

AYER Y HOY en TAOS

**Yesterday and Today in Taos County and
Northern New Mexico**

FALL 1999 Issue 28



**Ciboleros
The Hispano Buffalo Hunters of Taos**

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and Northern New Mexico

Issue No. 28 : Fall 1999

The Taos County Historical Society's publication, *AYER Y HOY en 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. All submissions will be edited for style, format and length.

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 nonprofit 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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Letter from the editor:

The publication of a journal devoted to scholarly historic research in a community the size of Taos was not only a noble idea back in 1985 when *Ayer y Hoy* began publication, it was wildly ambitious. David L. Caffey, the founding editor who now lives in Clovis, New Mexico wrote to us after the last issue to say, "It is always a great thrill to receive a new issue and know that *Ayer y Hoy* is alive and doing what it was supposed to. When we started, we knew we did not have the wherewithal to produce a substantial journal, but thought if we just kept at it, even a very modest publication could, over a period of years, add significantly to the historical record. In my view, that has worked out as the cumulative index by Dr. Wells illustrates. I think we have maintained pretty good quality, and the list of authors of articles supports that. I had not heard of the Taos Tax Rebellion of 1816, so I learned something from the current issue, and again, I think it embodies what we envisioned for the publication."

(continued on p. 15)

CIBOLEROS

The Hispano Buffalo Hunters of Taos

By Jerry A. Padilla

Imagine that it is the early nineteenth century. Out on the edge of the plains, some distance from Taos, a group of buckskin-homespun clad men check cinches on saddle pads, swing quivers of arrows over their shoulders, then knock bows and hefting lances to check for balance. One man silently directs the others. Hand signals and gestures tell how they will proceed. Just over the rise, close enough to smell, a seemingly endless herd of bison graze and laze about in dust wallows. Before the autumn breeze carries the hunters' scent too far, they mount up and spread out. All have secured a loop of rope around their waist, the rest of the length coiled on the man's saddle pads. Should they be thrown during the impending chase, they hope to be able to hold onto their horses long enough to remount before being trampled to death.

Entering the herd, they wish each other luck, with hopes that all will survive the thundering hooves of thousands of stampeding animals, to work together preparing the meat of these North American wild oxen-cattle. Specially trained hunting horses are guided by knee and foot pressure. Hands are kept free to shoot arrows or wield lances, aiming for just the right spot between the ribs of the animals. Even a bull bison can be brought down with a minimum of suffering and danger to horse and rider with a well placed arrow or lance thrust.

For generations on the southern plains, these encounters between men and beasts took place. Although these particular hunters had learned their skills from the Pueblo and Plains tribes, and their hunts took place on the traditional hunting grounds of the Kowa and Comanche, they were not Indians. They were Hispano colonists (and their descendants) who traveled annually to the plains from north central New Mexico's Rio Grande and mountain villages—from Taos and San Luis to Albu-

querque and Belen. They were called ciboleros. They hunted the cibolo—New Mexican Spanish for bison. Successful hunters provided their communities with meat for the winter. Their partners in the hunt were very special horses chosen from the descendants of the "barb" or Berber breeds and trained for buffalo hunting.

During autumn, after the harvests were in, the ciboleros ventured to the plains of present eastern New Mexico, north-central Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas to hunt. Caravans of oxcarts carried trade goods consisting of chile, corn, beans, squash and pumpkins, piñon and other crops to trade with the Kiowa and Comanche for permission to hunt on their traditional hunting grounds. (Another hunt was sometimes held in June, after spring planting, to replenish stores of meat exhausted over the winter.)

Each village had its cibolero, who rode his specially trained horse, utilized only for running bison, and ridden only by his owner. *Agregados* or helpers, sometimes recruited from the cibolero's family, accompanied him to help with the skinning, slicing, salting and drying of meat. It was imperative to return home before heavy snowfalls. A trip to and from the hunting grounds, the hunt, the preservation of the meat and the return entailed at least six weeks.

Except for special occasions, only well-to-do New Mexicans regularly partook of beef, mutton, goat or poultry. Most laborers, subsistence farmers and herders depended on bison and other wild game for meat. However, sometimes members of wealthier families indulged in the bison hunts to help provide for families in their employ. All members of the community, especially the destitute, were given a share of the dried meat from the hunt.

The ciboleros were most active from the late Spanish Colonial period to the mid-nineteenth century. Those originally engaged in these hunts wore a variation of a leather hat reminiscent of the European hunter's hat or the "Robin Hood" hat of the

middle ages. Although buckskin clothing continued as the norm, clothing and hats varied with individual preferences and locale. Josiah Gregg in *Commerce of the Prairies* described the hunters as wearing flat straw hats, while other contemporaries who encountered the ciboleros reported them wearing a variety of styles.

Since functioning firearms were few and far between in the Spanish Colonial, Mexican and early territorial eras, New Mexicans had adapted the weapons of their American Indian neighbors and learned to hunt with bows and lances. Having initially learned bison hunting from Pueblo Indians, it was not unusual for hunters from both cultures to travel together and cooperate in the annual hunts.

Meeting at prearranged sites, such as El Lucero near Buena Vista in present-day Mora County, ciboleros from several villages and Pueblo Indian towns, elected a mayordomo or leader, and traveled together in mutual safety. At times New Mexican hunters encountered tribal hunters from the northern plains also hunting among the same herds. More than one cibolero lost his life to rival hunters.

Once the herds were located out on the plains and the barter with the Kiowa and Comanche had taken place, exact plans for the hunt were made. The ciboleros only killed enough bison to feed their villages for the winter. Although the herds numbered in the millions, conservation was practiced.

Before they rode into the herds, the ciboleros commended themselves to God and Santiago. During the *corrida* (run) they maneuvered their horses and dodged the deadly horns of the cibilos to kill only choice animals. With their most difficult task behind them, the hunters joined their helpers in the processing of the meat. A custom among the Pueblo Indian hunters was that each man was allotted a certain amount of meat to slice and process. Those who finished their share of the work first, went to sleep first.

The meat was hung on racks to dry, the process speeded up by smoking from fires made of buffalo chips (well-dried-aged dung) an ever present prairie fuel source. When the meat was dried, it was packed into oxcarts or *tecovas*, or hide bags, and the caravans began the trip home. Hides taken

during the fall when the bison wool was at its best, were ideal for robes. Ciboleros used all of the bison. Tongues were smoked and traded as a delicacy on the Chihuahua Trail. Hides became robes or leather. Horns and bones were fashioned into tools. Cibilo wool was used as mattress stuffing or woven into cloth.

Oral traditions of Taos area ciboleros are still recounted. Juan de Dios Gonzales, Blas Griego and Benjamin Cortes from Ranchos de Taos hunted for their villages. Francisco Olonia probably learned many of his hunting skills while a young captive of Plains Indians before returning to Taos as an adult. Tomás Garcia was known as a cibolero from Arroyo Seco. José Maria Rodarte is remembered as a cibolero from the Peñasco area. José Guadalupe Lovato, with roots in Taos County, was a cibolero who was often chosen mayordomo. He later homesteaded in northeastern New Mexico on land he undoubtedly traversed in his pursuit of cibolos. The late historian-troubador Cleofes Vigil of San Cristobal, often sang a ballad telling the tale of a brother of a cibolero family losing his life on the buffalo plains. The song tells how the young man accidentally impaled himself with his own lance when his horse stumbled in a prairie dog hole.

Other accounts tell of Santiago Romero of Taos and Ranchos de Taos being accompanied by Pueblo Indian hunters as far as the Missouri River. José Angel Gonzales, of the Revolt of 1837 fame, is described by Rafael Chacon in his memoirs *Legacy of Honor* as a "nimrod engaged in the honorable profession of cibolero," prior to being caught up in the political turmoil of those times. Chacon also engaged in bison hunting as a young man. Rafael Medina was reputed to be the last cibolero of Ranchos de Taos when he passed away about 1949.

The late Elena Bustos Lucero, of the San Luis Valley, delighted in telling a story of Abundo Martines, a cibolero from Culebra, Colorado, who was born when that area was still part of Taos County, New Mexico. Said Lucero, "My neighbor Abundo Martines here in El Rito (San Francisco, Colorado) was the mayordomo of a hunt. As they rode through the herd, one fellow encouraged his fellow hunters to take only the fat cows. As it was difficult

to survive the corrida and still bring down those animals needed, Martines admonished the man, "Shoot which ever ones you can you...." (Expletive deleted.)

As the herds diminished, often due to efforts by certain military leaders who advocated reducing the numbers of bison in order to subdue the Plains Indians, ciboleros ranged further afield searching for meat. Joined with the extinction of the bison was the New Mexican tradition of ciboleros and their specially trained horses and the annual hunts. But the heritage of the courageous, agriculturalist-hunters lives on in family oral traditions and tales about ancestors who participated in a unique cultural episode.

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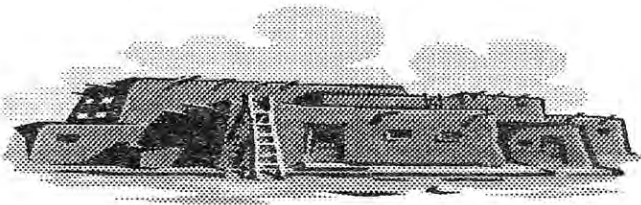
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Cover art of Ciboleros is by Bill Baron.



Christmas Eve at Taos Pueblo

By Roberta Courtney Meyers

Snow came to the parched earth.

Sacred mountain sings,

We are all one.

Mother Earth is sleeping peacefully.

Can you hear her slumbering heartbeat?

We are all one.

The bonfires will be soon.

The procession from the little Catholic Church
Will happen on the cold wintry

Christmas Eve night.

They will bring the virgin and parade her
Through the fire.

It will be so cold and so bright and so hot
All at once.

Spirits will soar.

It will be a healing for our souls.

We are all One.

And then the dances.

buffalo,

deer,

turtle

will bless us

and sing us well

for the year past.

We are all one.

Come.

Celebrate the night.

Listen to the joy.

Let your heart

Join the rhythm

Of love and togetherness.

We are all one.

We are not separate.

We are one in the earth,

In the sky

With the winged bird

Hawk or magpie

We soar and fly.

We are one

With brother bear

Antelope and buffalo

Mesa mountain,

tree or flower.

Can you hear the song?

We are all one.

We are all one.

We are all one.

We are all one... hieeeeEEE!

Alice's Gift to Chimayo: Still thriving after 99 years

By Sara Ford

Most of the students attending the John Hyson School in Chimayo are far too young to be fully aware of the rich traditions housed in the old building where they will be learning to read, write, add and subtract.

One day, when they grow older, the students will learn that their school, the last mission school remaining in northern New Mexico, is a historical treasure, built in 1900 and kept safe by the heartfelt efforts of many others.

Over this past summer, countless volunteers from Taos, Kansas and Ohio traveled to Chimayo to join work parties formed to rejuvenate John Hyson. Sadie Boyer of Taos, the school's new principal, said the board of trustees of the Menaul School in Albuquerque which operates John Hyson, spear-headed the efforts. "We are gearing up for our 100th anniversary next year," Boyer said.

The John Hyson School was founded with money saved by Alice Hyson, the Presbyterian teacher who founded the Ranchos de Taos Missionary School in 1884. At the turn of the century, Hyson, who had left her native Pennsylvania to dedicate her life to service in the New Mexico Territory, wrote the following to Presbyterian Board of Home Missions: I have been thinking of giving money for a school in Chimayo to be a memorial to my father, to called The John Hyson School. I enclose a check for \$640. More money will follow when needed.

That selfless gift from a mission teacher whose salary was \$500 a year created a school that has educated untold numbers of northern New Mexican students over the past century. The same missionary zeal which prompted the Presbyterians to move West prior to the Civil War still exists, Boyer said. With tears in her eyes, the former Taos Middle School teacher said the work parties came for no reason other than to give of themselves. "They came, and they worked. They worked hard. They didn't get paid for it. This was out of the kindness

of their hearts," Boyer said.

For many of the Taosenos, Clestino Romero and Edward Grant, for example, both of whom attended Presbyterian mission schools, sprucing up John Hyson was a gift from their hearts for the priceless gifts they once received. Perhaps those feelings are best expressed in the words of one of Alice Hyson's former students who wrote the Ranchos teacher, thanking her. He said, "You are a part of what I am and shall be...[for all students come and gone] I give my unending gratitude, undying love."

By the time the work parties finished removing stumps, sanding floors and hauling away old materials, the school was ready to open its doors at the end of August. The student body ranges from four-year-old preschoolers to fourth graders. Boyer, who taught in the Taos Municipal Schools for nearly 30 years, will teach second, third and fourth grades. Julia Hudson, who has taught at John Hyson for 37 years, will teach preschoolers, kindergarten and first grade. The school will add a fifth grade in 2000 and a sixth grade in 2001.

In the meantime, Boyer plans to seek out John Hyson alumni and involve them in efforts to acquire computer equipment and other items necessary to educate students in the 21st century. "I know this is the last mission school left. But it has been here for 99 years. I know it can be here for another 99 years. We just have to take care of it," she said.



History in Everyday Life

How do non-historians use history in their work? How and where does the discipline intersect their everyday life? (We all know that Taoseños live exotic and extra-ordinary lives so what passes for everyday life here is always provocative as is any local encounter with history.) In this feature we offer two examples of non-historian Taoseñas who utilize history outside the boundaries of its normal scholarly definition. Kathy Cordova, a journalist and teacher, tells us of her endeavor to write a book for general audiences about the notorious Arthur Manby's life. And Roberta Courtney Meyers, a poet/musician/actress, shares a personal reminiscence of the painter Lady Dorothy Brett.

Revisiting Manby: The Cloak of Secrecy Unveiled

By Kathy Cordova

Arthur Rochford Manby's death in Taos in 1929 continues to be an unsolved murder mystery. On July 3, 1929, U.S. Marshall James Martinez, Taos county undersheriff Malaquias Martinez and other deputized citizens found Manby's headless corpse on a cot in his home (now owned by the Taos Art Association) on Pueblo Road. The man apparently had suffered an extremely violent death. Manby's head rested on the floor in a separate room where his dog had been chewing on it.

At the time, people in the Taos area approached the subject of Manby's death with guarded reactions. He was so hated by townspeople due to his alleged swindling and fraudulent land deals that few people dared risk saying much at the time of his death for fear that they might be suspected of the crime. Actually, few people really knew him well. In the years preceding the murder he had become a recluse whom town gossips shrouded in mystery.

I first became interested in the man and the mystery back in 1968 when my mother-in-law, the late Josephine Cordova, proudly proclaimed, "I used to buy groceries for Arthur Manby when I was a little girl." Being new in town, I had no idea who he was, but the tone of her voice sparked my curiosity. Who was he? Why did she buy groceries for him? Why was she so enthralled with this role? My writer's instincts said there was a story in there somewhere. Further investigation revealed a number of publications about the man, the most notable,

Frank Water's *To Possess the Land*. But my instinct said that there was more to the story than had yet been written.

My research, so far, has produced a partially completed manuscript entitled *Manby Revisited*. Dedicated to the late Frank Waters in appreciation for his encouragement of my work on this project, the book unfolds in three sections: The People, The Papers and The Spirit.

The People section is made up mainly of interviews with individuals alive and living in Taos during the time of Manby. Though his death occurred 70 years ago, some of these interviewees spoke only under the condition that their real names not be used and that they have final approval of what I wrote about them. The surviving interviewees are now elderly. Some of them have passed away since the completion of the chapters containing their stories.

The section entitled The Papers is devoted to information gathered from research in historic documents and records. This phase of the book took me to Tucson, Arizona; Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, the New Mexico Record and Archives Center in Santa Fe and the Kit Carson Historic Museum Archives—now the Center for Southwest Research here in Taos. Especially interesting were articles I discovered in the W.P.A. Papers in the Santa Fe Center. These papers were written under the auspices of the Federal Work Progress Administration during the Great Depression. At least one writer offered new insight into Manby's character and revealed a nice side to the enigmatic man. He told of how Manby, a trained engineer and architect had drawn up plans for a hospital and offered to donate the same to the town.

Taoseños found the offer troublesome. Why would the town's greatest alleged villain attempt such a good deed? The town turned the offer down because the land Manby proposed to build the hospital on was adjacent to Kit Carson cemetery. Spokesmen for the town said that it would not comfort sick people to be so near to a cemetery.

The Spirit section of the manuscript may prove to be the most controversial. Will only those with a true belief in the spirit world believe that Manby's ghost haunts his former home? I feel compelled to continue my research into this realm.



Brett: A Reminiscence

By Roberta Courtney Meyers

(I was asked to write the following for a reproduction of Brett's "Turtle Dance" painting for the first Taos Falls Arts Festival in 1980.)

The Honorable Dorothy Eugenia Brett was born in Mayfair, London in 1883. She wanted to be an artist from the time she was a very young child. Her father hired an artist to paint Dorothy's portrait when she was five years old. Dorothy talked the portrait artist into giving her art lessons. Soon afterwards Brett and her brothers and sisters were taken to the Crystal palace to see the Buffalo Bill Wild West Show. She spoke of this as one of the great events of her childhood. She found the Indians in the show "gallant and unforgettable figures of romance."

Brett's family were very much against her "unceasing cry" to become an artist. To them this was absurd and it would also be a loss of social position. When Brett was 27, she was left a moderate inheritance. It was enough for her to enroll in the Slade School of Art. The director put her on a six months probation period for he did not want "persons of her high class, but serious students." Brett proved herself in the six month period and continued at the school for six years and won two prestigious awards.

In 1924, Brett came to Taos with D. H. and Frieda Lawrence. She had matured both in technique and in artistic perception within a European atmosphere. This meant that if she had painted the local Indians in the European way, as she was taught, they would have looked like "European Indians." Brett threw off her training and technique and started anew so that she might capture the Indians as she felt they wanted to be portrayed. She did what she had to do, was compelled to do—and in the doing has given us a record of some of the mystery of the Indian as no other painter of her time did.

Brett was a colorful, sort of magical, happy figure on the Taos landscape. In the pre-hippie days, her dress was outlandish. She had a domineering and bubbly personality that endeared her to almost everyone. Today Brett's paintings hang in the Tate Gallery and the National Portrait Gallery in England and throughout the United States in museums and private collections.

(The following happened while Brett was still alive and I was spending a great deal of time with her.) In the late summer of 1977, I arranged to have a poetry reading at Brett's studio and home a few miles north of Taos. I was working with the group Crow Call Press and had invited them to come and meet a woman who had been a great inspiration to me. We were to read to Brett a few poems of our choosing. As the day for the reading approached, I searched my manuscripts for something I felt would have meaning to her. She spoke of Lawrence a lot in those days. When I visited with her it was always her memories we discussed, a wonderful time for me for she took me far, far back into her past. Brett spoke of Lawrence with deep emotion. Late the night before the reading I was awakened from a deep sleep to write "Song of Life" for Brett. The following morning, on my way into town, I stopped by Brett's to see if I could pick up anything from town for the tea party and reading. I followed after Winifred, the lady who was taking care of Brett, for Brett was now in her 90s. There in one room, propped against the wall, was a drawing entitled "Song of Life" that I saw for the first time. *(Editor's note: Meyers' poem described Brett's love for Lawrence.)*

BOOK REVIEWS

Lucien Maxwell: Villain or Visionary. By Harriet Freiburger. (Santa Fe: Sunstone Press, 1999. 137 pages, illustrations, endnotes, bibliography, index. \$14.95, paper.)

Lucien Maxwell cut a wide swath across New Mexico's late Mexican and early American historical periods. The ultimate western land baron, he claimed ownership of 1,700,000 acres in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado at one time. He may have been the proto-type for the stereotypical land baron in American literature, myth and legend. He was a flamboyant and controversial capitalist, the sort of man who was easily idealized by white-Anglo Americans who believed in manifest destiny. He entered literature as a romantic hero in Henry Inman's *The Old Santa Fe Trail* published by The Macmillan Company in 1897. A well-researched scholarly biography entitled *Lucien Bonaparte Maxwell: Napoleon of the Southwest* written by Lawrence R. Murphy and published by the University of Oklahoma Press in 1983 thoroughly examined the myth, the legend and the documented facts. Murphy's book separated fact from fiction and allowed a multi-dimension Maxwell to emerge.

Now in a very slender volume, undertaken as a labor of love, Freiburger states that she is writing to correct the record. She freely admits that Maxwell is her hero, but she fails to portray him or his life in terms that convince the reader that he is a person worthy of adulation. The book offers scant scholarly examination of the documented facts of Maxwell's life. The debate promised in the title does not materialize, nor does her research offer new documentary evidence. Put simply, despite her avowed passion, she fails to make her thesis and the Maxwell that appears on her pages is a thin shadow of Inman's hero. — By Jane Anderson.

Intimate Memories: The Autobiography of Mabel Dodge Luhan. Edited by Lois Palken Rudnick. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999. Xxii + 265 pages. \$45 cloth; \$17.95 paper.)

Mabel Dodge Luhan (1879-1962), the patron of the arts who put Taos on the cultural map of the world, began to write her autobiography in 1924, a process that took over a decade and resulted in a four-volume opus published serially under the title *Intimate Memories*. Now almost forty years after her death Mabel has found an editor, and her work is available in one volume. Abridged and introduced by Lois Rudnick, the author of two previous books on Luhan, this version of Mabel's autobiography tells the story of a woman in rebellion against "the whole ghastly social structure" under which she felt the United States had been buried since the Victorian era.

Her struggle took her from Buffalo, New York, to Florence, Italy, to Manhattan, to Taos, a journey during which she married four times ultimately claiming that she had found happiness with Antonio Luhan, a Taos Indian. Mabel was famous for assembling the movers and shakers of her time, among them such luminaries as D. H. Lawrence, Gertrude Stein and John Reed.

Her autobiography is full of picturesque moments: Reed swinging into her bed in her Florentine villa on a silken cord; Mabel, the impatient New Yorker, hiring a car for the last leg of her journey to New Mexico because the train seemed impossibly slow; her first encounter at Taos pueblo with Luhan, whose face she had seen in her dreams. Mabel was a popularizer of the ideas of Sigmund Freud, and her insights into her own psychology will strike familiar chords with many readers. "That I was crossed in love—unlucky in men—was due to my own selection," she muses. From her childhood as a poor little rich girl lacking only love to her realization on the last page of her memoirs that she could be happy with Tony because the Pueblo people were "not neurotic," Mabel's story is as engrossing as any novel. — By Peter Moulson.

The Taos Society of Artists, edited and annotated by Robert R. White, 2nd ed., 1998, University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque. Illus., preface, intro., notes and index. 118pp. Hardcover \$16.95.

This second edition of Robert White's short but information-packed book on the Taos Society of

Artists is a welcome reprint of the original edition published in 1983. White adds a preface to this second edition which through narrative and the use of copious footnotes discusses at length the actions and reasons behind the founding of that prestigious organization. The main section of this small volume contains the minutes of the Society's proceedings from its inception in 1915 through its dissolution in 1926. The minutes taken alone would be interesting reading, but White's judicious editing and informed footnote explanations make the minutes sparkle with humor and, at times, crackle with the electricity of human friction as the fully formed egos of such men as Bert Phillips, Ernest Blumenschein, W. Herbert Dunton, Oscar Berninghaus, E. Irving Couse, Joseph Sharp, and others clashed over issues great and small. Indeed one is offered more a glance into the business and personal relationships of these men rather than a look at the artistic drives of the principals in the Society.

Equally interesting are the more than thirty photographs of the Society members, their daily pursuits, and group gatherings. Many of these historic images are from archives in the Museum of New Mexico in Santa Fe and the Kit Carson Historic Museum in Taos.

Historians dearly cherish primary documents, and are especially grateful for professional editors who do the enormous research and legwork necessary to explain and elaborate upon important groups such as the Taos Artists. Indeed, this reviewer believes that works such as this do more to advance the understanding of regional and national history than longer narratives. — By Samuel J. Wells, Ph.D.

Woman Who Glows in the Dark: A Curandera Reveals Traditional Aztec Secrets of Physical and Spiritual Health. By Elena Avila, R.N., M.S.N. with Joy Parker. (New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam, 1999. 337 pages, index, introduction by Clarissa Pinkola Estés, Ph.D. \$23.95 cloth.)

Curanderismo is a system of folk medicine well known to the residents of northern New Mexico. Practitioners are not as plentiful as they once were, but occasionally they can still be found in strongly

traditional Hispanic communities. The author explains that this type of folk medicine evolved when the Spaniards in the New World married their medical practices to those of the indigenous people they encountered in Mexico and what is now the southwestern United States. A third element was added from the healing traditions of black African slaves brought to these regions by the Spaniards.

Traditionally *curanderismo* is divided into a number of specialty categories. A *curandera* is a general practitioner; an *hierbero* specializes in herbal treatments; a *sobadora* specializes in massage; a *partera* is a midwife; a *consejera* is a counselor. According to the author, "In Western medicine, the body goes to the hospital, the mind to the psychiatrist, and the spirit to the church. In *curanderismo*, the healing takes place under one roof." She goes on to explain that it would be impossible for a practitioner or specialist to treat just a physical ailment. The entire person--the body, the spirit, the mind--must be treated at the same time for what might appear to be "just" a physical ailment.

The appeal of this topic for those interested in the history of northern New Mexico is obvious. With knowledge of the traditional folk health care system, we can have a more complete understanding of everyday life in past generations. Though the book offers some small insight into the traditional practice, it focuses more on the modern-day practice and beliefs of the author. Avila became a registered nurse and practiced for many years in modern American hospitals before going to Mexico to study with traditional Aztec healers and practitioners of *curanderismo*. She now practices and teaches her own brand of *curanderismo* in New Mexico. The value of the book for historical researchers is very limited. — By Mary Ann Wells

Celebrating the Coyote. By Barbara Waters. (Denver: Divina/MacMurray & Beck, 1999. 319 pages. Table of contents, bibliography. \$20.00, cloth.)

Barbara Waters, the widow of the late celebrated author Frank Waters, is well known to the people of northern New Mexico in her own right as

a businesswoman and as a conductor of dream workshops. She is also a consultant for the southern Arizona Friends of Jung and she has been instrumental in establishing the Frank Waters Foundation. During her husband's last years she devoted herself to his care. After his death she chose to channel her feelings of loss into positive action, preserving Frank's memory through the foundation and in writing this book.

The dedication reads "To Our Oneness—and Our Otherness," which succinctly sums up the author's philosophy. In the book's 27 chapters Waters shares glimpses of the couple's life together, local color and community systems. No doubt neighbors will read the book and recognize themselves and their beliefs. Those of us who knew Frank will see him in a way we never did before, through Barbara's eyes. The book, loaded with stories, realism, symbolism and beauty, chronicles the history of a magical couple and a geographic area. It is an absolute "must read" for history and literature lovers. — By Kathy Cordova

Adobe Angels: The Ghosts of Albuquerque. By Antonio R. Garcez. (Santa Fe: Red Rabbit Press, 1994. 110 pages. Illustrations. \$12 paper.)

In the seventeen chapters of this book the author shows us an Albuquerque that nonbelievers in the spirit world never experience. Interviewees offer candid accounts of hauntings and ghostly sightings under their own names. I find it courageous for those individuals to present their stories so honestly and openly. In the preface, Garcez discusses cultural views of death and ghosts referring to them as "...insight into another world in which time and space cease to exist." This book is one in a series of books of New Mexican towns and their spirits.

The author begins with references to 1706 when a group of colonists received permission from King Philip of Spain to establish a new villa on the banks of the Rio Grande. Colonial governor Don Francisco Cuervo y Valdez named the settlement after the tenth Duke of Albuquerque, dropping the first "r" in the process.

The stories of the hauntings take the reader to the Kimo Theater, the Luna Mansion, Maria Teresa's Restaurant and a home in Martinez Town. I certainly wish I had paid attention when I visited the Albuquerque Press Club. Somehow, I missed the paranormal sight of the gin-guzzling phantom who haunts that building. — By Kathy Cordova



Books Related to Taos History

Available at the Taos Public Library

- Bent's Fort*, Lavender: 1954.
- A Brief History of Taos*, Romero & Poese: 1992.
- Chapel of Our Lady of Talpa*, Wroth: 1979
- Echoes of the Flute*, Cordova: 1972.
- Forgotten People*, Sanchez: 1940.
- Taos Mosaic*, Morill: 1973.
- D. H. Lawrence in Taos*, Foster: 1972.
- Edge of the Taos Desert*, Luhan: 1937.
- Lawrence and Brett: A Friendship*, Brett: 1974.
- Long John Dunn of Taos*, Evans: 1992.
- Lorenzo Taos*, Luhan: 1932.
- No Lloro Pero Me Acuerdo*, Cordova: 1977.
- Not I, But the Wind*, Lawrence: 1934.
- A Poet & Two Painters*, Merrild: 1938.
- Short Stirrups*, Price: 1960.
- Taos: A Memory*, Dewitt: 1992.
- To Possess the Land*, Waters: 1973.



LOS REMEDIOS

Traditional Herbal Remedies Evolve and Survive in Taos

by Mary Ann Wells

Remedios, the traditional herbal home remedies Taoseña grandmothers have used for generations, have become commercially viable commodities. At least two local businesses, the Taos Herb Company and Avala Mesa Miracles, prepare and market remedios. Most of their local customers are members of Taos' modern tri-cultural community who prefer remedios and herbs to treat their minor ills.

Remedios resulted from an ancient marriage of Hispanic and American Indian herbal knowledge. Both European and native American plants are used as remedios to treat a variety of ailments. Several centuries ago, on this far frontier of the Hispanic world, women took responsibility for their families' health care. They sought the advice of their new Indian neighbors on the healing properties of local plants and in the process exchanged their knowledge of the European herbs they had brought with them. The body of knowledge grew over the years and was passed down to new generations of Taoseños.

The remedios tradition survived more strongly in some families than others. Taoseña Guadalupe Valerio Dominguez came to her vocation of "sobadora" and knowledge of herbs from family tradition. A sobadora is a traditional healer, registered by the state, who uses massage and herbal remedios to treat the ill.

Dominguez says her mentor/grandmother taught her, "The plant you need for your own health grows within five feet of your home." Growing up in Ranchos de Taos, Dominguez learned the use of plants as medicine. "Everything was there--growing by the ditch, by the river--we were aware of it and used it."

A licensed massage therapist as well as a sobadora, Dominguez uses herbal remedies in treating her patients. But since she does not have time to gather and prepare the herbs her patients need, she purchases them prepackaged. She also refers patients to local herbalists.

Local American Indian herbalists are reluctant to speak of their traditions according to Gov. Red Eagle Rael of Picuris Pueblo. He says, "That [herbs and remedios] is a touchy subject." Then patiently explains that Pueblo Indians believe herbal remedies are too closely associated with the spiritual world to be discussed casually.

Both Indians and Hispanics have welcomed allopathic and other medical practitioners into the community and have pragmatically embraced such modern medicines as antibiotics while still using many of the herbal remedies their ancestors formulated as remedios.

Today in Taos, remedios, marketed by herbal companies from throughout the state, can be purchased prepackaged at pharmacies, supermarkets and specialty stores. As Taoseña grandmothers have surrendered their traditional health care territory to modern medicine, fewer and fewer remember the vast array of plants that may be used for remedios or how to prepare them. And those who remember don't always have the time to collect and prepare remedios.

In the unique atmosphere of Taos' tri-cultural community, late arriving Anglo herbalists are doing much to preserve the traditional remedios' body of knowledge and are largely responsible for local herbs being available commercially.

An Anglo herbalist who fell under the spell of Taos and remedios, Lucy McCall has spent the last 30 years in Taos learning, growing, wildcrafting (gathering from the wild) herbs and preparing traditional remedios along with other herbal products. Her Avala Mesa Miracles company is firmly rooted in Ranchos de Taos. Her herbal products are available in local stores and on the Internet, but she considers herself more a teacher than a businesswoman. Her beliefs about the curative power of plants growing in the environment of an individual patient are the same as Dominguez. "Herbs are all around us. We can find the cures we need in our own environment."

As for how she learned the traditional remedios she says, "When I say I am an herbalist, people tell me things. I have learned from Indians and Hispanics. I am self-taught mostly. I am interested in local medicine--what is in our own environment."

McCall's reputation as an herbalist has gained national proportions and she now shares her knowledge through the mentor-apprentice training program of a number of progressive colleges and universities.

Robert Hawley, co-owner of the Taos Herb Company with his brother-in-law and sister Fritz and Tina Hahn, has been in business for 20 years. He says, "We cater to Spanish clients and have learned a lot from our elderly customers." He prides himself on collecting herbs from the wild for the remedios he packages.

For Taoseños interested in learning remedios lore first hand, Hawley leads herbal expeditions into the forest each summer. Contact him at 758-1991 for details.



Plants that become Remedios

The following is a random sampling of native and wild New Mexican plants and some of the ailments they traditionally treat when processed into remedios.

Agave (Century Plant)—indigestion, gas pain and constipation.

Álamo (Valley Cottonwood)--bark tea for fever and diarrhea.

Alegría (Amaranth)--mild heart disorders.

Alfalfón (Fillery, Storksbill)--bladder and urethra infections.

Amolillo (Licorice)--teething infants.

Áñil del Muerto (Goldweed)--intestinal gas.

Barba de Chivo (Virgin's Bower)--skin eruptions.

Barbasco (Texas Croton)--laxative; purgative.

Bellota de Sabina (Juniper)--bladder infections.

Cachana (Blazing Star)--sore throat.

Cadillos (Cockleburs)--diarrhea.

Cañagire (Red Dock)--pyorrhea and gum inflammations.

Coronilla (Blanket Flower)--sinus headaches.

Dormilón (Coneflower)--delayed menstruation.

Epazote (Mexican Tea)—round worms.

Flor de San Juan (Evening Primrose)--kidney ailments.

Flor de Santa Rita (Indian Paintbrush)--water retention.

Fresno (Ash Tree)--arthritic pain.

Hediondilla (Chapparal Bush)--rheumatism.

Hollyhock (Althea rosea)—poultice for skin infections.

Inmortal (Creeping Milkweed)--childbirth, bronchitis, headcolds.

Malva (Cheeseplant)--sore throat, skin rash.

Maravilla (Four-o-Clock)--inflamed joints.

Mesquite (Screw Bean)—cleansing, disinfectant wash.

Ocotillo (Candlewood)—hemorrhoids, prostate enlargement.

Oshá (Porter's Lovage)--all-purpose medicine.

Pegapega (Evening Star)--rheumatism.

Poléo (Brook Mint)--dizziness.

Piñon (Pine)—expectorant.

Prickly Pear (Nopal)—contusions, bruises and burns.

Punchón (Mullein)--asthma.

Sabina Macho (True Juniper)--urinary tract infections.

Uña de Gato (Catsclaw)--muscle pain.

Vervain (Moradilla)—sedative.

Wild Oats (Avena fatua)—tonic, laxative and nerve stimulant.

Yerba del Lobo (Golden Sneezeweed)--internal bruises.

Yucca (Spanish Bayonet, Spanish Dagger)—as a shampoo with the bark left on. For medicinal uses remove bark and make tea for arthritis.

-----Compiled from *Los Remedios, Traditional Herbal Remedies of the Southwest* and *Los Remedios de la Gente*. Both books, by Michael Moore, are available at the Taos Public Library. A third book by Moore *Medicinal Plants of the Desert and Canyon West* (Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press, 1989) offers detailed information on when, how and where to gather herbs, and important elements in processing them into remedios. He also offers advice and formulas on preparing tinctures, teas, poultices and other applications. His explanations of the therapeutic uses of remedios make fascinating reading.

Let's Talk About Historic Taos

In 1997, TCHS member Bill Hemp began a series of interviews with different citizens of Taos whose knowledge and personal experience sheds light on important facets of local history. From that time the series entitled "Let's Talk About Historic Taos" has been broadcast on Taos local television public access channel 2 on a weekly basis. Advising Hemp on this project was Ron Usherwood, who has served as director, editor and cameraman. Candyce O'Donnell, president of the Taos Local Television Board of Directors, has also served as advisor. Videos of interviews from the popular series, produced by the Taos County Historical Society and hosted by Hemp, are available from the society for a fee of \$14.95 each. Though the television program runs for 30 minutes some of the taped interviews run 40 and 45 minutes. Send your request (the name of the interview you want and your check) to TCHS, P. O. Box 2447, Taos, NM, 85751. The following is a list of available videos by name of the interviewee and their area of expertise.

1. Tal Luther, Bibliophile (Taos fiction writers)
2. Arsenio Cordova, Historian (Christmas traditions)
3. Lou Pond, Taos Ski Valley, Holy Cross Hospital
4. Eloy Jeantete, former Taos Mayor (French fur trappers)
5. Jon Young, Archaeologist (Pot Creek)
6. Larry Torres, Actor (Padre Martinez and Bishop Lamy)
7. Marie Reyna, Taos Pueblo Educator (Oo-Oonah Center)
8. Skip Miller, Co-director, Kit Carson Museums
9. Beatrice Mandelman, Taos Modernist Painter
10. Eya Fechin, President Fechin Institute (Nicolai Fechin)
11. Carmen Velarde, Santera and Fireplace Builder
12. R. C. Gorman, Navajo Artist and Sculptor
13. Art Bachrach, Moby Dickens Bookshop Owner (D. H. Lawrence)
14. Richard Archuleta, Taos Pueblo Bison Herd Manager
15. Ted Egri,, Taos Sculptor, Artist and Activist
16. Hattie Trujillo, Mandolinist (Trio de Taos)
17. Jonathan Warm Day, Taos Pueblo Artist
18. Novella Lineberry, Director Van Vechten-Lineberry Museum
19. George Chacon, Taos Muralist and Artist
20. Corina Santistevan, Archivist San Francisco de Assisi Church
21. Tom Tarleton, Taos Old Timer (Elizabethtown)
22. John Nichols, Author, Humorist
23. Barbara Waters, Director Frank Waters Foundation
24. Peter Rabbit, Taos Character (Hippies and Poetry Circus)
25. Victor Westphall, Director Vietnam Veterans Memorial
26. Rachel Brown, Weaver/Teacher (Southwestern weaving)



Letter from the editor, continued:

Truthfully, the continued publication of *Ayer y Hoy* is nothing short of a miracle. Each issue depends on the kindness of society members, friends of history, generous writers and dedicated scholars. We continue to solicit articles of historic interest from all quarters. We especially invite scholarly work. At a recent meeting of the journal's publication committee, we decided to return to offset printing, which will allow us to have better quality reproduction and illustrations. (Sage Printing of Taos offered the best bid.) We believe that this is a major step toward a better publication.

President Andy Linquist, who sat in on the meeting, said he would like to see more articles by the members of the society in the journal. So would we. We are open to all submissions. We are ready to aid, advise and assist anyone who wants to write for the journal but might feel intimidated by the genre. (Plain historical writing is a genre, as is scholarly historical writing.) If you would like a copy of our guidelines send us your request along with a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Can we democratize the writing of history? We can sure try. In this vein we are starting a new feature, History in Everyday Life. Within this format, hopefully many people who would be intimidated by scholarly writing will be more comfortable writing of their historic experiences or that of their friends, family and acquaintances.

Write and tell us what you think. Our address is *Ayer y Hoy*, P.O. Box 2447, Taos, NM 87571.

Mary Ann Wells



Time Capsules

Compiled by Andy Lindquist

BOARD MEMBER STANDS UP FOR SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

Three Taos high school boys have been expelled from school for the remainder of the year, and the

motion for the action was taken by a close relative of one of the boys....Two of them were recommended for repeated acts of trouble and carrying knives...the third was expelled for repeated absenteeism.

Felix Santistevan, made a motion...then, obviously disturbed by the decision he had to make, commented that one of the boys was the son of a close relative. "But it has to be done", he added. "We must maintain discipline in the schools."

The Taos News, March 9, 1961

DEDICATION OF NEW HOSPITAL SUNDAY AFTERNOON

Most Rev. Edwin V. Byrne, archbishop of the Santa Fe Archdiocese, is scheduled to dedicate the new half million dollar Holy Cross Hospital here Sunday. The new structure replaces the 25-year-old Holy Cross which has been the only hospital in Taos....Sister Grace, administrator of the hospital, said F.F. Baca of Taos will be the master of ceremonies at the event, which is scheduled to start at 4 p.m. Archbishop Byrne is to bless the hospital, followed by a musical selection by the Taos High School Band. Speakers will be Mayor Gilbert Rivera of Taos; State Sen. Floyd Santistevan of Taos; Dr. Albert Rosen president of the Taos County Medical Society...Msgr. Albert Chavez, pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

The Taos News, April 13, 1961

HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS

Preliminary arrangements have been made to improve the Palo Flechado road. Mr. Brainerd, of Colfax county, arrived in Taos yesterday and called for a meeting of our business people, when Mr. Brainerd informed those present that Colfax county had appropriated \$150 for the purpose of improving that road, while the Santa Fe Railroad offers \$250 if Taos county can raise a similar amount....The road is to be built on a 12 percent grade, with a roadbed 10 feet wide....It is hoped that by November 1 the road will be open to travel.

The Taos Cresset, September 12 1901

(continued on p. 16)

Time Capsules (cont.)

ENGLISH TO APPEAR IN TAOS NEWSPAPER

As about ten percent of the readers of "El Heraldo" prefer English to Spanish, we have decided to accommodate them with a column of local items each week in that language.

El Heraldo de Taos, March 17, 1886

COMMUNICATION IMPROVING IN TAOS

The businessmen and others of Taos will probably be asked to sign a petition for a mail route direct from Taos to Arroyo Hondo. It will be approved by everyone.

Alex Gusdorf has begun work on the telephone line which will connect his store here with his store and residence at El Rancho.

El Heraldo de Taos, March 24, 1888

LIFE ON THE STREETS

The hogs are unusually numerous on the streets since the alcalde posted notices ordering all animals to be enclosed.

El Heraldo de Taos, March 31, 1888

STARTING CAR A SNAP

The automobile is coming into such general use that any advice to its users is of general interest. A great many people, when cranking their cars strain their back, or "drop a stitch"....In cranking, keep the back straight like "the oarsman's back." Bend from the hips, snapping the crank over by straightening at the knee and hip, but do not bend at the middle, or waistline. *Taos Recorder and El Bien Publico, Thursday, November 12, 1913*

GUNS BLAZE IN TAOS!

Police were speeding after a car that had zoomed off the Plaza and was darting around corners and speeding along various streets. The time was 2:54 a.m. The police, failing to bring the offender to a stop by normal means, decided to use a gun. One of the officers fired two quick shots. Both bullets hit the spotlight of the police car. The driver of the other car was later identified through the license number.

The Taos News, April 6, 1961



TAOS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 2447

TAOS, NEW MEXICO 87571

TO: