



GUAJALOTES, ZOPILOTES, Y PAISANOS

Newsletter of the Hillsboro Historical Society

**August, 2013
Volume 6 Number 3**

Editor: Harley Shaw

BOARD

President: Harley Shaw

Vice President: Jamie Lee

Treasurer: Susan Binneweg

Secretary Robin Tuttle

Directors: Patti Nunn, Matti Harrison

Barbara Lovell, Larry Cosper, Sonja

Rutledge

ADVISORY BOARD

Karl Laumbach, Chris Adams, Craig

Springer, R. D. Brinkley,

Patricia Woodruff,

Penny McCauley, Mark Thompson

Membership

At present, we have 46 paid memberships. Of these, 17 are family memberships, 3 are business, and 26 individual. Figuring 2 individuals within family memberships, this gives a total of 63 paid members.

Financial Report

As of August 6, the HHS had \$35,570 in assets. Our total income for the month was \$3,271.54; total expenses were \$4,842.33. Major expenses included \$642.54 for advertising and promotion associated with the Fountain Trial reenactment; \$698.68 payments for sign restoration; \$3236.48 has been spent in getting the **HHS Museum Shop and Educational Center** up and running. With the exception of rent and utilities, these are one-time expenses. In its first few days, the shop had produced \$1014 gross income, so we're optimistic that it will support itself. A detailed financial statement is available to any member requesting one.

Events

An event that happened without fanfare was the installation of the **new Hillsboro welcoming sign** at the junction of Highways 152 and 27. Jamie Lee coordinated this project; Sue Bason created the delightful murals of early Hillsboro and Kingston; and Trevor Roberts handled the reconstruction and installation. If you haven't done so, take time to stop and study the murals up close. Once

again, Sue has created her own kind of "masterpieces."

We had one presentation during the quarter. Katherine Flynn gave a fascinating illustrated talk about **New Deal Art and Architecture in New Mexico**. Her talk occurred in conjunction with a display in our Education Center showing New Deal Art. This is our first display in the Center and will stay up through September. If you haven't stopped in, please do.

Concurrent with our initial Education Center display, our Museum shop opened with a variety of items and books for sale. Considering the disruptions caused by the Silver Fire, concerns over flooding, and reduced traffic due to extended closure of Highway 152, visitation in the Center has been good.

We must express special thanks to Jamie Lee for the tremendous amount of work he put into preparing the shop—painting and supervising repairs; Barbara Lovell for hustling goods, shelves, and display cases and opening the shop; and Robin Tuttle for coordinating the New Deal Art display and arranging Katherine Flynn's presentation. Ted Caluwe applied his carpenter skills to door repairs, lock installations, and strips for hanging displays.

The reenactment of the **Fountain Murder Trial** is coming along. We have cast; we have costumes, and we've been rehearsing every Sunday afternoon. Garland Bills has been the spark plug that kept us going. Val Werker handled direction until she and Jim left for Czechnya. Since then Debbie Kelch stepped in and has done a wonderful job guiding the cast. Sherri Hartman and Sharon McVay have done a marvelous job assembling costumes. Robin Tuttle has handled publicity and coordinating events for the weekend. In addition, everyone involved has been full of ideas and suggestions. It has been fun to watch the play evolve. It's going to happen—August 31 and September 1 at 2PM each day. Tickets are \$10 per person. They can be purchased ahead by mail. Tickets are available at our Museum Shop and at the Black Range Winery. At the end of the presentation each day, the audience will be asked to serve as the jury—guilty or not guilty. Come dressed in period clothes. You'll be part of the play.

After the play on Saturday evening, there will be a **Cowboy Soirée at the Black Range Vineyards on Main Street**, with wine, food, and music. The actors from the play will be there. Come in era costume and join in the fun.

In addition to the play, there will be showings of *Among the Dust of Thieves: A True Story of the Final Days of Mesilla's Colonel Albert Fountain* every 90 minutes at the **Historic Sheriff Murphy House (circa 1891)** on Elenora Street. Authors of books on the Fountain Murder Trial and related events and characters will present lectures or read from their works and offer and sign copies for sale each day. Vendors offering antiques, historic artifacts, and art will also be present. The Hillsboro Historical Society will provide an updated and expanded walking guide to Hillsboro's historic sites. A horse drawn wagon will circulate along Main and Elenora Street providing a tour of Hillsboro and transportation to the Murphy House and the Hillsboro Community Center.

Museum Shop.

The current hours of our Museum Shop and Educational Center are Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 11am to 4pm. The shop will be open through the Labor Day weekend, along with the New Deal photo display. The HHS phone number at the Center is 575-895-3324.

Fire Truck

The "parts" fire truck has been moved to Albert Sanchez' shop in Palomas Creek. He is in the process of removing the engine and transmission.

EDITOR'S COMMENTS AND NEWS

The past quarter was busy laying down history for future observers to compile. From the media standpoint, the big event was the Silver fire that ultimately encompassed some 140,000 acres of forest on the Black Range. Kingston had to be evacuated but fortunately no structures burned and nobody was hurt. As most are well-aware, other places in the west weren't so lucky, and houses have burned in California, Arizona, and Colorado. Even more tragically, 19 young firefighters lost their lives in an instant near Yarnell, Arizona. We can only add our condolences.

I believe that the people in Kingston and Hillsboro can be proud of the way they worked together during the time Kingston was evacuated. Everyone hove to, helping with food at the Community Center and providing lodging, all deserve kudos. And all of our citizens should be complimented upon the way they

cooperated and worked with the USFS fire fighters. And, of course, we must give their due to all of the fire-fighting crews and USFS personnel, not the least of which is our own board member, Black Range District Ranger Larry Cosper. We can only wish that the higher echelons of our government could learn to work together the way these highly professional people were able to operate. Thanks to everyone.

The cooperation continued after the fire, with local citizens and flood control people inspecting Percha Creek and its existing flood control structures. The necessary adjustments were made on the levees and clearing serious debris, without excessive damage to the creek environment. Kingston has had a couple of scares, but so far the water downstream has stayed within the banks of the creek. The threat still exists and always will, but, short of a "Noah" flood that nothing could contain, we may move through this crisis as well without loss of property or life. Let us hope so.

On a sadder note the past quarter saw the passing of several long-time residents of our area: Julie Roberts, Smokey Nunn, John Able, and Jimmy Bason. Their presence will be missed, and we can only regret that we were unable to capture their memories of this landscape. Such people are the ones who create the true day to day history of an area.

LOCAL HISTORY

A Shell Hunt in the Black Range

On the whole, scientists were late coming to the Black Range. Amazingly, among the very earliest to explore the mountain after the decline of the Apaches were two adventurous souls that did not fit the norm of explorers making broad based plant and animal collections or archaeologists studying indigenous cultures. In 1915, H. A. Pilsbry and James H. Ferris spent several weeks packing through the Black Range in search of mollusks and snails new to science. While most of their writings were rather drab and technical, Ferris, who worked as an assistant to Pilsbry, took it upon himself to write of their Black Range adventures in a lighter frame of mind. In his paper (*The Nautilus, July 1916*), "A Shell Hunt in the Black Range" he describes a summer spent on the mountain, initially with Pilsbry and "two ladies," presumably their wives and later traveling by himself. These shell hunters had planned to collect in the Mogollon Mountains,

but during a brief stopover visit with, Dr. Samuel Swope in Deming, they were persuaded by Swope to switch their attention to the Black Range.

Samuel Swope is worthy of additional study. He practiced medicine in Deming from about 1900 until the mid-1920s. He served as a physician with the Mexican Punitive Expedition under Pershing and in one instance treated victims of a shootout involving Butch Cassidy and the Wild Bunch. From Ferris' comments, Swope was well-acquainted with the Black Range. I'm still seeking information on him.

Bypassing Cooke's Peak by way of the Mimbres River, the foursome traveled by wagon from Deming to Swartz, an early settlement near present Faywood Hot Springs. At Swartz, they transferred their equipment to a pack string owned by Teodoro Solis, a Chihuahuan who Ferris described as "the best packer and camper alive." Their route led them to Mitchell Gray's mining camp on the west slope of Sawyer Peak. Thence they traveled along the crest of the Black Range to Reed Ranch, near Reed's Peak, where Pilsbry and the two ladies departed. Ferris stayed and describes his more solitary adventures, including a battle with an angry range cow and a visit from a suspicious fugitive from the law:

"The work was continued for another month by way of Black Canyon, Diamond Creek (where we were detained briefly by enormous speckled trout), then over the range eastward, making our first camp at the ranch of Teodoro's brother near Chloride.

"This was the forest primeval. The trail ran about nine to ten thousand feet in elevation and the yellow pine, Douglas fir, spruces and quaking aspens were large and thick. It was our highest and wildest range to date. The cattle, wild and keen of scent, are trapped for slaughter in corrals with swinging gates, something like monster turkey-traps. Black and silver-tipped bears and mountain lions were plentiful. A couple of untamed, off-the-reservation Apaches also were hiding in what seemed to be our best snail coves. We saw one a few seconds but did not catch him. Deer and turkey were fairly abundant, and the whole country is marked by interesting historical events. Near here Dr. Fewkes had earlier dug some of his most valued specimens of prehistoric pottery.

At one point a train of pack burros had rolled down into the Las Animas country.

During our short stay two saddle horses also rolled down into that cavern of lost souls. In one of the gulches the bones of an unknown soldier had lain so long his clothing and a roll of money were destroyed by the weather. On the Kingston trail a bear dropped out of a tree upon a packer and killed him. Here Apache Kid had robbed and burned a miner's cabin, and at another point, lying in wait behind a rock, he shot a miner in the back; and when we dropped down into Chloride we met the men who followed the same Apache Kid into the San Mateo range and killed him—saw the mule that packed their dunnage, and located the men in Chicago who sent Kid's head to the Yale skull and bone fraternity. We also saw the carcass of a bull that killed a ranch-owner's saddle horse, and was killed and pried off the angry and pompous owner by an efficient cowboy.

"I soon found myself in the whirl of Black Range society. Off upon an independent excursion of my own, a mad cow obstructed the right of way. The law was upon my side but I knew the peculiarities of Spanish half-breed cattle well enough to get behind a tree, and did my best. Going around the tree rapidly, I kept behind it all but once and then in a fleeting second was fairly introduced. Grasping her heartily by the horns, I shook them; but the impulsive creature was really overwhelming in her attention, and upon her knees walked all over me. This spot is now marked, and it is quite a large one. Luckily the same cowboy with his 45 that killed the bull, came up the trail and with a bang released me from further embarrassment. Pride only received a jolt. My horsehide coat was cow-proof,

Again when alone, and my thoughts were far away, just at dusk, a robust mountaineer from the Great Smokies came into camp to show me the mummified right hand of the last lawman who climbed the trail to take him back to Tennessee. As a stranger, and a little timid, it was my part to show that I had no particular interest in the specimen; but those mountaineers possess keen insight into the minds of the tender-feet and I presume the camp site is marked also. However, the dwellers of the high and lonesome will never find the spot where I lay out the rest of the night watching to see if that uncanny naturalist was coming back with any more fragments of his specimen.

. . . . I returned to Deming via Hermosa, Las Animas Canyon, Hillsboro, and Kingston. “

INTERESTING LINKS

<http://hillsborohistory.blogspot.com/>.

Hillsboro blog maintained by Craig Springer. Lots of good stories about our area.

[http://www.blackrange.org/The Black Range Rag/The Black Range Rag.html](http://www.blackrange.org/The_Black_Range_Rag/The_Black_Range_Rag.html). Created by Robert Barnes. Now back online with a lot of new information. Good for both local history and natural history. And lots of links to other sites.

<http://www.hillsboronm.com/>. Community organizations and functions around Hillsboro and Kingston.

<http://www.blackrangelodge.com/>. Historic bed and breakfast with accommodations in the pines.

<http://barbershopcafe.com/>. Check ahead for hours and menu.

<http://www.blackrangevineyards.com/>. Currently in Mesilla, New Mexico. Soon to open in Hillsboro.

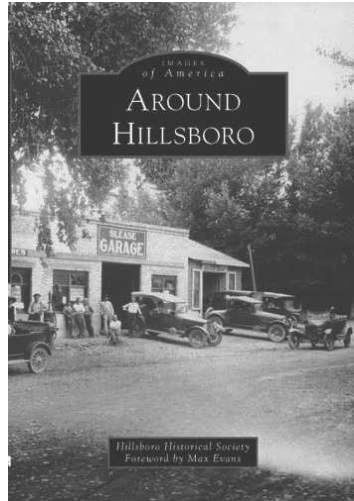
<http://www.aldosattic.com/>. Fine bird prints and literature of nature.

HISTORIC HOMES



Hillsboro Power Plant

The power plant, built in 1930, operated from 1952. It was then abandoned until 1987, when an individual hoping to convert it to a home bought it. It changed hands once before conversion was complete. It has been artistically restored and is a fine example of “adaptive reuse.”



\$21. 99 plus postage
Available at the Museum Shop

MEMBERSHIP

The Hillsboro Historical Society is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization whose mission is to collect, preserve and share the history and historical artifacts of the Hillsboro, Kingston and Lake Valley communities in New Mexico. Its membership comprises supporters and volunteers who may choose to participate in many aspects of the Society's mission including fundraising, collection and conservation, oral histories, education and interpretation, special events and programs. Member benefits include the Historical Society quarterly newsletter, priority registration for lectures, summer programs and field trips, and an invitation to our Annual Dinner and Silent Auction. Dues are \$25 annually for individual or family and \$50 for business memberships. Please mail this completed Membership Subscription, along with your check made payable to **Hillsboro Historical Society, P. O. Box 461, Hillsboro NM 88042.**

Member Name _____ Today's Date _____

Address _____

City / State / Zip _____

Phone Number (_____) _____ Email _____

Volunteer interest _____

Enclosed is \$ _____ annual (from Feb to Feb) individual or family membership

Enclosed is \$ _____ annual (from Feb to Feb) business membership that includes ad in newsletter

Additional Donation \$ _____ Gift Membership \$ _____ for _____

Newsletter sent (check one): Digital by email Hard copy mailed

We prefer to send the newsletter via email. If we have no email address for members, we will mail them a hard copy.