

AYER Y HOY en TAOS

Yesterday and Today in Taos County and
Northern New Mexico

Winter 1998

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Chili Line Train No. 115 at Sublette circa 1950, with K-28 Engine No. 476. Photograph by Bob Richardson
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THE SANTA BARBARA TIE AND POLE IN THE SANGRE DE CRISTOS

by George Graham, edited by Andy Lindquist

THE CHILI LINE – Saga of the Squat Iron Horse from Antonito to Santa Fe

by Bill Hemp

POT CREEK DIG ENTERS NEW AGE

by Sara Ford

A PUBLICATION OF THE TAOS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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The Taos County Historical Society's publication, *AYER Y HOY in Taos County and Northern New Mexico*, is published semi-annually by the Historical Society.

We invite articles of a scholarly nature, as well as book reviews of recent publications pertinent to the Taos and northern New Mexico area. We are open to publishing occasional reminiscences, folklore, oral history and poetry that are of lasting historical interest.

The Taos County Historical Society endeavors to maintain high standards of quality in *AYER Y HOY*, and we seek to make improvements as we go along. Readers' comments and suggestions are welcome.

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AYER Y HOY is mailed to all members of the Taos County Historical Society as a benefit of membership. Memberships are \$15 for individuals, \$20 for families, and \$30 for sustaining memberships.

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The Taos County Historical Society is a New Mexico non-profit organization dedicated to the study and preservation of the historical resources of Taos County and northern New Mexico. Membership is open to any interested person, regardless of residence.

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One more year until the new century and a new millennium. We are on the verge of new times marked by the events of a new world. We are urged to document the present in order to better understand events in the larger context known as history.

As this edition goes to press we as a nation we have seen events in Washington result in the historic impeachment of a president, while the darkness of bitter wars, violence, cynicism and old grievances looms over the world population. Those of us who live and work here often feel Taos is a sanctuary, a place from which the effects of these tensions can be escaped and avoided. But recent local events have lead us to face the inevitability that, even in Taos, there is a darkness that has seeped into our lives as well.

Two recent senseless and extremely violent murders, made even more shocking because they involved young people as perpetrators and victims, have illustrated how this darkness has gained a stronger foothold even in this peaceful little valley.

Change, however difficult to fathom, is inevitable. Some say the advent of the railroad was what pulled northern New Mexico, kicking and screaming, into the modern world, bringing with it new ideas, more business, fresh blood. But when the railroad came into the region it was not part of some Manifest Destiny movement but rather the inevitability of common sense — it simply was a necessity.

However we choose to remember and document history, either as the passage of events that were meant to be or as the ripples just reaching us from waves begun far away, it is the character of the people who choose to live here that will chart the course for the future. This is the end of a decade, the end of a century and the end of a millennium. But it is also a beginning, a slate yet to be written upon.

This issue features an account of the Santa Barbara Tie and Pole company in the Sangre de Cristo mountains, by George Graham and edited by Andy Lindquist. A light accompaniment is an article by Bill Hemp on the Chili Line, part of the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad.

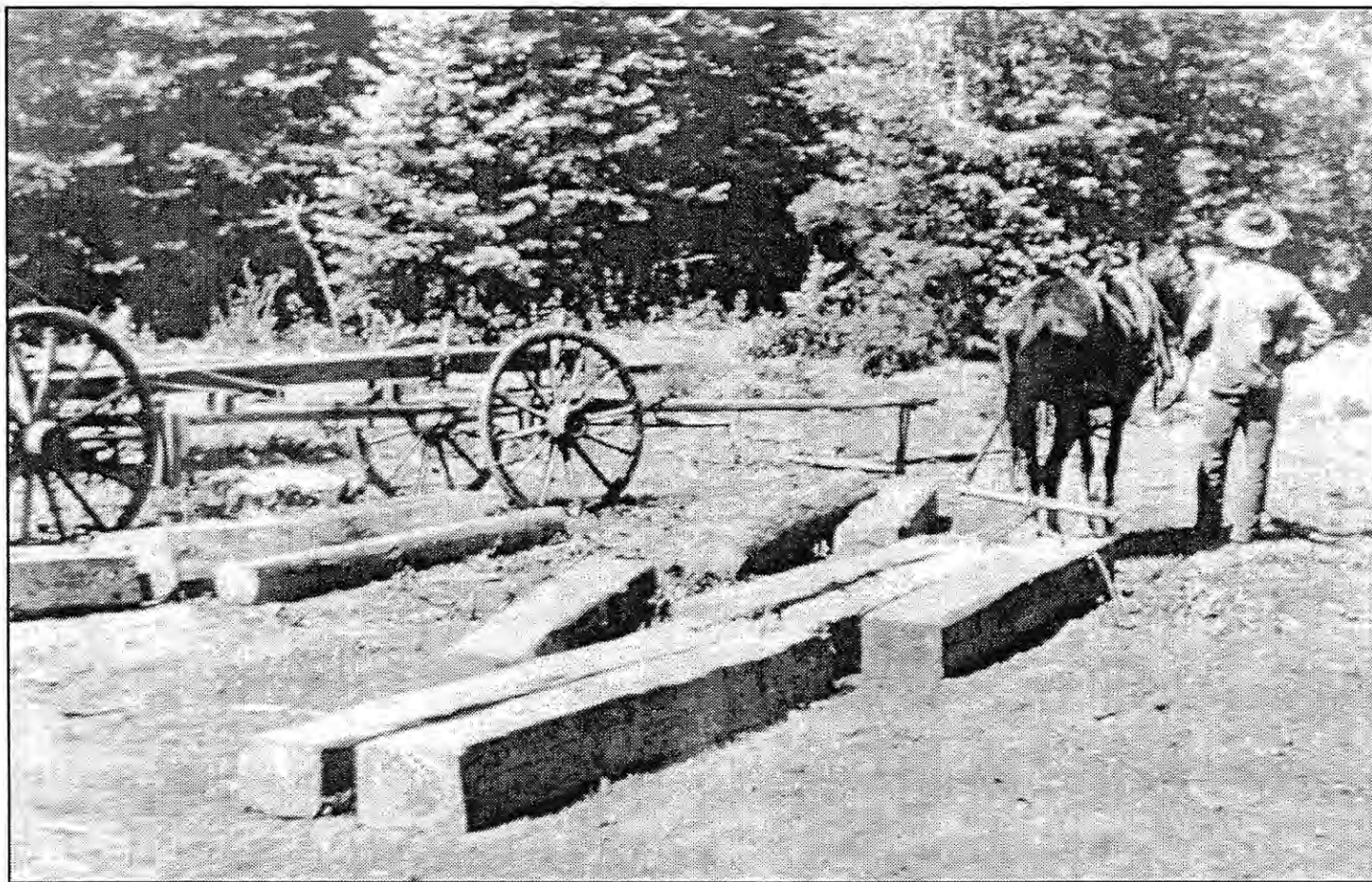
The last article in this issue shows how historians are improving the way we document the recovery of the past. "Pot Creek Enters the New Age" by Sara Ford tells us about a massive computerization project launched by the National Science Foundation and Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas.

Finally, this represents my last issue as editor of *Ayer y Hoy*. It has been my pleasure to be part of such an illustrious publication. Much luck to the new editor, who has yet to be confirmed.

I would like to thank Andy Lindquist, as always, for his patience and help, without which I'm sure I'd be lost. Melody Swan and Lynda Ferris of Cowgirls Design also deserve many thanks for making the final drafts and masters of this issue possible.

Here's to history. Here's to tomorrow.

Melody Romancito



Ties being skidded to the yard. Shown are the yarding area with wagon, horse and Teamster, taken sometime between 1907-1916. Photograph courtesy of the U.S. Forest Service.

SANTA BARBARA TIE AND POLE IN THE SANGRE DE CRISTOS

by George Graham
edited by Andy Lindquist

This article is an extract from a comprehensive scholarly report prepared in 1998 by George E. Graham, MA, a volunteer in 1997 in the Camino Real Ranger District. In order to fit the space available in this issue of Ayer y Hoy en Taos, we have greatly shortened the report, leaving out the many footnotes and citations so carefully gathered by the author. The listing of sources at the conclusion of the article barely skims the surface. The full report may be read at the Taos County Historical Society, located upstairs in the Old Taos County Courthouse.

In 1903, President Theodore Roosevelt enthusiastically urged construction of the Panama Canal. As the

former Under-Secretary of the Navy, Roosevelt grasped the strategic importance of the canal to the United States. Moreover, he knew that the canal would be a boon to world trade. Started in 1904, the Panama Canal was completed in 1914.

Improbable as it seems, the canal dramatically impacted the majestic Sangre de Cristo mountains in northern New Mexico. The connection between the canal and the mountains was the American railroad industry. Even as President Roosevelt extolled the value of the canal, the American railroads viewed it as a threat. The canal would compete with the railroads, an industry that had dominated transport across the United States for



Skidding logs to the railroad using a "bummer." Note the crude wheels under the front of the logs.
 Photograph courtesy of the U.S. Forest Service.

decades. In 1907, the railroads were laying plans to compete with the developing canal. The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway (AT&SF) concluded that double tracking, laying an additional track beside the existing one, would improve scheduling and provide the competitive edge, but adding the track would be an immense project involving, among other things, millions of railroad ties.

To get the necessary ties, the AT&SF sent Amasa B. McGaffey to search northern New Mexico for suitable timber. A. B. McGaffey was an experienced lumberman from Vermont who had moved to New Mexico in 1886 and became a bookkeeper and commissary operator for the American Lumber Company in the Zúñi Mountains. McGaffey found suitable timber in the Sangre de Cristo range, but transportation of the ties was a major problem. Transport by train was out of the question since the Chili Line, the closest railroad, was 20 miles away through rugged mountains.

The only hope was to float the ties in the river system. The Rio Santa Barbara and the Rio Pueblo ran into the Embudo, which entered the Rio Grande flowing toward Albuquerque and the AT&SF. This was good, but McGaffey's young engineer, Fred W. Drake, was

unsure whether the water levels were sufficient to float ties. Both men also knew that the Hispanic population in the Sangre de Cristos was unfamiliar with anything like a large logging operation. In fact, many of the Hispanics and the Picuris Indians living nearby were not yet completely familiar with a commercial economy. How this labor force would respond was unknown.

In 1907, McGaffey, backed by the AT&SF, forged ahead in the Sangre de Cristos. In February, 25,338 acres of the Santa Barbara Grant were purchased. In the purchase, N. B. Laughlin sold one-quarter of the grant to each of the following three men: A. J. Lester, W. S. Strickler, and W. S. Hopewell. Lester and Hopewell then sold their portions to Strickler on that same day. The original land grant was about 31,000 acres. Laughlin apparently retained one-quarter of the grant for himself. On March 16, three weeks later, the Santa Barbara Tie and Pole Company (SBT&P) was formed. The 25,338 acres of the Santa Barbara Land Grant was turned over to the company and one-quarter of its stock issued equally to four men; W. P. Johnson, A. B. McGaffey, W. S. Hopewell, and W. S. Strickler.

What was accomplished by these complex business arrangements was unclear. One possibility is that

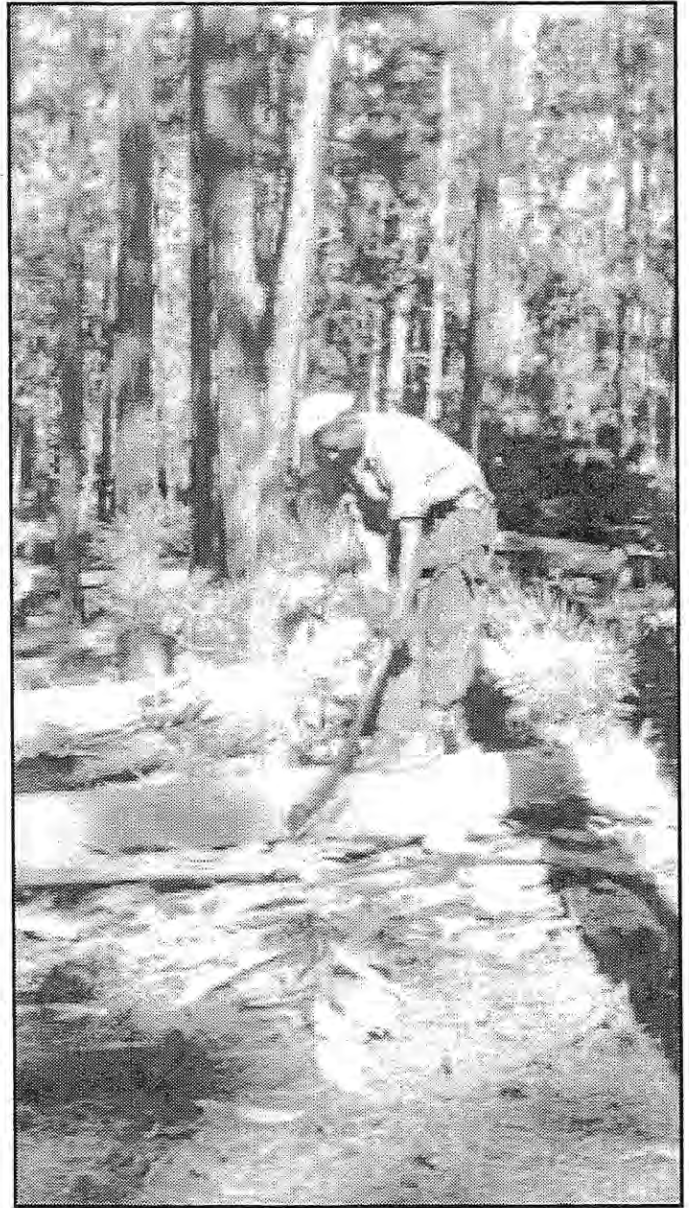
SBT&P was buffering itself from potential claims to the land by previous grant owners who had lost their land through unsavory deals over the years. The Santa Barbara Land Grant was made under Spanish authority in 1779, and title was recognized by Mexico after 1821. After taking control of New Mexico in 1846, the United States, under the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, agreed to respect the land grant titles, and ownership by the original grant owners was confirmed in 1879. Subsequently, numerous questionable legal maneuvers led to the land titles being sold in 1907.

SBT&P was well connected in 1907, and arrangements for developing the operation began in earnest. On March 15, 1907, a day before the incorporation of SBT&P, New Mexico House Bill 190 authorized the use of rivers to float logs. W. P. Johnson of the Albuquerque Lumber Company began a special committee through the Albuquerque Commercial Club to construct a creosoting plant in Albuquerque. W. S. Hopewell, committee member, SBT&P investor, and head of the New Mexico Fuel and Iron Company, went to Taos to work on the transportation of the first ties. The AT&SF supplied a pile driver to help build a boom to catch ties at Cochiti, just north of Albuquerque.

On the ground, the first great hurdle was to see if the Rio Grande and the Embudo River would float ties. In 1907, some 12,000 ties were floated in the Embudo River and the Rio Grande as a test. The tie drive, as it came to be known, succeeded. In 1908, starting on the Rio de Santa Barbara, 100,000 ties were floated. After some anxious and seemingly hopeless moments in Embudo Canyon, this tie drive succeeded as well.

By 1909, SBT&P was ready for large-scale operations. Crews built flumes, a few several miles long, to shoot ties down the mountainsides to the Rio Santa Barbara and the Rio Pueblo. Skid trails were built to haul ties in the mountains. The company town of Hodges was built with a commissary, officers' quarters, and post office. SBT&P purchased a two-truck Shay steam engine (Lima 2194) and five miles of track. The train, SBT&P No. 1, ran from Hodges into the wilderness to move logs and ties. The company owned 65 to 70 teams of mules and horses, and piece workers furnished their own draft animals. For the next 17 years, SBT&P would produce about 400,000 ties annually.

To turn SBT&P into reality was a herculean task for the workforce. In 1909 the installation of the narrow gauge railroad was itself a monumental task. SBT&P No. 1 was brought to Embudo by rail. The 51,000-pound narrow gauge engine was disassembled, loaded in wagons, and hauled over 20 miles through the mountains to Hodges, where it was reassembled. Its track, also hauled in by wagon, was laid on crudely built rail beds on the mountainsides. As the logging was com-



A "tie hack" is a worker who shapes a log into a railroad tie using a broad axe. Photograph courtesy of the U.S. Forest Service.

pleted in one area, new rail beds would be made and the track moved to the new route.

The railroad operation ran from 1909 to 1917, when the train was sold. It was disassembled again and removed from the mountains. The engine can be seen today on display at the Gold Strike Inn and Casino near Boulder City, Nevada.

Cutting and transporting ties for SBT&P was year-round work. During the fall and winter months, workers cut trees and hewed ties. Shacks in the mountains housed men who worked as long as weather permitted. The company owned three steam-powered sawmills that were moved on skids in the mountains, but the bulk of the pro-



Intake for adding water to log flume father down the canyon.
Photograph courtesy the U.S. Forest Service.

duction was done by hand with broadaxes.

Tie drives were timed with the seasons. Spring was best because of snowmelt from the mountains. To prevent jams, rocks and other obstructions were removed from the streambeds. Large objects were dynamited. To assist nature, splash dams were built along the waterway. The dams were blown up, creating a wall of water that carried the ties downstream. All year long, ties were stacked along the streams at Hodges, Tres Ritos, and Peñasco, waiting for the three-week spring tie drive. The drives were difficult and dangerous. Jams were cleared with peaveys and occasionally dynamite. Falling into the water was a constant problem for the workers. Besides the dangers of drowning and entrapment in the moving ties, developing hypothermia in streams swollen with snowmelt was a real danger.

Workers followed the tie drives through many miles of canyons. The ties were regularly trapped in eddies or stranded along the banks or against obstructions. When the splash dams were blown open, a wall of water would deposit ties surprising distances from the rivers. Workers had to return these stray ties to the main water flow.

Summer was the time for construction. At Hodges, a permanent sawmill was built, along with a dam to supply water to it. Mountain cabins were constructed every year. Flumes were built on mountainsides. Cutting continued even as construction proceeded.

A full account of the life of the people working for SBT&P is unavailable, but glimpses can be found. In 1910, there were 124 people living in Hodges, 29 Anglos and 95 Hispanics. Among the Anglos were two managers, a bookkeeper, and workers. None of the Anglos were married or had dependents living at the site. The Hispanics, all workers, included 15 heads of households and had many dependents. Approximately 300 people worked for SBT&P at its peak. Additional workers came from Peñasco, Llano, and Llano Largo. It is also known that farmers cut ties from their property and sold them to the company. Workers, mostly Hispanic, performed a physical miracle in making the company successful. Compensation for their effort was estimated at about \$1.75 a day. Farmers received about \$0.25 per square 16-foot-log delivered. In 1910, all Hispanics were exclusively in unskilled manual labor positions. By 1920, a few had moved into skilled positions and management positions.

Besides being paid more than the workers, SBT&P managers held paying side jobs. Fred W. Drake was the postmaster from 1909 to 1913, as well as the first game warden in Taos County from 1909 to 1911. In 1918, Drake and Allen Hides and Livestock operated in Tres Ritos.

Hispanic workers lived in shacks and sometimes tents. In Hodges, a dormitory was built for workers next to a commissary and an ice house. Too near an acequia, the ground was often soaked. The buildings sat on stilts and were connected by raised boardwalks. Workers' accommodations were meager compared to the large, well-built cabins of the managers.

Picuris Pueblo provided few, if any, workers to the SBT&P. The company hurt the Picuris economy, which relied on the land. The company thinned the game by hunting. For several years, Taos County paid bounties for the destruction of predators, and SBT&P took advantage. In 1916, Taos County restricted hunting in response to the declining numbers of wild game. These restrictions limited the food supply of the Picuris. Besides all this, the Picuris had philosophical and religious differences with the company over the use of the

land.

Unquestionably, SBT&P had a negative impact on the environment of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, but this can be overemphasized. To begin, SBT&P was not alone in doing damage. Farmers and ranchers burned untold acres of trees to open grazing and planting areas. Environmental damages in New Mexico due to lumbering were about average when compared to the rest of the nation. It is also important to avoid harsh judgments based on current standards that SBT&P scarcely could have conceived. In some cases, elementary conservation was attempted.

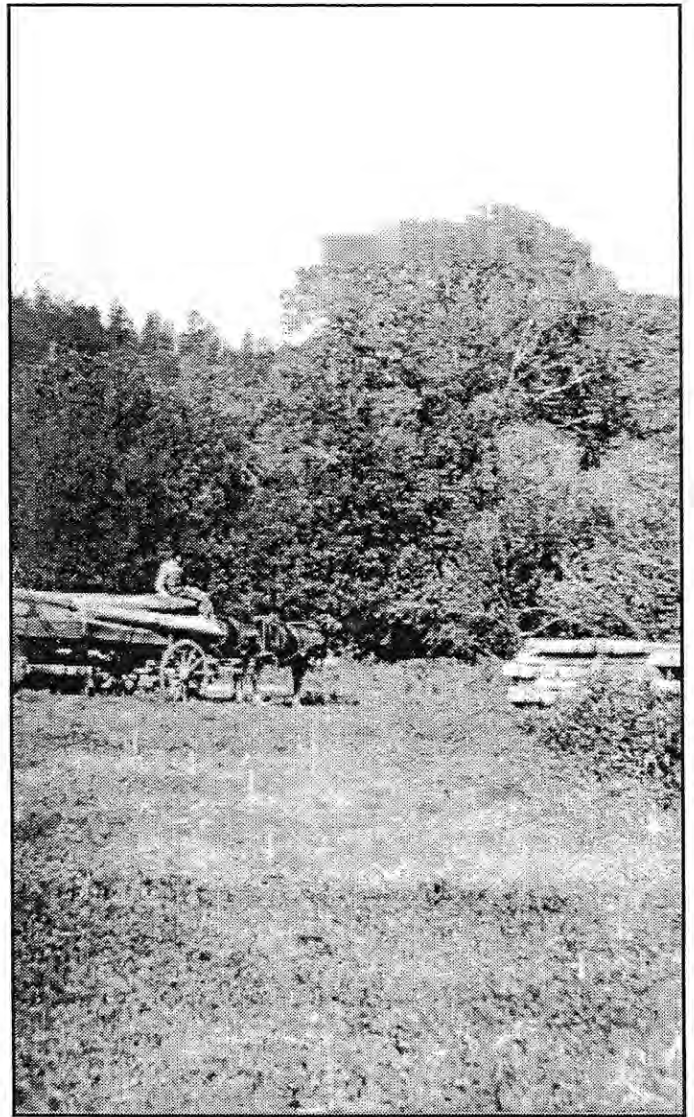
It was well known that the tie drives destroyed the habitats of fish and wildlife. In 1912, about 7,500 black spotted trout were released in the Embudo River. These fish, it was hoped, would reach the Rio Santa Barbara. Throughout 1913 and 1914, AT&SF released 500,000 fish at locations along its main line. It is unclear if these fish influenced the Embudo or its tributaries. In 1915 and 1916, the Rio Pueblo and the Rio Santa Barbara were stocked with unknown quantities of fish. It is possible there were more fish in the river system due to stocking during the tie drives than before the drives began.

Still, SBT&P knowingly and intentionally damaged the environment while in operation. In 1908, Arthur Manby of Taos County was the delegate from New Mexico to the Sixteenth National Irrigation Congress held in Albuquerque. Manby, a well known and flamboyant Taos resident, gave a speech at the Congress that included the following excerpt:

"The history of the world has demonstrated that when forests have been cut down on the heads of rivers, that such rivers lose their flow of water during all seasons of the year. . . where timber is cut off, the snow and rainfalls rush off in one great flood devastating the country it passes through and thereafter leaving it dry and desolate."

Ironically, the practical end of SBT&P began in 1907, the same year as the company's birth, in a treaty with Mexico. In January 1907, the United States agreed to deliver 60,000 acre feet of water per year to Mexico via the Rio Grande. When the treaty was signed, no one expected damming or irrigation in Colorado or New Mexico to affect water flow. But Mexico began lodging complaints as early as 1908. The practices of American industry along the tributaries of the Rio Grande clearly influenced water flow. Attempting to comply with the treaty, Elephant Butte Dam (1912—1916) was built far to the south to regulate water flow. The national treaty kept alive the issue of water flow down the Rio Grande, raising questions about lumbering and tie drives.

To control river waters, New Mexico created the Rio Grande Conservancy in 1923. The conservancy was empowered to control and tax the waterway, much like



Yarding area where the ties were stored. Photograph courtesy of the U.S. Forest Service.

a city controls and taxes its citizens. To SBT&P, the threat of increased taxation from the conservancy was very real. Further, the conservancy developed plans to build a dam on the Embudo. Though never built, the conservancy plans directly attacked the drive route.

Beyond the government, economic forces were turning against SBT&P in the late 1920s. There was a national decline in lumbering as demand fell. The double tracking project was largely complete. New competitors arose in the lumber industry. East Texas began harvesting hardwood trees that did not require creosoting, and new methods of making railroad ties were on the horizon. In 1931, as the Great Depression grew worse, SBT&P began the process of selling its Santa Barbara Land Grant holdings. Still able to turn a dollar, the company reached an agreement with J. H. McCarthy of

Taos, allowing him to graze his cattle on the land for \$250. On December 31, 1931, SBT&P sold 27,734.34 acres of the Santa Barbara Land Grant to the United States Government for \$55,000. J. H. Keefe signed as the president of SBT&P. The land became part of the Carson National Forest.

In 1931, the spacious dwellings in Hodges and Tres Ritos were given to the current occupants for life. Several SBT&P cabins still stand at Tres Ritos, but only foundations remain of the buildings in Hodges.

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A view of the Taos Junction depot in February, 1941, by E.J. Foley, Jr. This photograph marks the start of a trip back to Alamosa, approximately 110 miles, which took eleven hours due to heavy snow. Photograph is from the Fred Springer Collection and used with permission by Richard Dorman.

The Chili Line

SAGA OF THE SQUAT IRON HORSE FROM ANTONITO TO SANTA FE

by Bill Hemp

On September 1, 1941 agent R. W. Ogle handed the final orders of the line to conductor Henry Willis, who gave the signal to engineer Charles R. Arnell. The train rolled out of the City of the Holy Faith for the last time. It carried 20 paying passengers in two coaches, along with three freight cars and one baggage-mail car, all pulled by Engine No. 470 AK-28. The narrow gauge train arrived in Antonito 18 minutes late. That really didn't matter, because the Santa Fe Branch of the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad (D&RGW), affectionately called the Chile Line, had become history.

The saga of the Chili Line began in 1867, when

General William Jackson Palmer, a Civil War veteran and an engineer on the Kansas Pacific, had a vision to build a railroad. His vision was that the railroad would run along the western foothills of the Rocky Mountains, south from Denver to El Paso, with extensions to Mexico City and the salt water ports of Guaymas. After years of negotiations with the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway (AT&SF) and the Union Pacific, Palmer's narrow gauge railroad became a reality in 1880. Track-laying started in Antonito and reached Tres Piedras in 1881.

Orders were that the branch was to be constructed as cheaply as possible. The depot stops from Antonito were Volcano, No Agua, Tres Piedras, Taos Junction, Barranca, Embudo, Alcalde, Chamita and Española. By 1886, the line extended to Otowi Bridge and Buckman and finally, in January 1887, to Santa Fe.

Although the Chili Line was originally surveyed to go from Comanche Canyon down to Pilar and south along the Rio Grande, which would have allowed easy

entrance to Taos, the decision was made to go down Comanche Canyon proper to Embudo. This saved some \$200,000 in construction costs, but gave the line a twisting, turning track up Barranca Hill, with its 4% grades and 24% curve. The town of Taos was left waiting for a train that never arrived.

Forty-pound steel rail was used in Comanche Canyon, but the rest of the line was built as cheaply as safety dictated. No ballast was used, and the rails were spiked directly to the ties without tie plates. By the time the line was completed as far as Española in December of 1881, construction cost amounted to \$1,485,000.

Freight carried over the Chili Line varied with the season and year. Lumber made up much of the freight in the early days. Minerals, such as quartzite from Glenwoody, lepidolite from the Embudo-Dixon area, and mica from Tres Piedras, came later. More than 200 carloads of apples were shipped annually from Española. World War I saw more than 8,000 soldiers and their gear moved on the line. Cattle and hogs were shipped north to Colorado. Servieta was the largest sheep shipping point. Piñon nuts, and of course, chile, were carried in carloads up and down the line.

Native Americans from the Santa Clara, San Juan and San Ildefonso pueblos were passengers on the line which permitted them to ride free, a complimentary service provided by the railroad to compensate the tribes for the tracks that cut through their reservations. Entire families would flag down the train as it chugged through. They would hop aboard and ride either up to Antonito or down to Santa Fe. They would then turn around for a round-trip excursion.

In the summer of 1910, one of the passengers on the Chile Line from Santa Fe to Servieta was Dorothy Berninghaus, a petite girl of eight from St. Louis. She was accompanied by her artist father, Oscar E. Berninghaus, her mother, Emilia Miller Berninghaus, and her brother, Charles. At 96, Dorothy Berninghaus Brandenburg recalled taking the narrow gauge train four or five times.

"On that first trip, Long John Dunn picked us up at the station in his buckboard pulled by two horses. Mom and Dad were in the backseat and Charles and I were in the front with Long John in the driver's seat. All of a sudden we were hit by a terrible hailstorm. I blame the dark spots on my hands of that infernal storm!" she said. "My father first took the Chili Line from Antonito to Servietta in 1899 when he was a young man on 25. That's when he discovered Taos as the place to paint."

Ruben Martinez, a Taos tradesman and plumber, tells a Chili Line story about his father and mother, Salomon and Lisaida Martinez. In 1937, when they were married, there were no furniture stores to speak of in Taos, so they ordered a full set of furniture from a

Sears Roebuck catalogue. The furniture arrived months later on the train at Taos Junction.

"It took them an entire day to transport their chairs, tables, beds, and chests back to their home in Taos," Martinez said.

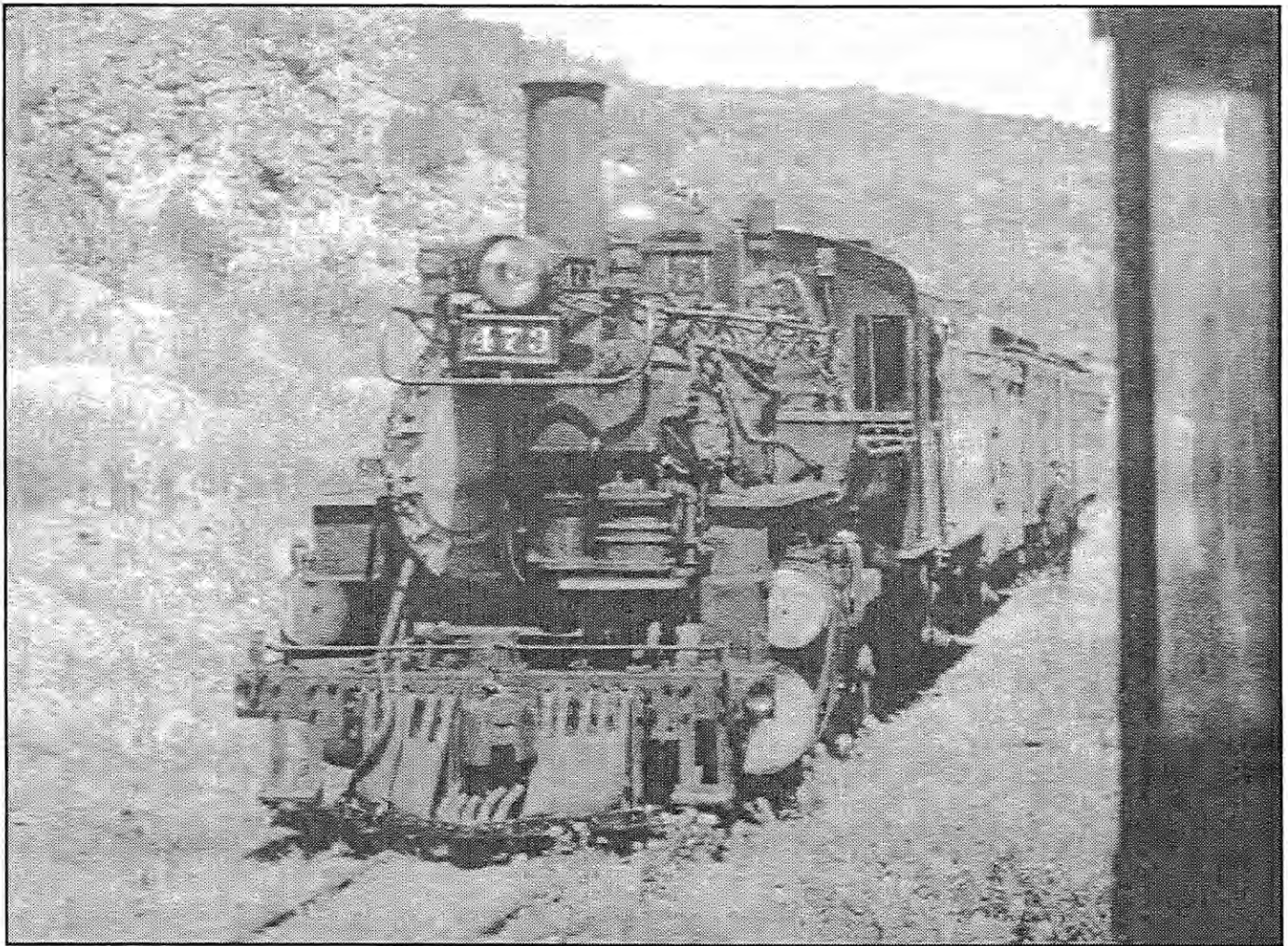
One of the most unforgettable characters associated with the Chili Line train was Edith Warner, a frail, shy, minister's daughter from Pennsylvania who moved to New Mexico for health reasons in 1928. She was employed by the Los Alamos Boys Ranch to receive its shipments and meet incoming guests at Otowi station. Serving also as the caretaker of the station, her life was chronicled by Peggy Pond Church and fictionalized by Frank Waters in *The Woman at Otowi Crossing*.

Edith opened a tea room next to the Otowi bridge and operated a gas pump. The Chili Line delivered ice and supplies from Santa Fe for her tea room. As America prepared for war in the early 40s, the Boys Ranch was turned into a top-secret community for the development of the atom bomb. Edith's tea room served as a sanctuary for the distinguished scientists Niels Bohr, Arthur H. Compton, Enrico Fermi and J. Robert Oppenheimer. She knew them all personally, as they dropped in almost daily for her home-cooked meals and chocolate cake.

Carl Berghofer, 72, of Embudo, reports that his father, Carl II, served as a fireman and assistant station master for the Chili Line at Taos Junction, between 1925 and 1927. This was the last station before the point where the southbound train would stop while the brakeman set the retainers before proceeding down the 4% grade from Barranca Hill through Comanche Canyon to Embudo.

Carl's mother, Winifred Watts Berghofer, became one of the legends of the line. Apparently, she made a friend with Mr. Kellog, one of the engineers on the La Madera branch. On approaching her home, Kellog would blast several vigorous whistles, whereupon Winifred would rush out of her house and set her laundry tubs by the track. Shortly thereafter, the squat engine would grind to a halt, fill her tubs and steam away. Thus, Winifred Watts Berghofer became part of Chili Line history as the first lady to have door-to-door hot water service delivered by a railroad. Carl Berghofer also tells that Henry Wallace, the station master at Embudo and an avid fisherman, invented the "Wallace Hook" for using minnows as bait. Most probably he is also the artist who etched drawings of a bird and a sailboat on one of the station house's windows.

Along the chamisa-covered mesa west of Taos along the Rio Grande above Embudo, there are still mementos of the Chile Line. The old water tank in Tres Piedras stands on the right as you drive into the town that was once a busy rail center. The ticket office and waiting



Engine No. 473 pulling a mixed train from the Embudo station on March 22, 1941. Photograph by Bob Lunoe and used with permission by Richard L. Dorman.

room at Embudo, entirely paved and faced with unbroken cobblestones, is the last remaining intact narrow gauge station house in the southern Rockies. It is because of Henry Wallace that the structure still stands. In 1912, suffering from tuberculosis, he came to Embudo to be station agent. Thriving in the desert sunshine, Wallace began the stone facing. When the line was abandoned, the D&RGW discovered his work was so substantial that wrecking costs would have far exceeded the salvage. Further down the line, the red brick D&RGW station house in Santa Fe has been modernized and now serves as Tomasita's Cafe.

While the last remnants of the Chile Line fade into the past, memories of the railway can be rekindled by talking to people who traveled on it and by thumbing through books written by devotees of the beloved line.

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Southern Methodist University students excavate a room in the unearthed pueblo at Pot Creek. Photographs by Sara Ford.

POT CREEK DIG ENTERS NEW AGE

by Sara Ford

A prehistoric pueblo, abandoned around A.D.1320 , may one day have an address on the world-wide web. Pot Creek Pueblo, now tucked safely into the adobe jacket that protected the ancestral pueblo for more than 600 years before the first archaeological excavations

there in 1957, is entering a new age.

A massive computerization project, one of the largest of its kind, is underway at Southern Methodist University in Dallas. The project, financed in part by a grant from the National Science Foundation, will both

preserve and make available data from the single most important regional collection on the history and pre-history of the far northern Rio Grande region. The collection is now housed at the Fort Burgwin Research Center, 10 miles south of Taos.

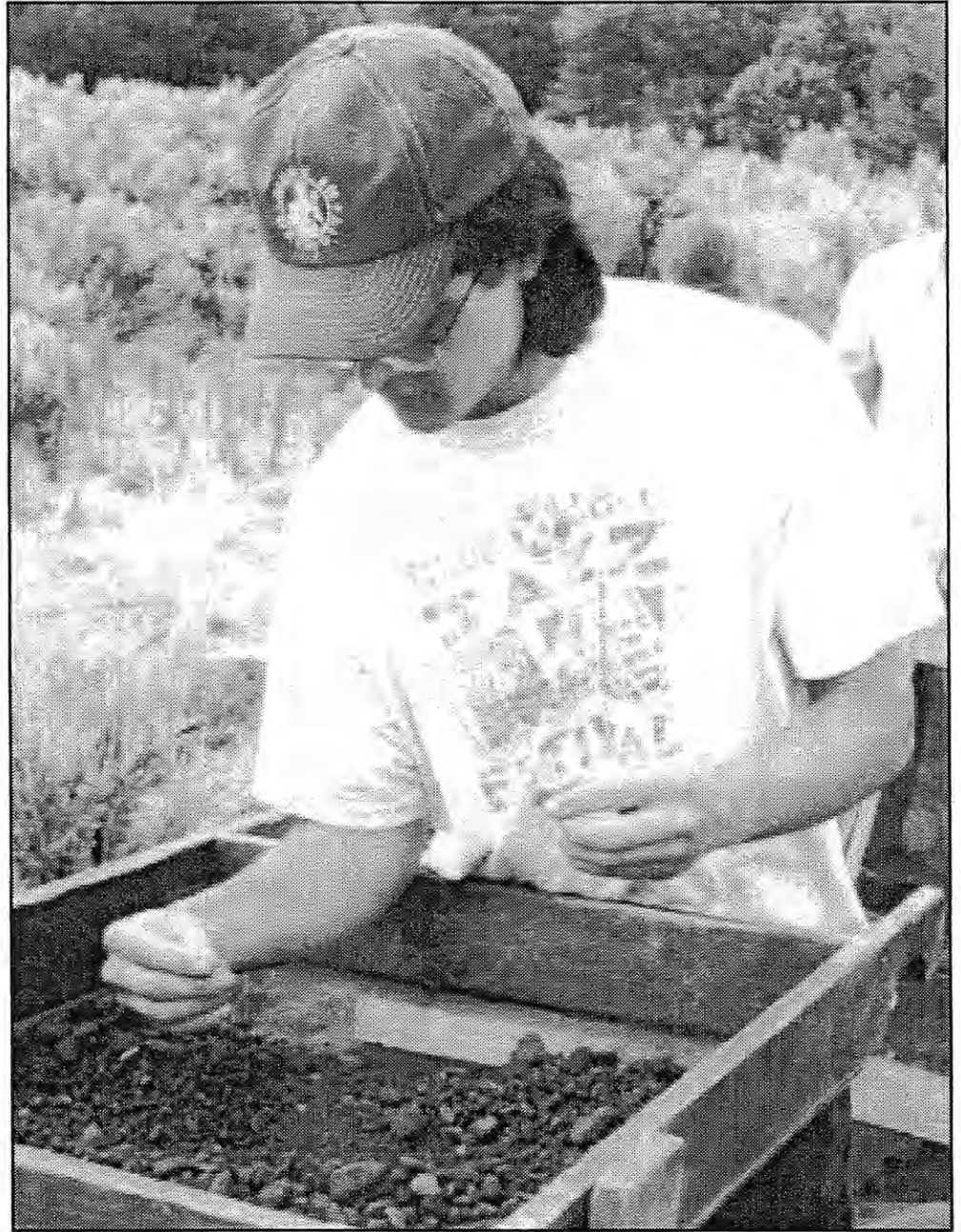
The aim of this ambitious undertaking, according to SMU anthropology professor, Michael Adler, Ph.D., is to expand antiquities boundaries.

"Academic, non-academic, and lay persons will have access to what has been done here, done in the name of science. Our goal is to get it out there, beyond the confines of these adobe rooms," Adler said.

The collection includes artifacts from the Pot Creek Pueblo, believed to be the ancestral home of both Taos Pueblo and Picuris Pueblo, and artifacts recovered from Picuris. According to Adler, the Picuris material represents the largest systematically excavated collection from a living pueblo in New Mexico. Moreover, this collection documents more than 800 years of continuous occupation at the pueblo.

"The combined materials and documents represent a virtually unprecedented record of Puebloan culture change and continuity spanning nearly a millennium," Adler said.

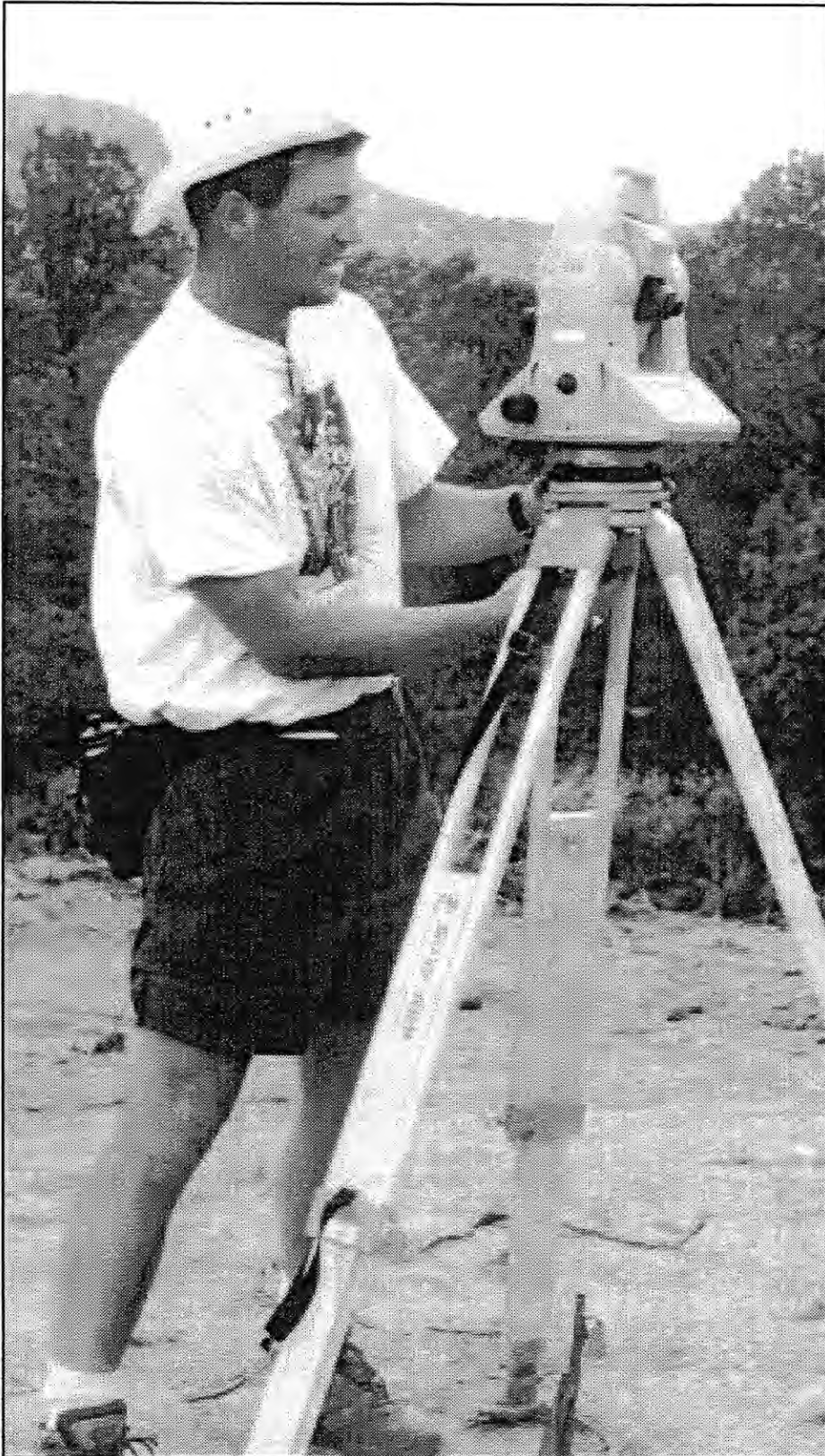
Over the past few summers, a handful of students have spent long days in the lab at Fort Burgwin, rummaging through the prehistoric past and authenticating the material before entering it onto a database. Much of their work requires old-fashioned hands-on examinations. Once the program is completed, researchers will be able to easily access data, which will allow scholars to compare, for example, similarities or differences in Taos Valley black on white ceramics – the most common type of potsherds found at the sites – with ceramics found at other Anasazi locations.



An SMU graduate student sifts through dirt from the site for artifacts.

The Pot Creek Pueblo is of special interest to researchers, because the pueblo reached the height of its occupation around 1260 A.D. during a period of aggregation throughout the Anasazi world. Why the pueblo was abandoned in A.D.1320 has long intrigued researchers studying village formation.

Another area of interest is the extent and importance of developing trade networks among ancestral Puebloans. Adler believes conclusions drawn from the data may sketch a picture of a group who left Pot Creek because they succeeded, rather than failed, in diversify-



Project director Michael Adler uses sophisticated instruments to measure distances and directions at the Pot Creek site.

ing and adapting to changing conditions. The assembled data will help answer these and other questions.

According to Adler, 18 databases will be created, containing information on nearly a half million objects. Categories for ceramics, lithics, macrobotanical, faunal, architectural and human osteological remains will be available. Pertinent information on the location of food stores, primarily corn, found in the multi-storied Pot Creek Pueblo will be readily at hand. The material, including field notes, will be placed on both microfilm and digital disks. The data is being entered into a system, considered an industry standard, which is compatible with systems used by other museums.

"We're trying to find our way. This is an experiment to see how we can transform early archaeology, archaeology that was well done, into a format that benefits more people," Adler said.

Copies of the collection's documentation on microfilm and CD-ROM one day will be available at Fort Burgwin, the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture/Laboratory of Anthropology in Santa Fe, the Maxwell Museum in Albuquerque, and SMU in Dallas. Individual scholars will be able to request copies of the microfilm, floppy discs, and CD.

However, the ultimate goal is getting the information on the Internet.

"This level of accessibility is rarely achieved for anthropological collections and will greatly enhance the Fort Burgwin collection as a cultural and scientific resource," Adler said.

The results would be far reaching. As the professor has repeatedly pointed out, "The more we understand the past, the more we understand the present."



TAOS TIME CAPSULE



GASPARD HONORED WITH DINNER

Leon Gaspard, veteran Taos artist, was honored with a dinner given by the Taos Artists Association at Casa Cordova. To the delight of his many friends assembled for the occasion, the artist gave an after dinner talk on his early days in Paris, when he had been part of art's avant garde impressionists in Montmartre.

Gaspard came to New Mexico in 1916 from New York upon the recommendation of a doctor. The artist was recuperating from injuries received after being shot down while serving as an aviator in the French Forces during World War I.

Gaspard already had an international reputation when he came to the Southwest. His paintings are in the Luxembourg, Paris, and many other museums and private collections. Since coming to Taos, Gaspard has traveled and painted in Egypt, Turkestan, China, India, Africa, Asia, the Near East and Russia. He has also revisited Europe. Many of his brilliantly colored paintings, including those of Indians of the Southwest, may be seen in the private gallery at his handsome home on Raton Road, where he resides with his artist wife, Dora Kaminsky.

The Taos News, December 7, 1961.

LARGE SHOES WANTED FROM SANTA

Dear Santa Claus,

Here I am writing you these few lines only to remind you not to forget me for Christmas. I am 5 years old and I need most of all a basket of food and a pair of shoes size 13 1/2.

Ranchos de Taos

The Taos News, December 7, 1961

SUCCESSFUL FARMING DOUBTFUL

The Great Divide publication, which has been colonizing a number of areas in New Mexico and Colorado, are [sic] attempting to start a colony on the public domain lying east of Tres Piedras. They have three men on the ground looking after the colonization work, and daily there are a number of prospective homesteaders coming into that place. If the colony develops on the lines given in the prospectus, Tres Piedras will certainly be a great stockraising and agricultural center within a few years, however, judging from the past efforts on this dry land, it is extremely doubtful.

The Carson Pine Cone, January 14, 1918

FLU EPIDEMIC A VISITATION OF DEATH

The flu epidemic at its worst already begins to seem a dream in that of its resembling an impossibility. We could not imagine several months ago that such a catastrophe could occur, a catastrophe in which so many lives could be

wiped out in so short a time. Its suddenness so stunned us that we did not know what to do or where to begin. If we could, we would like to forget it all, but such visitations leave their imprint upon our minds for time only to efface. Losses of friends and dear ones will long cause us to remember the epidemic as a visitation of death.

The Carson Pine Cone, November 20, 1918

SPEED SPILLS

Forest Assistant Yarnall is the proud possessor of a new buckboard which, named by him "The Spectacular Speeder," fully lives up to his cognomen, as has already been proven to the owner and Forest Clerk Johnston. Considering what happened on its maiden trip, a better name would be "The Spectacular Spiller."

The Carson Pine Cone, April 1912

PUBLIC LIBRARY ORGANIZED IN TAOS

The Board of Directors for the Taos Public Library held its first meeting the afternoon of January 1. Lee Witt was elected President, Mrs. Cordelia Wilson Vice-President, Mrs. Cheatham Secretary and Jose Montaner, Treasurer.

Taos Valley News, January 7, 1918

WAR TROPHY ATTRACTS ATTENTION IN TAOS

Mrs. Pooler of the Columbian Hotel is in possession of a German helmet, sent to her from France by her brother Willie Mares, who has been with the American Army since last June. This is the first war trophy to be sent to Taos and is attracting much attention.

Taos Valley News, January 7, 1918

DOCTOR ENTERTAINS AS A SIDELINE

Doctor Richardson of Denver, who was sent by the Government to assist in the flu epidemic in the Indian Pueblos of New Mexico, left Taos yesterday morning for Albuquerque. The doctor was very entertaining, beautifully playing the piano, being one of his accomplishments.

Taos Valley News, January 7, 1919

RANCHITOS SOLDIER RETURNS HOME

Arturo Martinez, one of the first soldier boys from Taos to go to France arrived at his home in Ranchitos last Saturday night. Arturo experienced some exciting fighting, having gone through the battle of the Marne and the battle of Chateau Thierry. He was wounded in one knee and foot and was sent to a hospital in Iowa where he has been detained since August. Only 17 of his company escaped with their lives.

Taos Valley News, January 14, 1919



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TO: