

AYER Y HOY en TAOS

Yesterday and Today in Taos County and Northern New Mexico

Spring 2016

Issue #40

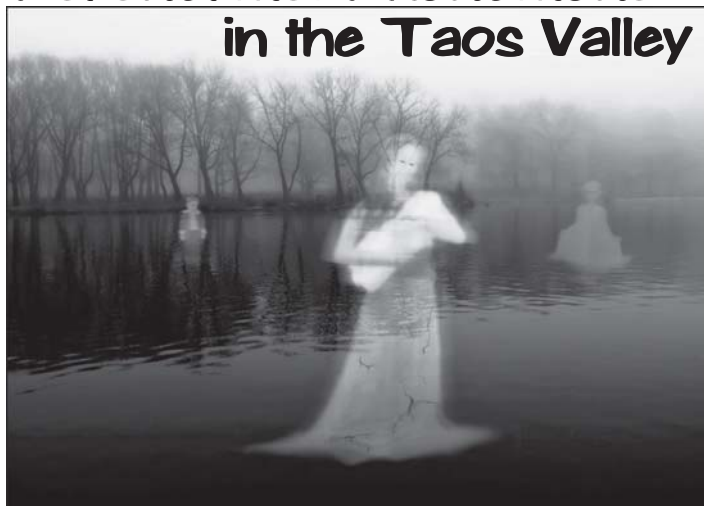
Corina Aurora Santistevan 1919 - 2016



“I would urge strongly that people engage early on in the preservation of family history; of historic sites as they become endangered; of oral and written material. People should not take things that seem unimportant for granted. As time passes they are the history for the future.”

Corina Santistevan 2011

Miracles, Mysteries & Paranormal Phenomena in the Taos Valley



2016 TCHS Honorees: Los Alegres de Taos



A publication of the Taos County Historical Society

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Taos County Historical Society's publication, *Ayer y Hoy en Taos - 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 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 distributed to all members of the Taos County Historical Society as a benefit of membership.

Editor

Dave Cordova

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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A Message from the TCHS President

Dear Members,

I am happy to announce a great start to 2016. As of this month, we've had three well-attended monthly lectures.



In February, we had a full house as we sang *Las Mananitas* to Bataan Death March Veteran Tony Reyna on his 100th birthday. We also heard from John Suazo and Jonathan Warm Day who talked about growing up at Taos Pueblo. In March, Mark Henderson provided us an excellent presentation about the Old Spanish Trails and in April we had

photographer Laurence K. Gustafson.

Our May Honoree Luncheon honors "Los Alegres de Taos." Folk dancers Porfirio & Rosana Cordova, Frank & Lucy Mares and musicians Pablo "Chema" Trujillo and Damian Archuleta, who represented Taos at the American Folk Life Festival in Washington, DC in 1976 and 1977. In commemoration, a special dance exhibition will be performed by Theresa and Reuben Martinez. Theresa carries on the traditions that her parents, Porfirio & Rosana Cordova, loved. Also, a special lecture by Taos Pueblo War Chief Richard Archuleta, speaking on the multi-century traditions of the Taos Pueblo Pow-wows and Trade Fairs.

Our Program Chairperson has promised a full year of interesting programs for the rest of 2016. In June, Esther Garcia is scheduled to give an update on the progress of the restoration and preservation of the San Antonio de Padua Catholic Church in Questa. In July, there is a field trip planned to the DH Lawrence Ranch in San Cristobal.

On a sadder note, we've lost three TCHS members in the past few months. Former TCHS Director and world-renowned artist Ouray Meyers passed away in January. In February, Taos historian and photographer Vicente Martinez passed away, leaving us with treasures in our TCHS archives. More recently, we lost our strongest supporter and dear friend historian Corina A. Santistevan. You can read about her life and her accomplishments in this issue of *Ayer y Hoy* in a special tribute article by Elizabeth Cunningham and David Cordova.

I am very proud of our board members and committee members that continue to work together as a team for the success of our society. Thanks to all members that participate in all our activities.

I wish you all a happy and fun summer in all you do.

Ernestina Cordova, President
Taos County Historical Society

Corina Aurora Santistevan (1919 - 2016)

A Tribute by Elizabeth Cunningham

A seventh-generation New Mexican and an aficionado of history, Corina Aurora Santistevan considered herself most fortunate to have been born a Taoseña and to have had a father who opened her eyes to the wonders of nature inherent in the “blessed rich valley of Taos.” She owned and lived much of her life in the Santistevan ancestral home, an adobe with all the trappings of the centuries-old Hispanic culture—an enclosed *placita* (courtyard) with a shallow stone-lined well, an adobe *horno* (oven) and plants like the *rosa de castilla*, a yellow rose bush supposedly brought to Taos via Mexico from Spain.



photo by Robbie Steinbach

For nearly fifty years Corina devoted her time to learning and teaching. In the latter 1930s as part of the National Youth Administration, Corina worked under Roberta Robey, founder of the Villagra Bookshop in Santa Fe, who was the librarian at the Harwood Foundation in Taos. With Robey’s help, she established and ran a branch library in nearby Ranchos de Taos. Corina taught for fifteen years at a rural one-room school in Cordillera near her ancestral home. (She was known to generations of her students as their beloved “Miss Santistevan.”) The lessons learned there led to pioneering work in language arts in California, where Corina helped develop and place the learning of languages in the elementary school curriculum.

In the 1960s after earning her Master’s degree at San Francisco State College, and further study at Stanford, she taught elementary school youngsters in Hayward, California, and held seminars for aspiring teachers in the Bay Area. Corina received national recognition in 1972 in *Outstanding Teachers in America*. Her expertise in the classroom once reached an international audience. In 1966 she traveled to Geneva, Switzerland to “teach teachers how to teach reading” for a U.S. government-sponsored program for English-language instructors in foreign countries. Corina returned to Taos in 1979, and after conducting a year’s program on Human Relations in the School and another on parental involvement, she ended her career at the Taos Municipal Schools in 1982.

History runs through Corina’s life as an “unending silver chain.” As a result of her passion for the field, Corina became a charter member of the Taos County Historical Society in 1952. She shared her interest with and found inspiration in people like her historian and amateur archeologist friend Helen Greene Blumenschein, and Jack Boyer who secured a handful of historic buildings—including the Hacienda de los Martínez, the E. L. Blumenschein Home, and the Kit Carson Home—to represent and preserve the cultures of the people who established Taos. Corina worked on the history of the renowned San Francisco de Asis church when she served as its archivist. Her efforts culminated in *Centuries of Hands: An Architectural History of St. Francis of Assisi Church* (1986, co-authored with architect Van Dorn Hooker). She also spearheaded the repair of the one-room adobe *oratorio* (oratory, a private place of prayer) and the restoration of the surrounding Peñas Negras Cemetery to its traditional status as a *camposanto* (holy field).

Numerous historians consulted Corina. In his book *On the Edge of Empire: The Taos Hacienda of los Martínez* (1996), David J. Weber credited her unexcelled knowledge of local history. In the mid-1980s, beginning his study of Hispanic agriculture, New Mexico historian Marc Simmons called on Corina. He considered her “a goldmine of firsthand information on that subject and many others related to the Taos Valley’s traditional economy and its folkways.”

In recognition of her contributions to these and many other projects, Corina received numerous awards, including the New Mexico Cultural Properties Commission and Historic Preservation Division for her efforts to preserve and interpret the history of the Taos Valley. In 1997 Corina embarked on her most ambitious enterprise as project director and oversight historian for a book on Taos history. Under the auspices of the Taos County Historical Society, she spearheaded a book committee. Efforts came to fruition with the publication of *Taos: A Topical History*, co-edited with Julia Moore, in 2013. A year later the book won the New Mexico Historical Society’s Lansing Bloom Award.

Typical of Corina’s generosity and community spirit, in the book’s acknowledgments she honored generations of contributors:

Mil Gracias, A THOUSAND THANKS, does not begin to cover the many, many individuals to whom we owe a debt of gratitude. This debt is not only to the living but also to those men and women who long ago began to preserve the journals and documents we now depend upon for knowledge of the past.

Known for her brilliant mind, insatiable curiosity, and childlike wonder, perhaps Corina demonstrated her highest achievement in a life well lived. She wove a web of friendship, making time for family and friends while pursuing her passions. Corina touched the lives and hearts of many, many individuals. Through them her words, spirit, and love live on. Mil gracias, Corina!

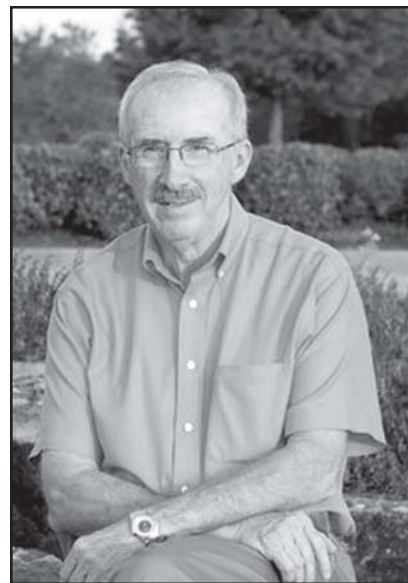
Miracles, Mysteries & Paranormal Phenomena in the Taos Valley

by David L. Caffey

I moved to Taos to become director of the Harwood Foundation library and museum in 1982. About a year later, Sam Buchanan, a seven-term president of the Taos County Historical Society, came to me and asked me to be president of TCHS and help get it back on its feet after a period of relative inactivity. I said o.k. When Corina Santistevan, a longtime TCHS member, was told of the move to make me president, she was skeptical. I was new to Taos. What could such a person know of Taos history or of leading the historical society?

The reaction was entirely rational, but once we got acquainted and Corina could see that we shared many interests and a vision for the historical society, she became my very good friend and supporter, and served as secretary throughout my three years as president. Corina remained a dear friend after I left Taos, and I always looked forward to seeing her when I could return.

Sometime after she had started the long project of assembling a history of Taos, she asked me to do a piece on Taos mysteries and miracles. That was not something I knew a great deal about, but my admiration and respect for Corina were such that I was not about to turn her down on much of anything. She sent me a collection of pamphlets and clippings as source material. I started to work, and the following article is the result. It didn't make the final cut for the Taos history volume, but working with Corina was always a pleasure and I am happy to have done it for that reason, if for no other.



Milagros and mysteries, myths and legends—they're everywhere in the Land of Enchantment. Así es Nuevo Mexico; it is a land in which many are willing to suspend disbelief on occasion—to learn from stories belonging to the realm of fantasy and fable, and to wonder about that which can be observed but not explained.

While some of our mysteries are rooted in religious faith, others evoke traditional folk tales; they also include ghost stories, unsolved crimes, unexplained natural phenomena, and lore of the occult. What these widely varied and loosely related items have in common is a resistance to rational explanation and scientific proof. Tales of the supernatural are common throughout New Mexico, but it has been suggested that Taos—pueblo, village, and valley—is a sort of spiritual vortex, a swirling center of spiritual, mysterious, or paranormal activity.

From its earliest times as an identifiable place, Taos has been felt by persons of widely varied cultures and experiences to be a place of special spiritual significance. Two legends concerning the origin of Taos Pueblo, both related by the late traveler and story collector Alice Bullock, bear this out. In one version, the pueblo people were searching for a home, and were advised by caciques that the place reserved for them by the Gods would be marked by an eagle feather beside a stream. When the wanderers found two feathers, one on each side of the stream, they divided into two groups and built a dwelling on each side of the stream—thus the structure and appearance of the existing Taos Pueblo village. In the other version, the wandering Taos people climb a rainbow that arcs skyward, then descends to show where they are to make their home, at the foot of the sacred mountains in the beautiful valley of Taos.

Of the modern pueblo, the psychologist Carl Jung observed that its people are sustained by a vital mystery. The closeness that many outsiders perceive as secrecy or exclusivity serves this purpose. Among other cultural groups that have been attracted to Taos, there may be greater openness in religious beliefs and practices, but there is a common concern with the great mystery concerning the origin of human life, the creator and the nature of creation, and the purpose and ultimate destiny of those who dwell on earth for a time.

From Spanish-Mexican Tradition

When Spanish Colonists trekked up the Rio Grande, some eventually settling in the Taos Valley, they brought mysteries of their own. Some were rooted in religious faith, others in folk tales that provided object lessons for children and adults.

In the isolated reaches of northern New Spain, a penitential brotherhood took root, shrouded in secrecy and practicing a faith that grew from Catholicism but embraced practices that were condemned by church authorities. Outsiders seized on sensational features of Penitente ritual as gleaned from rumors and fragmentary accounts, often failing to appreciate the religious significance and constructive purposes served by the brotherhood.

Los Hermanos de la Luz conducted their rituals in closed and closely guarded *moradas*—isolated, largely windowless adobe meeting houses scattered throughout the valley. There are also indications that the Chapel of Our Lady of Talpa, familiarly known in recent years as the Duran Chapel, was intended, at least in part, for the use of the Penitentes; further evidence indicates that the chapel may have been made available for use by Padre Antonio Jose Martínez of Taos, following a schism resulting in his ouster from the recognized body of the Roman Catholic Church in New Mexico.

A modern-day ecclesiastical mystery revolves around an object not emanating from Hispanic culture, but embraced by parishioners and visitors to the San Francisco de Asis Church in Ranchos de Taos. A painting, “The Shadow of the Cross,” by Henri Ault, was created in 1896 and was first shown in public exhibition at the St. Louis World’s Fair in 1904. It was given to San Francisco de Asis Parish in 1948. In full daylight or artificial light, the work’s central feature is the image of a full-length Christ figure standing by the sea. Viewed after a brief time in darkness, the figure’s posture appears slightly altered, and the unmistakable shape of a cross appears over the left shoulder—to the right of the painting from the viewer’s perspective. Despite varied investigations, theories, and hypotheses pursued over the years, no satisfactory explanation has been found for the change in appearance—a transformation attested to by many.

A folk tale of New Mexico, said by some to date to the time of the conquistadores, is the tale of *La Llorona*, or the weeping woman. Particulars vary from one locality to another, but in most, the ghost of la llorona is evident in the wailing sound of a woman who wanders the banks of a stream, grieving the loss of her drowned children. La llorona is often heard in the night, in the sound of the wind. In a telling common among residents of Taos, La Llorona carries the body of a decapitated child, along with an ax. Her piercing cry is not unlike the sound of a steam engine’s whistle, and reportedly permeates not only the ears, but the whole body of the listener.

From early territorial times, when the U.S. army occupied the former Mexican province and stayed to provide for the defense of villages and settlers from raiding Indian tribes, comes the story of an American soldier and his Spanish bride. Following their marriage, the soldier and his bride lived in a small casita, known today as the Valdez house, once owned by the author and historian, Marion Estergreen. Soon the two were blessed with a child, but their happiness quickly dissipated in the wrath of the husband’s jealousy. The two lovers quarreled often, and one morning as the soldier was at his morning shave, he flew into a rage and slashed the unfortunate young woman’s throat, bathing the baby in the blood of the mother.

According to witnesses, the incident has been reprised on occasion for guests at the Valdez house. More than one guest has been astonished to look into the dwelling’s small patio and behold the image of a beautiful woman holding fast to her bloody child, imprisoned for all time, apparently, in her unspeakable grief.

The Mysterious Death or Disappearance of Arthur Rochford Manby

Anglos from the eastern United States had been common in Taos since before the American Occupation, some coming into the valley in the waning years of the fur trapping era, others engaging in an increasingly lucrative mercantile trade, either legally or illegally. After the turn of the twentieth century, the southwestward migration of Anglo newcomers increased, and these new residents added to what was already a substantial body of supernatural lore.

Among those who came to the Taos Valley to seek fortune or fulfillment were a number of speculators determined to make quick fortunes in land, chiefly through the acquisition and sale or development of old Spanish and Mexican land grants, titles to which were in a fluid condition under the new U.S. administration. A British subject, Arthur Rochford Manby, came to New Mexico in the 1880s, intending to avail himself of opportunities for economic success. He settled in Taos in 1883 and immediately began amassing real estate holdings. He built an elaborate home on Pueblo Road and laid out an English garden on the adjacent property. Manby overextended himself with irrigation schemes, agricultural projects, and other business ventures, and met with a series of reversals; in later years he was reduced to selling bogus quitclaim deeds, and engaging in questionable manipulation of his dwindling assets. Never a congenial presence in the valley, Manby was known as an unscrupulous curmudgeon living a joyless existence, motivated mainly by his own greed.

Few tears were shed when, on July 4, 1929, the townspeople learned that Manby apparently had been murdered in his home on Pueblo Road. The scene was especially gruesome, as the dead man’s head was found in one room and his body in another. So mutilated were the remains that no one could be certain of the dead man’s identity, but the body was supposed to be that of Arthur Rochford Manby.

In the absence of facts there was speculation. Had enemies of the Englishman acted on their resentment to do him in? Had Manby been attacked and killed by his own dog? Or had a desperate Manby murdered another and left the unfortunate to be found in his place, then fled the valley in order to make a new beginning elsewhere? No one knew at the time, and it has not since been possible to discover Manby’s true fate. As a footnote to the mystery, Joseph Sharp, a pioneer artist and resident of Taos, reportedly saw Manby in Florence, Italy some years later, but was unable to make contact; the man vanished and Manby was not heard of again. The mystery remains unsolved, but is the subject of Frank Waters’s *To Possess the Land: A Biography of Arthur Rochford Manby*.

Haunted Places

Several Taos landmarks have been associated with tales of ghosts and unexplained mysterious happenings. One of these is the Hacienda Martínez, the one-time home of the Severino Martínez family. A compound combining dwellings,

gran sala, a large *cocina*, stables, shops, granary, and corral, the building dates to the early nineteenth century. The structure fell into disrepair after passing from family ownership, but has enjoyed a revival as a unit of the Kit Carson Historic Museums of Taos. The present building may be considered a historic restoration, as true to the original home as available records, archeological evidence, and contemporary workers could make it.

At least two employees working at the Hacienda in its recent years as a museum have reported ghostly experiences that were remarkably similar in nature. While working alone, each has heard footsteps and other noises indicating the presence of another person, only to investigate and find no one nearby. Other visitors have reported seeing or hearing the form of a woman crying within the walls of the old hacienda. A medium or psychic visiting the compound reportedly has determined that the spirit haunting the hacienda is that of a woman. As with La Llorona and the subject of the story of the Valdez house, the spirit appearing to contemporary residents and visitors is said to be a woman of sorrows, grieving through the ages over her unrequited losses.

Ghosts

One of the older residences in Taos is the former home of Capt. Smith Simpson, a frontier soldier and compatriot of Kit Carson. The adobe structure on Ledoux Street now houses the Harwood Museum of Art. Built or substantially expanded by Simpson and occupied by him until his death in 1916, the home passed to ownership of Burt and Elizabeth Harwood. Following Burt Harwood's death, his wife gave the home to the community as a library and an exhibit space to serve a growing artistic community. In 1935 the property was conveyed to the University of New Mexico, which has administered it since that time.

The Smith Simpson-Harwood building is a large, two-story compound of Pueblo Revival or Spanish Pueblo architecture. Spaces now occupied by the main exhibit galleries were designed by John Gaw Meem and added to the original structure. An upstairs gallery containing the museum's collection of *santos*, given to the museum by Mabel Dodge Luhan, can be eerie enough all by itself. Among the *bultos* and *retablos* is a representation of the *carreta del muerto*—the traditional death cart associated with Penitente rituals, carrying the macabre figure of a human skeleton representing death.

Among those who have spent much time in the building in recent years, including longtime Harwood curator David L. Witt, there is a decided sense that a person alone in the building is not, in fact, alone. Witt's experiences include finding light bulbs unscrewed overnight and hearing strange noises—crashing sounds and the rattling of chains. Are these simply the foibles of a creaky old building or, as some suspect, does the ghost of Capt. Smith Simpson continue to wander the premises by night?

The counterculture movement of the 1960s, known informally as the “hippie era” in Taos, brought a migration of young souls to the valley. Most were more uninhibited than the native residents, many were idealistic, and nearly all were non-conforming in relation to the “establishment” society they had fled. Among the newcomers was the *Easy Rider* star and sometime Hollywood personality, Dennis Hopper. In the market for a place in Taos, Hopper surveyed the possibilities, then purchased, the Mabel Dodge Luhan house, including grounds the smaller “Tony” house.

Hopper's experience with the homes included a succession of ghostly events. Once he reportedly beheld the ghosts of Mabel and Tony Luhan, floating before his eyes and assuring him that he was not in danger. On another occasion, a door seemingly locked to him was easily opened by another. And still another time, Hopper and his brother, David, were ascending a stairway in the Tony house when a statue some distance ahead of them suddenly teetered on its base and crashed to the floor with no apparent physical cause. Mabel periodically appeared to Hopper and his guests, irrepressible in death as she had been while living in New York, in Italy, and in the Taos Valley.

Among the artists and writers attracted to Taos through the efforts of Mabel Dodge Luhan was the British novelist, David Herbert Lawrence. Lawrence acknowledged the spiritual power of New Mexico and professed to have been profoundly affected by it, although he lived in New Mexico, near Taos, only in brief intervals in the early 1920s. Mabel gave Lawrence a home in the area, the Kiowa Ranch, high above the village of San Cristobal on Lobo Mountain. Situated some 8,600 feet above sea level, the property overlooks a beautiful valley and the gorge of the Rio Grande.

While Lawrence was a resident of Taos, three prominent women—his wife, the former Frieda von Richthofen; Dorothy Brett, and Mabel Dodge Luhan—vied for his attention. Following Lawrence's death in 1930, his wife returned to New Mexico to live, eventually having his body exhumed and cremated. Frieda built a memorial—some say shrine—to her husband on the Kiowa Ranch property, and planned to keep his ashes there in an urn. Fearful that Dorothy Brett or Mabel Dodge Luhan would take the ashes and scatter them as they wished to do, Frieda mixed them into a batch of cement from which an altar for the memorial was built, exclaiming, “Now—let's see them steal this.” There are other, contradictory stories concerning the disposal of Lawrence's ashes, but the story of the ashes and the concrete is widely accepted.

The Taos Hum

A more recent phenomenon, and one that could almost be considered a belated manifestation of the counterculture era, is that of the fabled “Taos Hum.” The hum is a sound heard many, but not all, Taoseños beginning in the early 1990s.

Background noises noticed by a portion of the population are common in many localities. The “Taos Hum” surfaced as a public issue beginning in 1993. By 1995, New Mexico’s congressional delegation, at the request of local residents hearing the unexplained noise, had secured authorization for a scientific investigation of the hum. Some hearers suspected that the noise might emanate from a clandestine activity on the part of the government. The noise itself has been described as a low frequency sound “reminiscent of a distant oil pump, an idling diesel truck, or perhaps someone’s high powered audio bass running amok.”

Joe Mullins, a manufacturing engineer, and Jim Kelly, a hearing research scientist, both associated with the University of New Mexico, headed up a research team including members from New Mexico’s two national laboratories and the Phillips Air Force Laboratory. The team first conducted tests to determine the approximate physical characteristics of the sound, as reported by hearers. They then conducted acoustic, geodynamic, magnetic, and electromagnetic tests throughout the valley, searching for the source of the hum.

Failing to identify a likely source, the researchers turned their attention to the characteristics and experiences of hearers and surveyed the entire community to determine the relative prevalence of persons perceiving the hum. The investigation produced some contradictory data. Researchers have not denied the existence of some kind of auditory experience on the part of persons who report hearing the hum, but to date, no satisfactory explanation has been found and the phenomenon remains a mystery.

The Upshot

What should Taoseños and outsiders make of these and many other avowed mysteries and manifestations of the spiritual and supernatural? That the people of Taos are people of deep devotion and faith? That there are a lot of “Taos crazies” willing to believe the improbable? That Taos residents are a playful lot, who prefer to live with a few puzzles and mysteries in preference to the monotony of pat explanations? All of these may be true. For now, readers and residents can take these natural and supernatural mysteries, fabulistic tales, and historical puzzles for just what they are—curiosities for which no rational explanation exists—and let them be part of the intriguing, inviting, and ever-changing mosaic that is Taos.

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DAVID L. CAFFEY became acquainted with northern New Mexico and its history in the course of twelve summers as a staff member at the Philmont Scout Ranch near Cimarron and as Director of the Harwood Library and Museum from 1982 to 1990. He served three terms as president of the Taos County Historical Society and was founding editor of *Ayer Y Hoy*. He is the author of several books on New Mexico and the Southwest, including the most recent, *Chasing the Santa Fe Ring: Power and Privilege in Territorial New Mexico* (2014).

Farewell to Corina A. Santistevan, Grande Dame of Taos

by Enrico Miguel Velasquez

Early Monday morning, March 28, 2016, Corina Aurora Santistevan, left this world to re-unite with her beloved father Alfredo C. Santistevan, mother Raymunda Cortez Santistevan and siblings Alicia, Domitila, Adela and Cleofista. When I learned of my aunt's passing, my sadness quickly turned to joy for at age ninety seven Corina had lived a wonderful life of deep love for family, faith and many accomplishments as a distinguished teacher, community leader and Taos historian.

The following is a glimpse of Corina's extraordinary life based upon her oral history over many years of memorable visits. Also included are many historical details from her dear friend, Elizabeth Cunningham.



Corina making chicos with her father, Don Alfredo Santistevan, ca. 1940s

Corina was born on March 9, 1919 in the farming community of La Cordillera (between Ranchos de Taos and Los Cordovas). Her father called her a true March child because Corina loved the wind, the snow and the outdoors so much.

She was born with a brilliant mind and uncommon spirit. She never knew her mother, who passed away when Corina was two years old. As a toddler she would follow her father, Don Alfredo, as best she could in his fields of alfalfa, corn, barley and wheat. Too young to attend school in Cordillera's small one room school, the teacher Mr. Joshua Trujillo allowed Corina to be with her sisters and provided her with a cot in the back of the room to take naps during the day.

As she became older, words moved in rhythm to their hands as father and daughter sowed the family fields: Para nos, para vos, y para los animalitos de Dios – “For us, the others, and for the little creatures of God.” Through such dichos (sayings), Corina's ears became attuned to the lilting rhymes and rhythms of her native Spanish, and she gained a life philosophy passed along by her father through Hispanic proverbs and stories.

In 1926 Corina and family moved to Taos Junction where her father operated the Continental Oil Company at the train station. They lived in a one bedroom adobe house where every night Don Alfredo would lovingly listen as his daughters recited their prayers in Spanish. This example of deep faith remained with Corina and her sisters all of their lives.

As his daughters reached high school age, Don Alfredo found them lodging together in Taos. When Corina's closest sibling, Adela, graduated from the eighth grade in Taos Junction, Don Alfredo enrolled his two youngest daughters in Taos school. Corina lasted two weeks. She became determined to rejoin her beloved father. On his next visit to Taos, Don Alfredo found her sitting on the wagon seat, her suitcase packed, ready for the journey back to Taos Junction. His heart went out to his youngest daughter and he relented. He took on the additional role as mother – rising early to braid Corina's hair, pack her lunch and see her off to school. After supper at night, when he delivered gas to neighboring towns, he would wrap Corina up in blankets. She watched the night sky from inside the cab of his truck until the passing stars lulled her to sleep. Such was the love between father and daughter that created an uncommon bond to each other.

In 1932 Don Alfredo reunited his family in their ancestral home. Corina was back in the fields with her father and after graduating from high school in 1936 became a 4-H leader.



Corina in front of San Francisco de Asis, Ranchos de Taos, ca. 1985

Through the National Youth Administration (depression era New Deal program) Corina was awarded a job at the Harwood Foundation's library in Taos.

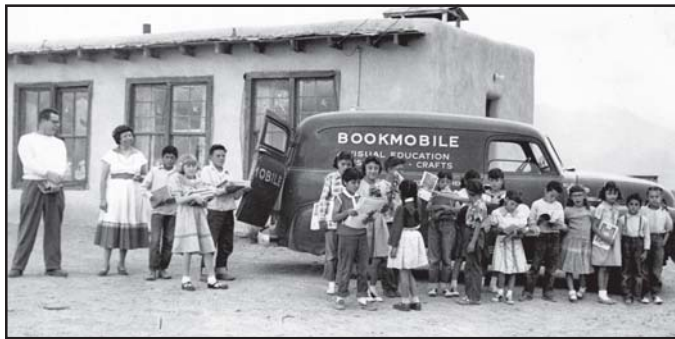
With the help of librarian, Roberta Robey, and members of the community who donated books, Corina established her own branch library in Ranchos de Taos. During the school year, teachers borrowed books to read to their pupils.

Corina graduated with honors from New Mexico State University with a major in Modern Languages during May, 1946. This was a significant accomplishment after waiting six years to start college and after enrolling in her first semester six weeks late.

In Corina's long teaching career from 1946 – 1982, she was an exceptional teacher – listed in the 1972 edition of Outstanding Teachers of America. Teaching was her passion and in the summer of 1965 she taught reading techniques to teachers at Versoix, Switzerland (as part of U.S. Office of Education NDEA Overseas Reading Institute).



Corina teaching Reading Techniques, Colege du Leman near Geneva, Switzerland, part of U.S. Office of Education's NDEA Overseas Reading Institute, 1966



Henry Sauerwein, bookmobile driver for the Harwood Library, and Corina with her pupils in front of the one-room school in Cordillera, ca. 1952

As a new teacher in her former childhood school at La Cordillera, her teaching brilliance was soon displayed as she spent hours creating lesson plans that would embrace listening, reading, writing and mathematics so that when the children finished the “oral” work they went to assigned tasks to practice what they had learned. Victor White, a well-known professor from a private school in Texas, visited Corina's classroom one day and wrote a full-page description of her program of instruction in the local paper.

Corina began getting constant

visitors, local and from other northern New Mexico teachers.

As a historian and writer, Corina Aurora Santistevan had a long list of accomplishments and awards for historical film productions and publications – co-authored *A Century of Hands* and was project director and co-editor for the Taos Historical Society's book *Taos A Topical History* (first edition 2013). Among Corina's most noteworthy awards are the Governor's Award (1998) “in appreciation for invaluable contribution to the



Corina at booksigning for Centuries of Hands and “Symphony in Mud” at San Francisco de Asis parish hall, Ranchos de Taos, July 14, 1996

preservation of the history, culture and traditions of our peoples”, and the Dona Eufemia

Penalosa Award presented by the New Mexico Hispanic Culture Preservation League.

In summation, Corina Aurora Santistevan was woman of outstanding leadership ability and energy, who dedicated her life to family, friends, learning and the history of Taos.



left to right: Corina talking with Taos history book committee members Nita Murphy, Martha Dick and Jenny Vincent, Southwest Research Center library, Harwood Museum of Art, ca. 1997

We are so happy for you Corina!

*Submitted by:
Enrico Miguel Velasquez, LtCol U.S.M.C (Retired)
with the help/contributions of Elizabeth Cunningham*

...A Fragrant Memory

by Julia Moore (read at the Corina A. Santistevan Memorial - April 4, 2016)

Corina and I collaborated for more than ten years on what was her crowning gift to the community, the book *Taos: A Topical History*. It was a project of the Taos County Historical Society and was published by The Museum of New Mexico Press in 2012 and issued in a paperback edition in 2014 by The University of New Mexico Press.

Most of you who know me are aware that I have been challenged by a constellation of debilitating, though slow-to-progress, diseases. I will be returning to my Taos home very soon, but not in time to be here with you, or Corina, on this day.

That Corina and I regarded each other as dear friends is one of the most precious honors my life. She shared with me her special knowledge and understanding of her people, of the Taos Pueblos' people, of old Taos Anglo families, and of her childhood and, of life as it was here a hundred years ago. And, by example, her rich faith. She was a scholar. Her grasp of the literature was deep, and she guided me to the best of the best books, journal articles, and writers—from the earliest accounts to the luminaries of the twentieth century She took me to places in the Valley few newcomers would be aware of—to processions, moradas, the sites of paraliturgical rites and overgrown campos santos.

She was herself a clear-headed, demanding editor, sensitive to language and the voices of the book's contributors. I went back to one chapter at least eleven times because of her carefully documented additions and comments. I cannot say that working with her was always easy or smooth, but because her intelligence and the deep respect I had for her prevailed—and because she trusted me—it was always rewarding.

Corina was probably the wisest, fairest, kindest, most generous person I have known. She was regal and she was humble. She is a fragrant memory.

Julia Moore (April 4th, 2016)

In Memoriam of Corina Aurora Santistevan:

for her contributions as an educator, historian and community leader.

As an aficionado of history, Corina A. Santistevan was a strong supporter of the Taos County Historical Society and as a board member of the Society she guided and supported our efforts to make history come alive for the community. Her leadership was certainly the driving force behind the book *Taos A Topical History*. To honor the memory of Corina, the board of the Society has set up “The Corina A. Santistevan Memorial Fund”. Money contributed to this special fund will be used to further the efforts of the Society to share the special history of Taos with a greater audience. While her presence will be sorely missed, our memories of Corina will inspire us to continue her vision of preserving the history of Taos County.

TCHS has a Restricted Memorial Fund that is used for the expansion of TCHS services for greater public appreciation and participation to “preserve the irreplaceable.”



2016 TCHS Honorees: *Los Alegres de Taos*

by **Dave Cordova**

The year was 1976. The entire country was in the wild throes of celebration, and everyone was commemorating the bi-centennial of the birth of the United States of America. The most ambitious celebrating, of course, was in the Nation's Capitol... Washington, DC, where the Smithsonian Institute hosted the American Folk Life Festival on The Mall in the shadows of the Washington and Lincoln Monuments.

Among the celebrants on The Mall that summer were six Taoseños; dancers Frank and Lucy Mares and Porfirio and Rosana Cordova, musicians Pablo "Chema" Trujillo and Damian Archuleta. They proved to be a real crowd-pleaser and the group was invited back the following year.

I remember driving my parents, Porfirio and Rosana to the small Taos Airport and watched as my father donned his bravest face and climbed aboard the small prop airplane for the short flight to Albuquerque for their connecting flight to Washington, DC. While my mother had flown on commercial airlines, my father had never flown before. My father joked through the farewells and boarding, surely easing his tension as-well-as for his traveling companions.

The performers were gone for about eleven days, and performed two or three times daily for a solid week, entertaining visitors to The Mall. When my parents got back, they took the opportunity to re-live the experience in the many re-tellings of the sights and sounds of our Nation's Capitol as it celebrated its 200th birthday.

The group got right back to performing at the Taos Fiestas and several other appearances around Northern New Mexico, which they continued to do for the next several years.



Damian Archuleta, Porfirio & Rosana Cordova and Pablo Trujillo. Not pictured, Frank & Lucy Mares.



Remembering our Ancestors

FLOYD (FLAVIO) SANTISTEVAN

Served in World War I - 1914-1918

Submitted by Jacquelyn Chase

Floyd Santistevan was born on 13 October 1892 in Taos New Mexico to Santiago Santistevan and Santana Sena. He joined the New Mexico National Guard in Taos County about 1915 and joined the Army in 1917 in Monte Vista, Colorado as a WWI Colorado Soldier. According to family lore, after boot camp, he spent most of his tour in France.

In 1921, he married Daphne Reddick and they had three children. He spent his life as an educator, administrator and lawmaker. He spent thirty three years as an educator, as Taos County School Superintendent, as the New Mexico Assistant School Superintendent under Georgia Lusk and was instrumental in revising the New Mexico Retired Teachers Act of 1959. He served several terms on the Taos Town Council and one term (1962-1964) as the Mayor. He also served as the State Senator from Taos County (1961-1964). He died on July 15, 1968 of heart failure.



Taos Soldiers Ready To Serve

Lectures, Field Trips & Special Events (Tentative Schedule)

- May 1, 2016 - Honoree Luncheon
"Tri-Culture Visionaries"
- June 4, 2016 - Lecture
"Restoration of St. Anthony Church in Questa"
Esther Garcia
- July 9, 2016 - Field Trip
D.H. Lawrence Ranch in San Cristobal
- August 6, 2016 - Lecture
"Genealogy & History Inform Poetry"
Karen Cordova
- September 10, 2016 - Lecture
"Helene Wurlitzer Foundation" - Michael Knight
- October 1, 2016 - Lecture
"Ladies of the Canyons" - Lesley Poling-Kempes
- November 5, 2016 - Lecture
"Bringing Bataan Home:
NM & the War in the Pacific" - Elena Friott
- First Saturday of the month at 2:00 PM
Kit Carson Coop Meeting Room
118 Cruz Alta Road - Taos

Taos County Historical Society Board of Directors

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Mary Barrett

BECOME A MEMBER

We invite your participation and support through an annual membership, which includes subscriptions to *Ayer Y Hoy* and our periodic newsletters. Other activities include recordings of oral histories, maintaining archive materials and participating in community events.

Membership categories:

Student	\$10
Individual	\$20
Family	\$30
Sustaining	\$50
Business	\$75
Lifetime	\$500

To become a member send a check, along with your name and address, to:

TAOS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 2447 - TAOS, NM 87571

For more information call (575) 770-0681
or e-mail: cordova@taosnet.com



Taos County Historical Society
PO Box 2447 - Taos, NM 87571

The Taos County Historical Society was formed in 1952 for the purpose of "...preserving the history of the Taos area." This part of New Mexico has a fascinating history, full of people, events, stories and places. If you are interested, we invite your participation in our field trips or lecture programs, or by supporting the Society by becoming a member.