags. Many Spanish Treasure galleons were built by private shipyards and investors with the King’s permission. Transporting colonists, supplies and treasures across the oceans was big business making handsome profits for their owners. These “private” galleons were built to the same precise specifications of the royal galleons with construction constantly inspected to ensure their compliance.



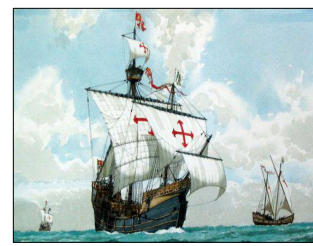
Spanish galleons were heavily armed, though seldom engaged in maritime warfare. Their firepower and maneuverability deterred most from picking a fight.

THE VOYAGE TO AMERICA

Colonists boarded their galleons at Cadiz or Seville, Spain, after they paid a handsome fee for passage to the New World. Spanish records show the colonists were usually families of a man and wife with one to three children.

Space was at a premium. High ranking naval officers had private cabins or staterooms. The rest of the crew and passengers slept where they could, crammed either below decks in the cargo or livestock holds, or on deck in the weather. Due to these cramped conditions, the ship quickly became smelly and unhygienic. Rats were a persistent problem attacking their food supplies and the animals onboard. Cockroaches, mice, scorpions, and fleas added to the discomfort. It didn’t take long for the colonists to realize this was no pleasure cruise.

Passage across the Atlantic would take two to three months, or longer, dependant upon reliable winds and calm seas – not always the case. The voyage could face strong gales for a very rough ride, to the doldrums – windless days where the ships would sit nearly idle in the ocean for days in the hot sun



The voyage to the New World was not always met with blue skies and calm seas.

awaiting the return of the wind. And, of course, the dreaded hurricanes. Between bad weather, bad food, little fresh water, crammed space, rodents and the constant pitching of the ship, with perhaps small children to care for, it must have been a miserable trip for the colonists.

The typical onboard diet consisted of biscuits, stew of chickpeas, lentils, rice and beans, red wine, cheese, onion, garlic, olives and vinegar, and once a week, salted meat.

Most galleons arrived at Havana, Cuba, the main port and hub for the Spanish Treasure Fleet. Ships carrying the Incan and Azteca gold from South America would depart for Havana from Cartagena, Columbia or Lima, Peru (those ships ported at Panama where the cargo was carried by wagons from the Pacific to Carribean coasts. There, they were reloaded onto ships for Havana).

For the colonists, they arrived in Havana and waited for the next galleon to depart for Veracruz, Mexico. This could be a wait of a month or two. Once in Veracruz, they would often build their carretas, struggle over the Sierra Madre mountains to Mexico City for their travel permits, then to Zacatecas for the next caravan along El Camino Real to New Spain.

From the time a family decided to depart Spain for the New World, they spent months at sea on Spanish galleons, months getting to Veracruz and Mexico City, followed by another six months or more on the dusty trail – a year or more of miserable travel by land and sea to reach New Mexico, their new home.

GALLEON SHIPWRECKS

It is not known how many Spanish galleons are sitting on the bottom of the seas. It is many hundreds of them. Since Spain virtually controlled the high seas from the 1500s through the 1800s with their extensive Treasure Fleet, the majority of ship wrecks are Spanish – most filled with treasures. However, bad weather, hurricanes and naval conflicts claimed many French, British, and Dutch ships as well.

Since most galleons returning to Spain were stuffed with treasures, they are obviously of interest to treasure hunters today. New technologies are now being employed by enterprises hunting sunken Spanish ships. The amount of New World gold sent to Spain on a typical Galleon is worth \$100 million or more today. Plus the numismatic and collector value of recovered gold and silver coins, and other valuable artifacts.

Who owns the gold?

The legacy of the Spanish Treasure Fleet continues to this day through legal actions. World courts are still uncertain on “who owns sunken Spanish gold and treasures?” For example, sunken galleons are being located off the Florida keys periodically. The treasure hunters claim “finder’s keepers” – the gold coins are theirs. Spain claims the treasures belong to them. Florida also makes claim since the wreck was found in their waters. Even the IRS has taken a recent interest.

And yet another recent twist, insurance companies in the 1600-1800s paid damages for some of the lost cargos. In a few cases, those precious cargos have since been found and recovered. Those European insurance companies want their money back.

On most salvage operations, the booty ends up being split between the involved parties in a court of law, which seems to vary from one ship wreck to another with no consistency. The main difficulty is identifying the exact ship wreck discovered for proof of ownership and who owned the cargo – the “burden of proof” required by the courts.

The Spanish Culture Ministry, led by archaeologist, Carlos León, has spent the last five years pouring through the millions of pages of documents in the Spanish archives in Seville, Spain. The Spaniards did keep excellent records. Thus far, the team has documented 681 wrecked or missing ships along the U.S. east coast to Panama, about half of the Caribbean waters (see map above). This does not include the Gulf of Mexico or the eastern Caribbean islands. That research is ongoing.

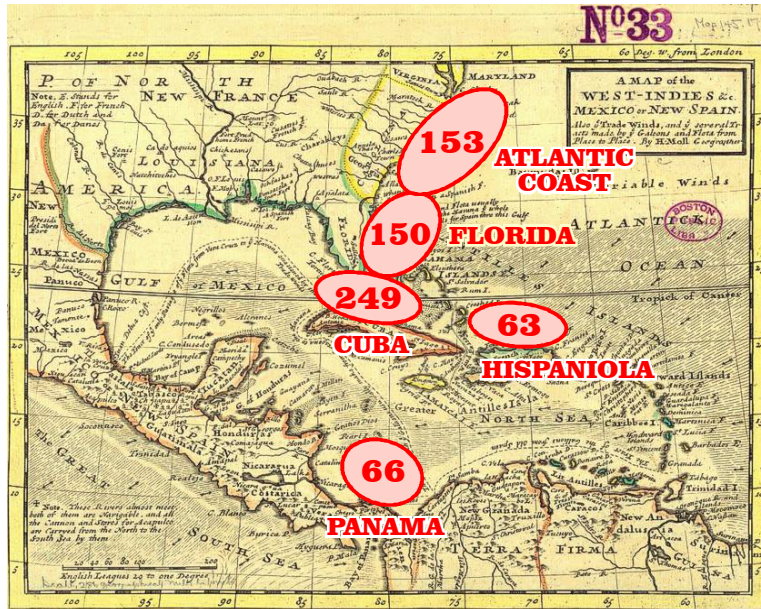
The researchers have identified these 681 wrecks by the ship’s name and Spanish ownership, the manifest of the cargo carried and crew, and often, the location of the wreck (which of course, they’re keeping quite mum about). Not only is this some great historical information, but indisputable evidence when needed in court to prove ownership by Spain.

Of the 681 wrecks logged so far, 91% were sunk by hurricanes or severe weather; 4% (29 ships) struck a reef or ran aground; 1.5 % (9 ships) were lost through naval engagement; and only a mere 0.8%, or 5 ships, were lost to pirates.

Galleons sailing from Spain to the New World often had 300 persons aboard between crew and colonists. Ships returning to Spain averaged a crew of 100 to 120. Sadly, these lost vessels also represents a loss of at least 60,000 persons over about 300

years, or about 2,000 souls per year who perished at sea. In spite of these odds, the colonists kept coming to build new lives in the New World.

Spain, and her galleons, controlled the world’s seas for about 300 years. They invented “global trade” and made Spain the wealthiest country on Earth at the time. They colonized the Americas and other areas with half a million settlers and colonists. Additionally, thousands of Jesuit and Franciscan priests arrived on the galleons to spread Christianity and their culture to the New World. All of this possible by the thousand galleons that once sailed the high seas, and sadly, most now sitting on the bottom of the seven seas – still guarding their treasures.



H. Moll Map of the West Indies, 1727, David Rumsey Collection
Map showing 681 galleon wrecks from Panama to the Atlantic coast identified from Spanish Archive records. Vessels lost in the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean islands have not yet been tabulated.



It is estimated \$3 billion to \$6 billion of Spanish gold coins and bullion sits on the bottom of the Atlantic and Caribbean oceans.



Socorro County Historical Society organized and sponsored another guided auto tour to San Marcial on Saturday, Sept. 14, 2019. This coincided with the 90th anniversary of the famous flood on Sept. 13–14, 1929 – to the day.

SCHS had a full house on the tour with 15 vehicles and a bit over 30 people. The tour was split into two for 7-8 cars each to better negotiate the narrow dirt roads and a more personable experience with the guides. SCHS Board members Hannah Brower and Paul Harden served as the tour guides.

Many know that San Marcial was once a bustling railroad town of about 2,000 persons that was wiped out in the 1929 floods. Many have driven to the area and saw nothing. There isn't much to see, but there are a few historic remnants if you know where to look – the job of the guides. The few remnants drives home just how devastating the flood was, and why the town was abandoned and no more. The point of the SCHS tours is to learn the local history with a “boots on the ground” approach enjoyed by all.

We had participants from the Socorro area as well as some professional people from out of town. Six archaeologists from PaleoWest Archaeology in Santa Fe were in the group. They have been hired by the Bureau of Reclamation to conduct an historical survey of the San Marcial area. They joined the tour to get familiar with the area and learn where some of the archaeological sites are located.

A researcher from UNM's Center for Regional Studies was also on the tour. She is working on some film projects to document historic acequias, villages, and El Camino Real trail. She got to see all three on the San Marcial tour. And, we had a party of three from Arizona from a Harvey House organization. The actual location of the San Marcial Harvey House has always been a mystery. No longer. The conveyance channel ditch road runs right over a portion of the Harvey House and old depot.

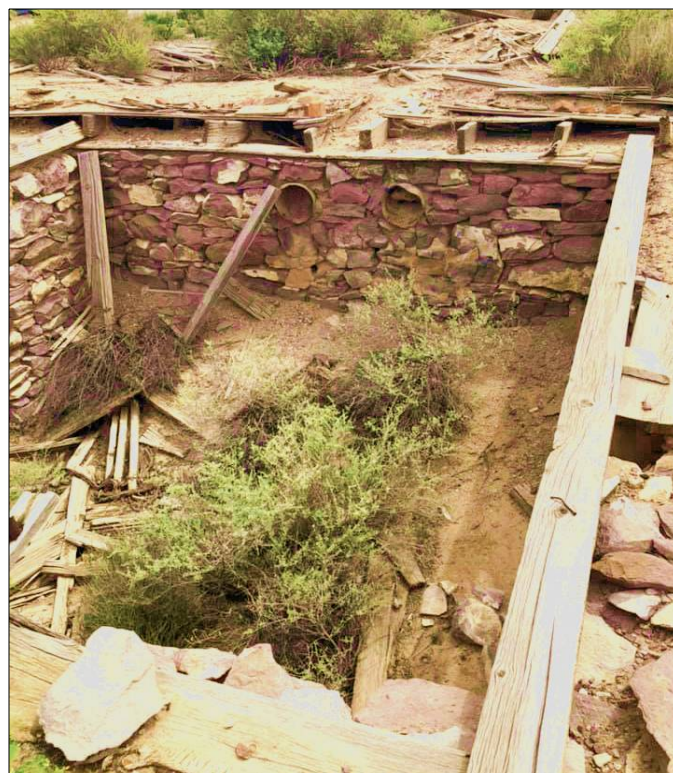
After the main tour, the archaeologists wanted to see the Tiffany townsite north of San Marcial, and a nearby pueblo. All three professional parties participated in this “bonus” portion of the tour. Once at the Tiffany townsite, Paul led the half-mile hike to the unexcavated Trenaquel (or Tiffany) pueblo, also in the survey area of the archaeology team. A remnant of El Camino Real was also explored.

Trenaquel pueblo was built and occupied in the 1300s with a newer portion, plaza and kiva added in the 1500s around the time of Spanish contact. The collapsed rock walls of the room blocks are still visible in places, as is the kiva.

Everyone enjoyed these historic sites and satisfied they learned about what they came to see.

The importance of this demonstrates the value of the local historical society. The participants gained a lot of respect for the knowledge that exists at the local level. The tour was very good PR for SCHS in professional circles. This local expertise is one of the prime purposes of any historical society, and why the need for “new blood” to carry on our history is always present. Members with a desire to learn more or get involved in such events are encouraged to attend a Board meeting and let your intentions known.

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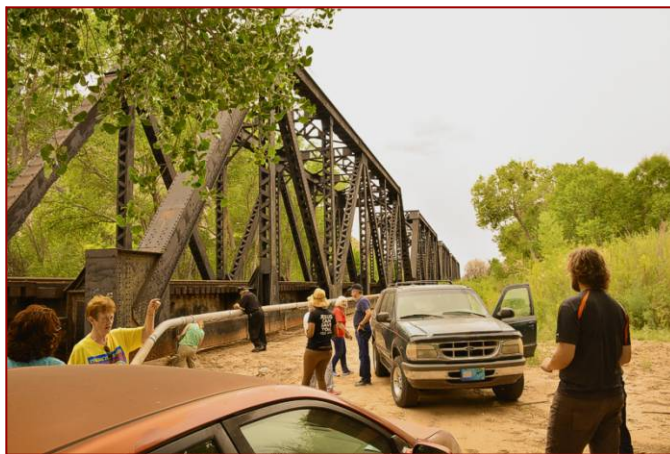
Remnants of a ranch house filled with silt from the 1929 flood. This structure may have been associated with the San Marcial diary located nearby.

**For the history and photos of San Marcial, visit our website at <http://socorro-history.org/>
On top menu bar, click on HISTORY ARTICLES then SAN MARCIAL.**



However, there was one surprise on the tour, including to the guides. As many may recall, the Tiffany fire a couple years ago burned many acres of bosque along the river in the San Marcial region. This fire burned most of the trees in the area of the railroad roundhouse, where a rock wall remnant still stands. The last guided auto tours to San Marcial were in 2018 and April 2019, the day after the SCHS annual meeting. The remaining standing wall of the roundhouse was “in the clear” on these tours. On this last tour, the roundhouse wall was almost completely obscured by the tremendous growth of trees, bushes and grass just in the past six months. The bosque at San Marcial is almost a jungle. Finding the old roundhouse in that thicket of trees was like Indiana Jones finding the lost Temple of Doom, as the above two photographs demonstrate. Yes, the desert can regenerate itself quite quickly when it wants to!

There may be another auto tour of San Marcial next April (2020) if sufficient interest.



Participants on the tour admiring the 1880s built railroad bridge across the Rio Grande at San Marcial. The old trestle is still used by the BNSF trains passing through Socorro between Belen and El Paso. Once the tracks cross the river, the railroad closely follows El Camino Real through the Jornada del Muerto.

Where would you Like to Stomp?

The SCHS guided auto tours have been quite popular, entertaining, and educational for several years. Participants enjoy learning and seeing local history “boots on the ground.” We’re often asked, “When will the next tour be?” Traveling in a group is fun and ensures safety exploring remote areas.

Where would you like to visit? What would you like to see? Some suggestions we’ve received:

- 1) Valverde townsite and Black Mesa
- 2) Bosquecito Road (El Camino Real), Las Cañas townsite and an unexcavated Piro pueblo
- 3) Kelly townsite, Kelly mine and Unity mine
- 4) Someplace else???



SCHS guide Paul Harden describing the Confederate Monument at San Marcial and a brief history of the Civil War Battle at Valverde in 1862.

Contact Paul at na5n@zianet.com with your interest

THE RAILROAD AT SAN MARCIAL

SCHS recently received some excellent photos of Rosedale and San Marcial from the Correa and McInnis families. Mr. McInnis, the great uncle to the Correas, was a Santa Fe train engineer stationed at San Marcial and Raton in the early 1900s. One of the

photos is an excellent panoramic view of the San Marcial depot and rail yards about 1910. An excellent view of the town and also important since photos before the 1929 flood are quite rare.



San Marcial rail yards with crew housing on far right, looking south ca. 1910.



San Marcial Harvey House and depot in the distance, looking north ca. 1910.

Smithsonian gets some Trinitite

On July 16, 1945, the world's first atomic bomb was detonated at Trinity site, southeast of Socorro. In addition to the characteristic mushroom cloud, the intense heat of the fireball also turned the New Mexico sand into a greenish glass substance. Dubbed "Trinitite," it quickly became illegal to own a piece due to being moderately radioactive. The larger the piece, the more radiation – the reason a good sized chunk has never been on display in a museum.



However, after 74 years, the residual radiation has decayed to very small levels. This allowed the Smithsonian Institute to *finally* display a chunk of Trinitite, and a piece of Socorro County, in their world famous museum.

Oh, no! The End of an Era

Who didn't grow up reading a MAD magazine now and again? The magazine was a strange combination of cartoon comics, political satire, and humor – and very strange humor at that. MAD published 550 issues since 1952 with about two million copies sold per issue. In early 2019, it was announced publication of the eclectic magazine would cease. Simply because all the "usual gang of idiots" are now very old or dead. Instead, periodic issues will be published containing reprints from its 67 year history. The publishing world will never be the same. Neither will the loyal readers. RIP Alfred E. Newman.

