

# La Crónica de Nuevo México



April 2006

Issue Number 67

## Public Art in Albuquerque A Reflection of Culture and History

by Carleen C. Lazzell



Cuarto Centenario Memorial located at the corner of Mountain Road and 19th Street. Redstone Missile in background.

Photograph by Lynn Adkins March 2006

There are more than 400 works of art included in the Albuquerque Public Art Collection. The City of Albuquerque's Public Art Program began in 1978 with the passage of the "Percent for Art" Ordinance. This bold initiative set aside 1% of City construction funds derived from the general obligation bond program and certain revenue bonds for the purchase or commission of works of art.

One of the more recent projects for the Albuquerque Public Art Program is the Cuarto Centenario, which commemorates the 400th year recognition of Spanish colonization in New Mexico. Planning for this project began in 1996 with a proposal from Millie Santillanes. Her concept would pay tribute to Don Juan de Oñate, who in 1598, led settlers on a six-month journey



"La Jornada" sculptures by Betty Sabo  
Photograph by Lynn Adkins March 2006

from Mexico City to Northern New Spain. The three-mile long caravan traveled along the Camino Real. Discussions regarding a memorial to Oñate included public input and continued for several years before a final decision could be reached, whereby everyone agreed that the Cuarto Centenario Memorial should not focus solely on Oñate, but should also include the colonists.

The Cuarto Centenario Memorial is two separate art projects: *La Jornada*, "The Journey", with bronze figures of Oñate, a group of colonists, domestic livestock, soldiers, a priest and a carreta (ox-drawn cart). Two artists were selected for *La Jornada*. Reynaldo "Sonny" Rivera and Betty Sabo, both of whom sculpted people and animals. For his contribution to the memorial, Rivera (formerly from Mesquite, New Mexico) traveled Oñate's route along the Camino Real. He was the artist for the Native guide (a Manso Indian), soldiers, cattle, horses, ox and carreta, which people are valiantly pushing up difficult terrain. Rivera researched the cattle from the 16th century and found that the longhorns were direct descendents (and closest relatives) of the feral cattle that existed in that time period. Rivera visited the longhorn ranch of Fritz and Rebecca Moeller at San Acacia (near Socorro), as he wanted to be historically accurate in his depiction of the cattle. As his model, Rivera used "Bubba," one of the Moeller's prize-winning longhorns. On the ox, Rivera shortened the horns and curved them inward. In addition, Rivera included the Moeller's Cross M brand on ox and other cattle. The figure of the drover is a self-portrait of Rivera.

Betty Sabo sculpted the women,

children, shepherd, Churro sheep, goat, donkey, pig, baby and priest in the group. Sabo asked Millie Santianelles to be her model for the older woman reaching down to the children and Mayor Martin Chavez was her inspiration for the man carrying a lamb on his shoulders.

The other part of the Cuarto Centenario Memorial is a landscape called *Numbe Whageh* in the Tewa language, which translates in English to "The Center Place." It articulates the earth from the Native American perspective of the world. The artist, Nora Naranjo-Morris, a native of Santa Clara Pueblo, brought rocks from various pueblos to use in her composition. She also includes native plants and a water feature.

The two parts of the Cuarto Centenario Memorial are side by side at the northeast corner of the Albuquerque Museum at Mountain Road and 19th Street. In the future, an Ancestral Wall (500 family names who joined in the journey) will be added. The Cuarto Centenario was paid for by the 1% for the Arts and some private donations at a cost of more than half a million dollars. In

the place for a missile to be on display in the historic district. However, the contrast between *La Jornada* and the "Redstone Missile" is quite profound. In his inaugural address on January 20, 1961 President John F. Kennedy talked about "The New Frontier." Space exploration was in the forefront of Americans' minds. The Redstone missile carried the first United States satellite, Explorer I, into orbit on January 31, 1958 and boosted the Mercury capsule, which carried Alan Shepard, the first American astronaut, into space on May 5, 1961. Both Northern New Spain and Outer Space were new frontiers and both were "remote beyond compare" during their time periods.

The City of Albuquerque created a map of the Public Art Collection, works of which can be seen throughout the city from the extensive collection at the Albuquerque Sunport to the Sandia foothills and even to the western edge of the city limits. Many of the art pieces are concentrated in the historic Old Town, the Downtown District and University/Nob Hill area. A quote from the map/brochure says it best: "In a city



"La Jornada" sculptures by Reynaldo "Sonny" Rivera  
Cuarto Centenario Memorial

Photograph by Lynn Adkins March 2006

comparison to other works in the Public Art Collection, this memorial encompasses close to three-quarters of an acre and has thirty bronze statues in conjunction with the landscape designed by Naranjo-Morse.

As one observes the Cuarto Centenario Memorial looking to the northwest, across the street is a seventy-foot tall Redstone Missile in the background. It is placed in front of the National Atomic Museum. When the missile was placed in this location a couple years ago, there was a public outcry. Many felt that Old Town was not

where the natural beauty of the sky, the Rio Grande, the volcanoes and the Sandia Mountains can enchant and even dazzle, the Public Art Collection finds its strength and beauty in reflecting the spirit, diversity and creativity of the people who live in Albuquerque."

With such a large number of works in the Albuquerque Public Art Collection, only a few can be mentioned in this issue. Please see page 8 for more examples. For those attending the 2006 Historical Society of New Mexico conference, a map of the Albuquerque Public Art Collection will be available.

Historical Society Annual Conference, April 20-22, 2006, Hotel Albuquerque Old Town

# Braden Memorial Fountain

## Tribute to a Hero



Braden Memorial Fountain  
Robinson Park, Downtown Albuquerque  
Photograph by Lynn Adkins March 2006

On the evening of October 16, 1896, the mood was festive as the Carnival of Sports, sponsored by the New Mexico Territorial Fair Association, began its parade in New Town Albuquerque. The carnival featured baseball games, races and other sporting activities. A highlight of the event was the street parade, which featured decorated floats, marching bands and fireworks. According to the *Albuquerque Citizen*, the procession formed at 7:00 p.m. along West Copper Avenue. Spectators lined the parade route as they anticipated the colorful display.

John Braden took the reins of the ammunition wagon, which was loaded with rockets and other explosives to be used for a big fireworks display after the

conclusion of the parade. In front of the ammunition wagon was the Flambeau Club float. As the procession began to move, club members riding on the float prematurely began shooting skyrockets and Roman candles. Just as the parade turned the corner of Copper Avenue coming south on Fifth Street, the Flambeau Club members continued activating the fireworks and sparks flew back into the ammunition wagon. The wagon ignited and exploded, scattering sparks and debris in all directions. The explosion startled the team of horses whereupon they bolted between the Flambeau Club float and one of the bands. Two band members were knocked to the ground. By this time, the wagon was engulfed in flames as it moved down the street. John Braden, realizing the danger to the spectators, attempted to stop the runaway horses. At the intersection of Railroad Avenue (now Central Avenue), the horses turned east and ran into a Scott Moore Hose Company cart. The wagon and the cart locked wheels. It was at this point that Braden, his body engulfed in flames, fell from the wagon. Braden, with burns over his entire body, was lifted into a hack and taken to the hospital. He died at 2:15 the following afternoon.

According to reports, never before had anyone seen such heroism. Braden could easily have jumped from the flaming wagon, but he chose to sacrifice himself in order to prevent the deaths of perhaps many other people. Albuquerque schools and businesses were closed Monday afternoon, October 19, 1896, for John Braden's funeral. He was 74 years old when he sacrificed his life to save the lives of others. In his earlier years, Braden had

been an Indian Scout and a stagecoach driver before he arrived in Albuquerque in the early 1880s. First he worked for the William Trimble Stable and later for Dixon and Olmstead Stable. At the time of this tragic accident, Braden was driving a Dixon and Olmstead wagon.

A couple years after his death, a memorial fountain was placed in Robinson Park to honor Braden's heroism. The Ladies' Park Association, a group of civic-minded patrons, spearheaded the project. According to art conservator, Charlene Brown, commemorative fountains and monuments have been popular for centuries. This particular statue was purchased from the J.L. Mott Ironworks of New York City. The Mott Iron Works was in business from 1828 through the 1920s. In addition to decorative pieces, the company also manufactured utilitarian metal objects, such as manhole covers and pipe. The Neo-classical sculpture selected for the Braden Monument is a Victorian-era figure depicting a Grecian woman. Catalogs consulted by Brown did not show this exact configuration, however, the 1905 catalog had a similar figure suitable for a fountain. It was titled: "Fountain: Maid of the Mist."

Charlene Brown said "To Victorians, human beauty above all meant art with a high moral purpose or noble sentiment preferably expressed in a classical style. Many artists emulated, sometimes copied, existing statues from classical Greek Art. These statues had a noble simplicity and calm grandeur, an appearance of detachment from the stress of circumstance. The figure was meant to be in harmony with a self-sufficient repose, which the outside world could not disturb. A statue must be static, structurally balanced like a piece of architecture. The Braden

Memorial figure possesses these characteristics."

The actual artist of the sculpture is not known because the J.L. Mott Iron Works hired several artists who worked in the Neo-classical style. It is thought that the artist may have been a woman because during the time period, fountain sculpture was the specialty of American women sculptors.

The Memorial Fountain consists of the statue elements themselves and the surrounding wall and basin. The fountain proper consists of five pieces: (1) the figure, (2) the vegetal form, (3) the bowl or basin, (4) the rock column and (5) the base support. The concrete basin is approximately 9 feet in diameter, which is round on the inside, but has an octagonal shape on the outside. The total fountain complex is approximately nine feet tall. With all components, the Braden Memorial Fountain cost about \$450.

The original plaque, which has long since disappeared, had the following inscription: "In Memory of John Braden, Who Sacrificed His Life Oct. 16, 1896, To Save the Lives of Others." In 1974, the New Mexico Chapter of Daughters of the Founders and Patriots of America installed a new marker.

The Braden Memorial Fountain fell into disrepair over the years. In 2000, Charlene Brown, an architect who performed the conservation work, restored the sculpture and basin to their original luster.

Located just west of New Town on the North side of Central Avenue, Robinson Park, the city's oldest public park, was established when New Albuquerque was platted in 1880. It was later named for Lena Robinson, the daughter of a Sante Fé Railway official.

CCL



## Lembke/Carson House

### Albuquerque's Historic Huning Highlands

Edward Lembke came to New Mexico in 1883 from Valparaiso, Indiana, to work as a stone mason and bricklayer on the capitol in Santa Fe. Upon completion of that job, he found work in Albuquerque on the 1886 Bernalillo County Courthouse, located in Old Town at San Pasquale and Railroad Avenue (now Central Avenue). [The old courthouse was demolished in 1959, due to the realignment of Lomas Boulevard].

While in Albuquerque, Lembke met and courted the "bonnie lass" Ellen Breen and they proceeded to marry and have a family. In 1894, he built the Queen Anne style brick home at 416 Walter SE. Notes from the Lembke family indicate that in 1906 the front porch was enlarged and colonial columns added to replace the Victorian turned posts, yet today, the house still basically retains its original character.

Remnants of a small barn for the horse and a smoke house are still visible in the rear yard of the property. When they purchased an elegant Franklin touring car, a large two-car brick garage was erected from bricks and lintels salvaged from their construction business. Son, Charles, received the first civil engineering degree from University of New Mexico and then joined his father's firm. The company expanded and received several contracts to construct numerous buildings on the university campus. In addition, Conrad Hilton

hired the Lembke Firm to build his downtown hotel (now La Posada at Second Street and Copper Avenue). During the 1950s, Lembke Construction built the large domed Civic Auditorium, designed by George Pearl, a well known architect. [That building has now been demolished].

Charlotte, their daughter, lived at home with her parents and cared for them in their later years. In 1957, she sold the family home to William and Dorothy Budagher. During most of their ownership, the Budaghers rented the house to a variety of tenants. In 1985, Ann Carson and her late husband Jim acquired the home and restored it, doing much of the work themselves. The front picket fence is an authentic reproduction taken from an old photograph of the house as it looked in 1900.

Both Ann and Jim have been active in historic preservation. They served on the boards of the Huning Highlands Neighborhood Association, the Albuquerque Historical Society, the Albuquerque Conservation Association (TACA) and the Albuquerque Archaeological Society. Ann presently is president of TACA and is a past president of the Albuquerque Historical Society.

The Lembke/Carson House was featured on "Restore America" on HGTV. It was also one of the homes included in *Houses in Time* (1997) by Linda G. Harris and in *The Photographs*



Lembke/Carson House  
Huning Highlands Historic Neighborhood

Photograph by Lynn Adkins, March 2006

of Kirk Gittings: *Shelter from the Storm* (2005). In addition, the house was included in an article in *New Mexico Magazine* (April 1995), which featured various houses in Albuquerque's Huning Highlands and in *Victorian Homes* (Fall 1993).

Ann Carson will present "Huning

Highlands Subdivision: Early Albuquerque" at the 2006 Historical Society of New Mexico Conference on Friday, April 21 and on Saturday, she will conduct a guided tour of the restored late 19th century residences in Huning Highlands.

CCL



# León Troussel: An Itinerant Painter in New Mexico

By R. B. Brown

Buried inside the Las Cruces *Rio Grande Republican* of Saturday, July 25, 1885 was the following article: no headline, no by-line, just the article:

"Sixteen years ago León Troussel, a French artist, who is also some thing of a Bohemian, stopped for a while in Las Cruces and painted a picture of the town, with the Organ mountains for a background. This summer his wandering footsteps brought him back again and for the second time he reproduced the beautiful view. Wednesday night this painting was raffled off at the Monarch saloon and Charles McCarty of Socorro threw 46, the high dice that won it. The artist is now engaged on a general view of this place which will also be raffled."

watering holes to sell his paintings and suggests that he was not concerned for their reputation. But we are seeing the beginning of a pattern.

According to the *Albuquerque Weekly Journal* and *The Evening Democrat*, Troussel exhibited two oil paintings - "Albuquerque, 1885" and "Albuquerque, New Town" - at the 5th. Annual Territorial Fair which ran from the 4th. to the 9th. of October, 1885. That Sunday found Troussel, along with the other exhibitors such as Ben Wittick, setting up their wares. Throughout the week, both newspapers repeatedly referred to the upcoming raffles that were to be held on Friday (9/Oct/1885). "Albuquerque, 1885" was raffled at the Fountain Head. Troussel sold 49 of the



Socorro County Courthouse painting by León Troussel (1885)  
Photograph from poster "New Mexico in the Gilded Age 1880-1900" an exhibit at the Palace of the Governors, 1980

This brief note gives us a laconic introduction to León Troussel. It establishes him as a Frenchman and identifies his profession: an artist. It then describes him as eccentric and peripatetic. It also lets us know that Troussel visited and painted a view of Las Cruces in 1869, a view that included the Organ Mountains, which evidently Troussel repeated in 1885. It also identifies the third painting as "a general view of this place." As if to confirm his unconventional nature, it goes on to tell us how he sold his paintings and helps establish their initial value.

According to information gleaned from the different newspapers published in Las Cruces in 1881 (Beckett 2003), the Monarch saloon and billiard room was a relatively up-market or expensive establishment that sold drinks for 25 cents in order to have "a nice quiet resort of gentlemen." (Newman's Thirty Four [9/2/1881, p. 3]). Since bars, saloons and cantinas have always been popular places for people to congregate and dispose of their excess cash, it is not surprising that León Troussel saw them as fitting venues to sell his paintings.

Six months earlier, on Friday 23rd. of January, 1885, a shorter article in a similar vein had been published inside the *El Paso Daily Times* under the headline of "A Fine Oil Painting of El Paso:

The work of León Froussel (sic), will be raffled at the Acme saloon; 60 chances, one dollar each. Let everybody see it."

At first glance, this article reveals even less about Troussel, other than his presence in El Paso and the fact that people often misspelled his name, but it does confirm that he sought popular

sixty tickets and won it back with number 48! Second place went to a Dr. Haslea with number 43. "Albuquerque, New Town" was raffled at John Buckley's place and was won by a J. B. Bushnell with a throw of 42.

Troussel certainly was a lucky man able to earn between \$40 and \$50 a painting - a little less than a policeman's monthly salary in the newly formed Las Cruces police force (Beckett 2003) - and able to justify his time spent "at the office!"

How did Troussel get to New Mexico? After two years of focused research, León Troussel remains a mystery. He first appears at Fort Inge, near San Antonio, Texas on 22 of September of 1867 and dies on 30 of December, 1917 in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua. Such basic questions as: When and where was he born? Where did he grow up? What was his education? How did he spend his early years? and How did he get to San Antonio? all remain unanswered. What we do know has been learned from studying his painting and poems. The paintings are many and the poems are few.

León Troussel's *obra* can be conveniently divided into three periods that generally correspond to the time he spent traveling across Texas (Fall 1867), up and down California (1874 - 1876) and along the Camino Real (1882 - 1886 or 1887). Clearly there is a slight overlap as he had to cross the Camino Real to travel from Texas to California, but more importantly, there are many years about which we know virtually nothing.

The first period dates to the fall of 1867 and includes five pen and ink drawings of his journey across Texas. Much of the research covering this period has been done by Frederick

Kluck (2002).

The second period dates to the mid - 1870s and includes the widest range of subjects: religious themes painted for the Los Angeles Cathedral; a historical scene seemingly painted as training exercise, as well as numerous landscapes that were to become his signature pieces. His techniques include oil, watercolor and gouache. During this period he was based in the Monterey Peninsula and travelled extensively from Los Angeles in the south to Santa Rosa in the north. Much of the research covering this period has been done by Edna Kimbro and Nikki Silva (personal communication) (Chalmers 2001)

León Troussel's third period dates to the mid 1880s and includes urban landscapes from as far south as León, Guanajuato and as far north as Albuquerque, New Mexico. These works include urban landscapes of León, Guanajuato; Lagos de Moreno, Jalisco; Encarnación de Diaz, Jalisco; Aguascalientes, Aguascalientes; Durango, Durango; Chihuahua, Chihuahua; Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua; El Paso, Texas, and at least nine more in New Mexico. It is those nine New Mexican paintings that concern us today.

Of these nine paintings, five have been clearly identified: one is in Washington, one is in Socorro, two are in Albuquerque, and two are in Santa Fe. "Old Mesilla" is to be found in the Museum of American Art of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC; "Park City and Billings Smelter" is in Socorro; "Socorro County Courthouse" is in the New Mexico Museum of Fine Art; "San Miguel Church and Convent" is to be found at the Zaplin-Lampert Gallery in Santa Fe and "Albuquerque, New Town" and "Albuquerque 1885" are to be found in the Albuquerque Museum.

The missing four paintings are views of Las Cruces that may be as early as 1867 and as late as 1887.

Most of the paintings can be attributed to Troussel on the basis of his signature in black or white in the bottom right hand corner. The signature generally includes the title. "Park City and Billings Smelter" has the title, signature and date in black on the bottom left hand corner. The date - 1885 - seems to have been added by a different hand in the case of "San Miguel Church and Convent."

It is often thought that as an artist develops, his technical abilities should increase correspondingly. However, there is no clear progression in Troussel's work: his quality seems to improve for a while when he is in California and associated with artists such as Jules Tavernier and Paul Frenzeny who established a salon in Monterey, California. (Chalmers 2002) Some of his later works are just as naive as his earlier works.

Troussel's style is his personal mixture of naive and romantic that suggests limited technical training in composition and perspective, which may have been derived from the basic skills learned as a draughtsman, and a desire to produce figurative or photographic - like representations. His treatment of clouds and people are quite personal, and his inclusion of certain elements is quite repetitive.

The composition of the landscapes that dominate his New Mexican *obra* tends to be very horizontal. They are clearly divided into thirds or quarters. The foreground is generally dominated by cardboard people, although occasionally the addition of a dark foreground seems to be an attempt to enhance the sense of depth that Troussel, or his customer, may have considered lacking. This variant is illustrated by "Albuquerque, New

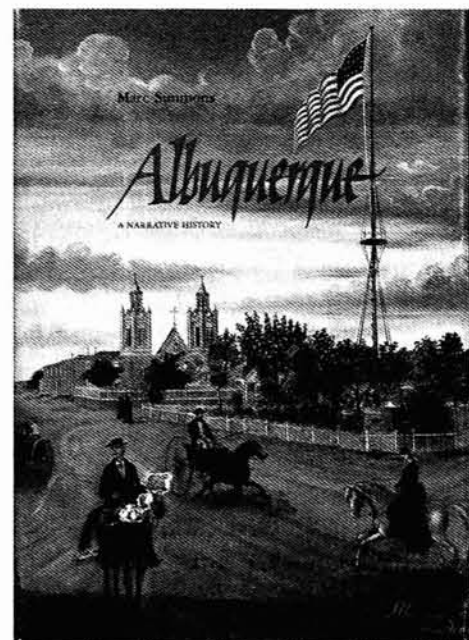
Town." The middle field is dominated by the major theme, albeit the colonial plaza of Albuquerque, or the county court house at Socorro, or the different buildings that make up "Park City and Billings Smelter." The upper field, albeit the upper third or the upper half tends to be either a light blue sky dominated by woolly clouds or pastel shades of pink, gold and blue common to romantic portraits of scenes depicted at sunset.

Although the figures in the foreground are depicted in great detail, they do not convey the sense of volume that is necessary for them to appear life-like. This is clearly demonstrated by the children and lady depicted in "Church of San Miguel, Socorro, New Mexico" or the figures jauntily spread around the Socorro County Court House. The figures depicted in "Albuquerque, 1885" are more varied, and include a cross-section of the physical types to be found in the local population: blonds, Mestizos, Indians and Chinese, they still seem more like caricatures rather than portraits of real or imagined people.

"Park City and Billings Smelter" is one of his more sophisticated works. While he does not surrender his sense of horizontality, the composition is not so flat and includes a more varied sense of presence than usual. This contrasts sharply with "Old Mesilla," which although it has one strong, vanishing point, is quite flat.

As can be seen in "Albuquerque, 1885" and "Church of San Miguel, Socorro, New Mexico," Troussel depicts clouds in a quite singular manner: woolly clouds in a blue sky. In the case of "Albuquerque, New Town" the colors of the sky and the woolly clouds are more varied ranging from blue and white to pink and gold, colors often used to romanticize western sunsets.

Although the major elements of Troussel's New Mexico paintings are static architectural features and buildings such as the County Courthouse in Socorro, and the church and plaza in "Albuquerque, 1885," the repeated inclusion of horses, mules, donkeys and dogs, generally in poses suggestive of motion, seems to be a clichéd attempt to achieve a sense of movement and depict drama or the hustle and bustle of urban life. Their absence from "Church of San Miguel, Socorro, New Mexico" and "Old Mesilla" heightens their sense of tranquility.



Detail of "Albuquerque 1885" by León Troussel (Dust jacket from "Albuquerque: A Narrative History" by Marc Simmons) Notice San Felipe de Neri church and flag pole in Old Town Plaza

The same dog that can be seen in "Albuquerque, New Town" seems to have pranced across the "Plaza de San Marcos, Aguascalientes" some ten years earlier.

Wherever legitimately possible, Troussel included national flags. In his 1899 painting of Juárez, we can see the Mexican flag flying over the post office.

...continued on page 7

# La Mano Negra

## A Personal Search for the "Black Hand" in Tierra Amarilla

By Robert Tórréz, Copyright 2004

*¡La Mano Negra!* For nearly a century, these words have stirred images of masked men who ventured out in the night with flaming torches and wire cutters in hand, burning haystacks, cutting fences, raising havoc and destroying the property of large land owners in that remote and controversial enclave in northern New Mexico known as Tierra Amarilla.<sup>1</sup> Once their work had been done, they retreated back into the dark of night, leaving behind only the imprint of a black hand, the trademark from which they derived their name.

The *mano negra* is a little known and poorly understood phenomenon that has been kept alive in northern New Mexico by a strong oral tradition. These profound images of the "black hand" organization and its activities were impressed upon the youth of northern New Mexico, including this author, by numerous stories told by *viejitos* and old timers over the past four generations. Despite the fascination and passions evoked by those vivid images, the *mano negra* has remained an entity about which little is known beyond the stories kept alive by this oral tradition. Over the past three decades, my own research into the history of Tierra Amarilla has uncovered information about a number of activities attributed to the *mano negra*. As my research progressed, I hoped to determine what the organization was, who was involved with its activities, what they actually did and what they hoped to accomplish. I even entertained vague notions of an "expose."

However, three decades of reasonably diligent research has uncovered precious little about the organization and the men associated with its activities. Oral interviews and other anecdotal information have hinted at who some of them were, but this limited information was often provided in confidence and not meant to be revealed. Consequently, this essay has not turned out as I expected. My research has answered precious few of the questions I hoped to address when I began this project. This essay will certainly not be an "expose" about who organized or participated in the activities of the *mano negra* in Tierra Amarilla. Instead, my study has concentrated on determining if such an organization or group actually existed, and if so, what activities attributed to them can be documented by the public record within the narrow context of land grant issues that were unfolding in Tierra Amarilla during the first half of the twentieth century. In the absence of any evidence that the *mano negra* had a formal organization that left behind published platforms or statements of purpose, the activities and the context discussed here may suffice to tell us something of their motives and what the *mano negra* hoped to accomplish.

Few scholars have written about the *mano negra* in New Mexico and these few have devoted no more than a few sentences or paragraphs to the subject, usually within the context of a broader discussion. These have provided little beyond speculation regarding its origins and general statements of some of the activities attributed to the *mano negra*. Robert J. Rosenbaum and Robert W. Larson, for example, describe the *mano negra* only as "shadowy organization" responsible for conducting attacks on the property of large landowners in the Tierra Amarilla area. They suggest the *mano negra*, like its late nineteenth century counterpart

in northeast New Mexico, the *gorras blancas*, or white caps, was an example of native resistance known as "social banditry."<sup>2</sup>

Various theories have been proposed to explain the emergence of the *mano negra* and its activities in northern New Mexico during the early twentieth century. Frances Leon Swadesh, in her seminal history of northwest New Mexico, *Los Primeros Pobladores*, speculates the *mano negra* may have gotten its name from "Spanish Anarchist" movements of the same name. Swadesh suggests that Spanish migration to New Mexico in the early twentieth century may have exposed Tierra Amarilla's residents to methods of violent resistance, and they in turn, adopted it for their own purposes.<sup>3</sup> A more recent study by Frederico A. Reade reveals a tenuous, but possible connection to a *mano negra* movement in northern Mexico,<sup>4</sup> while others have suggested an association with prohibition era bootlegging and other criminal activity in northern New Mexico.<sup>5</sup>

A cursory review of local newspapers during the first decades of the twentieth century makes it clear that the term "black hand" was in common use nationwide well before the label was applied to the *mano negra* in Tierra Amarilla. In 1908, for example, the *Santa Fe New Mexican* carried reports of the criminal activities of "black hand" societies in the Italian neighborhoods of New Orleans.<sup>6</sup> The following summer, the paper reported the arrest and trials of members of an "Italian Black Hand Society" in West Virginia and Ohio.<sup>7</sup>

By the second decade of the twentieth century, newspapers in the region were reporting criminal activity attributed to various "hand" organizations within New Mexico itself. In the spring of 1914, the *Santa Fe New Mexican* printed a letter attributed to "The Red Hand, The Black Hand, The Fuse Hand." This mysterious group was reportedly behind a letter sent to Governor William McDonald that threatened to blow up several public buildings in Santa Fe.<sup>8</sup> The threats made by this anonymous coalition of "hands" were a response to the March 31, 1914 lynching of Adolfo Padilla while he was being held in the Santa Fe County jail, charged with the murder of his wife. The letter vehemently criticized the inability of local law enforcement to prosecute criminals and threatened to blow up the "court house, federal building [and] the capitol" if those who lynched Padilla were not brought to justice.<sup>9</sup> Clearly, the residents of Tierra Amarilla did not invent the name *mano negra*. Considering the association of such a name with the activities described in the *Santa Fe New Mexican* and other newspapers of the time, whoever appropriated the term for local use in Tierra Amarilla could not have failed to understand the implications of using this name and the ominous image it projected.

Tierra Amarilla is today known principally because of events associated with the infamous courthouse raid of 1967 and other more recent land grant activism in this northern New Mexico enclave. However, despite Tierra Amarilla's long and sometimes notorious history of protest associated with the loss of the Mexican-period land grant of the same name, there is no evidence of violence or other activism of this type in the region until the second decade of the twentieth

century. During the late nineteenth century, while the *gorras blancas*, or white caps, waged their campaign of political activism and fence cutting in northeast New Mexico, Tierra Amarilla was extraordinarily quiet. So quiet, in fact, that in 1891, pioneering archaeologist and historian, Adolph Bandelier, was prompted to comment on the silence.

In 1891, Bandelier was employed by Thomas B. Catron, who owned the Tierra Amarilla grant and was desperately seeking a buyer for the heavily mortgaged property. In August of that year, Bandelier undertook one of his frequent sojourns into the New Mexican countryside and walked from Santa Fe to Tierra Amarilla to record the grant's resources for his employer. Bandelier was clearly impressed. "Catron's grant [is] a most valuable piece of property, a little kingdom of its own," he noted in his journal. Bandelier then added, "There is no trouble to be apprehended from the people [of Tierra Amarilla], unless there should be a leader."<sup>10</sup> This statement was clearly designed to assuage concerns potential buyers may have had about civil unrest and whether the influence of the *gorras blancas* extended to Rio Arriba.

The history of the Tierra Amarilla Land Grant is well documented and will not be discussed here in detail. In 1832, the Mexican government made a community grant of that name to Manuel Martínez, his sons, and a number of individuals from the Abiquiu region. In 1856, after New Mexico became a territory of the United States, Francisco Martínez, Manuel Martínez' son, applied to the United States Surveyor General for confirmation of the grant as a private grant. Through a series of machinations we are now only beginning to understand, the United States Congress confirmed the grant to Francisco Martínez as a private grant in 1860.

Sale of interests and land speculation within the grant began almost immediately after it was confirmed by Congress. By 1880, Thomas B. Catron had purchased all the Martínez interests in the grant and assumed ownership of the entire grant after the United States Congress issued a patent for the grant to Francisco Martínez in February 1881. Two years later, Catron filed suit to quiet title to the grant, exempting, or excluding, a number of "informal conveyances of some very small pieces of land." These parcels, known as the "Catron exclusions," were the individual allotments made by Francisco Martínez to more than one hundred individuals who settled the grant after 1860. Martínez also issued *hijuelas*, or deeds, to these individuals. These documents stipulated the typical Spanish and Mexican period rights that gave settlers free use of the grant's common lands and resources.

Even before Catron received quiet title to the grant, he began to develop its vast natural resources. He leased right of way to the Denver and Rio Grande Railway, sold rights to the coalmines and massive pine forests in the region, and leased its lush pastures to large cattle companies.<sup>11</sup> During this period, however, there is little evidence Catron aggressively curtailed Tierra Amarilla settlers from grazing their personal livestock on the traditional common lands of the grant. In reality, Catron had no practical way to prevent them from doing so and concentrated instead on expanding the timber and mining operations in the region made possible by arrival of the railroad in

1881. These enterprises brought prosperity to Tierra Amarilla during the 1880s and 1890s, and as long as local residents had access to grazing for their small herds and flocks, the nuances of legal ownership of the grant were apparently not an important issue.

In fact, Catron's political allies in the local press emphasized the extensive support Catron apparently enjoyed in the region. An article in the November 2, 1892 issue of *The Daily New Mexican* reported a "rousing" political rally held at Tierra Amarilla during Catron's campaign for a seat to the U.S. Congress. Catron apparently used the rally to respond to some unspecified "slanders" that had been "heaped upon him in respect to the Tierra Amarilla grant settlers." According to the *New Mexican* article, Catron's speech was received with "deafening applause" when he used the occasion to affirm "the amiable relations existing between himself and the grant settlers."

This amiable relationship changed radically when Catron finally succeeded in selling the grant to the Arlington Land Company in 1909. The new owners continued the practice of selling timber and mineral rights to various companies, but also sold large tracts of the grant to corporations and individual buyers, many of whom further subdivided the land. When these new owners began to fence off portions of the grant adjacent to established communities, they initiated a process that began to severely restrict access to the pasture, firewood, timber and water on which most settlers depended for their livelihood. These actions eliminated the principal reason why there is little indication of organized resistance or protest to Catron's purchase and ownership of the Tierra Amarilla grant. Up to this point, Tierra Amarilla's settlers had been able to access pasture for their livestock and utilize the grant's resources for limited personal use.

Despite this general lack of opposition, there were challenges to Catron's control of the grant after he obtained quiet title to the property. In 1889, a number of residents of the grant filed a suit against Catron. The plaintiffs, however, did not question Catron's ownership or make access to land an issue. Instead, they cited the stipulations of the original Mexican grant and the individual *hijuelas*, or deeds, issued to settlers by Francisco Martínez, and asked the court to order Catron to share the proceeds he was receiving from leases and sale of timber and mineral rights. The few extant records of this case tell little beyond the fact of its dismissal in April 1892.<sup>12</sup>

Although there is little evidence Catron moved aggressively against grant settlers who grazed their livestock, he occasionally acted to counteract other perceived threats to his ownership. In 1892, he filed suit against Miguel Chávez and Pablo Rivas for allegedly pasturing their sheep on grant property. When Catron sought a restraining order to prevent them from using the land, Chávez and Rivas challenged him, claiming that while Catron may have been given a patent to the Tierra Amarilla Grant by the United States Government, they had a right to graze their sheep based on stipulations made by the Mexican government when the grant was made in 1832. Chávez and Rivas cited the *hijuelas* that allowed settlers "free and common" use of water, pasture, and other resources of the grant. They claimed to be doing nothing illegal by grazing their sheep

and asked the court to force Catron to produce proof of his ownership. The suit lingered in District Court for nearly a decade until it was finally dropped from the docket in 1902 without any action noted. The record shows only that Catron paid the court costs, which amounted to less than ten dollars for various filing fees.<sup>13</sup>

Why did Catron go after Chávez and Rivas when he tended to leave everyone else alone? The scant District Court case file provides few clues, but part of the answer may lie in the fact that Miguel Chávez was not a typical Tierra Amarilla settler. He was a wealthy merchant and moneylender with extensive real estate holdings in Rio Arriba and Santa Fe. Catron apparently did not object strenuously when settlers grazed a few sheep, but he did vigorously oppose any efforts by someone with Chávez' resources to gain a foothold in the grant. Chávez and Rivas may have been perceived as potential leaders that had to be suppressed, if not by force, at least through the ponderous civil litigation at which Catron was a master.

These litigations also reflect the longstanding political enmity between Catron and the principals in these suits. Jacob H. Crist and N. B. Laughlin, the attorneys who represented Chávez and Rivas, were Catron's bitter political enemies. Crist and Laughlin had represented the Tierra Amarilla settlers in the previously mentioned 1889 suit that had sought to force Catron to disclose and share the revenues he was receiving from the grant. Neither of these cases were resolved in court and both were dropped for reasons not reflected in the scant case files. It seems clear from this activity that most Tierra Amarilla residents were aware of Catron's ownership and exploitation of the grant. Adolph Bandelier's statement quoted earlier implies as much. Bandelier did not say people were unaware, only that no leadership had surfaced that might have galvanized protests or other such activity.

Is this lack of leadership the principal reason why there is so little indication of grass root protest about what was happening to the grant? There is no doubt that in that age of robber barons and powerful patrones, the development of effective leadership among the settlers of the Tierra Amarilla could easily have been thwarted by the political and economic control exerted in Rio Arriba by Catron's political allies. In Tierra Amarilla, these would have included men such as Thomas D. Burns and Edward Sargent, both of whom had significant interests within the grant. Additional allies included Wilmot E. Broad, Catron's resident agent for the grant, and certainly, the powerful and influential Gallegos and Jaramillo families into which Burns married.<sup>14</sup>

A principal factor in this process was Catron's apparent ability to placate local residents with assurances that although he owned the grant, he would honor the stipulations in the settler's *hijuelas* and allow them access to the grant's pastures, water, and timber. What form these assurances took is a mystery, but every indication is that as long as Catron owned the grant, local residents were not aggressively denied access to common lands. It is possible that Catron reminded them of his generosity during his November 1892 speech at Tierra Amarilla.

Indications that Catron made such assurances to the settlers emerge in 1919, a decade after he sold the grant. That year, the first evidence of violent protest to land loss in Tierra Amarilla makes its way into the documentary record. We can only speculate why it took ten years after the sale of the grant for protests to galvanize and surface,

but the timing may have been a factor of how long it took the various new owners to fence off enough of the common lands to severely impact resident's ability to graze their livestock and access firewood. As noted earlier, large scale fencing in the region began in earnest soon after Catron sold the grant. This fencing may have even progressed significantly by the time the United States entered the Great War in 1917. The war and subsequent enlistment of many of the region's young men in the armed forces likely served to delay reaction to the fencing until the war had ended.

In August 1919, a significant stretch of fences erected by George Becker and H. L. Hall near Enseñada, two miles north of Tierra Amarilla, was destroyed. *El Nuevo Estado*, the local newspaper, did not identify the perpetrators, but described them as being the same individuals who had previously posted some warning notes signed "*La Ley Secreta*" and "*La Mano Negra*" at various locations.<sup>15</sup> The newspaper does not elaborate on what these previous occasions had been, or the contents of the notes, but this report is the earliest documented instance of such activity attributed to the infamous secret organization of the "black hand" in Tierra Amarilla.

George Becker's fences were targeted again the following spring. Reports in *El Nuevo Estado* do not provide specific dates for these incidents, or the actual amount of damage done, but the stories describe what became the *modus operandi* of black hand activities. According to the paper, they "cut all the strands of wire at each post, and in many places, the posts themselves were broken or pulled out." The paper was indignant about these activities, and noted that although no suspects had been identified in this latest outbreak of fence cutting, they were confident "that some day... these malicious wrongdoers [would] be brought to justice."<sup>16</sup>

The only official report of an investigation into these incidents was submitted to Governor Octaviano Larrazolo by New Mexico Mounted Police officer J. Alcario Montoya on May 28, 1920. Montoya was sent to Tierra Amarilla earlier that month on an undercover assignment. Posing as a livestock buyer, Montoya and another officer identified only as "Miguel," spend several frustrating days in the region attempting to determine who had been responsible for the fence cutting.

"At that place," Montoya reported, "the people conduct themselves like Pueblo Indians. No one saw anything or knows anything!" Consequently, the scant information he obtained was from the landowners whose fences had been cut. He did manage to find out that a group of mounted men was seen riding between Tierra Amarilla and Canjilon the night Hall and Becker's fences were cut, but the identities and destination of these men remained unknown. This led Montoya to speculate that the residents of Enseñada might not have been directly involved.

Hoping to learn more about what was going on, Montoya managed to get himself into a game of poker in one of the neighboring towns. During the course of the game, one of the card payers commented that Hall and Becker had threatened to bring police and detectives to the area to capture and punish certain individuals. Sensing an opportunity to find out more about the issue, Montoya inquired why these men made such threats. "Because they are stealing land from the people through fraud and pretext of buying it," one responded, "and they are fencing everything, even the yards of their

homes...They have not even left a place where one can pasture a goat."

When Montoya asked why people would break the law and risk arrest instead of taking legal action, one of the card players responded, "Because they are all poor and justice must be bought." Then another brought the conversation to an end by stating, "We believe what they are doing is the best way, and I think the people will repeat their actions if the fences are rebuilt." Montoya left Tierra Amarilla shortly afterwards, certain his identity had been discovered and that the conversation at the card table had been for his benefit.

Montoya's report to Governor Larrazolo makes no mention of the *mano negra* or *la ley secreta* alluded to in the *El Nuevo Estado* story of the previous year. Montoya did say he knew more than he had included in his written report, but that he would elaborate when he saw the governor in person.<sup>17</sup> Unfortunately, if they discussed the issue privately, no documentation exists of what else officer Montoya discovered or recommended.

A month later, a series of events prompted Governor Larrazolo to take further action. The first was two letters he received from George Becker. The letters themselves are not in the governor's official files, but reference to them in other correspondence leaves no doubt Becker complained loud and clear about a lack of action against the individuals who had cut his fences.<sup>18</sup> Larrazolo also received a note from New Mexico Mounted Police Captain A. A. Sena, who informed him that Sergeant Rafael G. Lucero had sent a telegram from Tierra Amarilla. Sergeant Lucero apparently asked if two additional officers could be assigned to the area and implied Becker had offered to pay the officers' expenses. But the governor was wary. He feared the presence of more officers in the region would aggravate the situation and prohibited Sena from sending any more men to Tierra Amarilla.<sup>19</sup>

In the meantime, a delegation from Enseñada visited Santa Fé to speak to the governor on behalf of area residents. No written record of this visit has surfaced, but in a subsequent letter, Larrazolo identifies Seferino Duran as the spokesman for the group. Duran apparently told the governor that when Thomas B. Catron sold the grant, he assured them he had made provisions that allowed them customary access to pasture for their livestock and the right to remove firewood for domestic use. Duran further claimed it was their understanding this included the lands Becker and others had purchased near Enseñada. Duran insisted Catron himself could verify the claim.<sup>20</sup>

Larrazolo advised Duran that he had personally spoken to Catron and others about the property. However, he also noted that they all denied knowledge of any rights that had been reserved for the area residents. Unable to form an opinion as to the legal rights of either party, Larrazolo suggested Duran and his neighbors consider purchasing the land from Becker. If they could not purchase the land, he suggested they try to reach an understanding that would enable them to live in peace as good neighbors.

The same day Governor Larrazolo wrote to Duran, he also sent a long letter to George Becker detailing his feelings on the "unpleasant situation" which existed between Becker and the residents of Enseñada. Larrazolo suggested Becker attempt to reach a "mutual understanding" with his neighbors and reviewed the historical precedent by which New Mexicans had access to "*pasteos comunes*," or common pastures. This practice,

Larrazolo noted, had been in place for hundreds of years, until "the courts commenced to decide otherwise...in conformity with American laws, usages and practices." Larrazolo agreed Becker had the right to prevent others from using the land if he had legal title to it, but added, there was "an element of moral excuse, though not a legal right, for the people of Enseñada, when they claim a privilege to so use the land in dispute in this case." Then Governor Larrazolo directed a blunt question to Becker,

Which of the two courses would be more prudent to follow? For you to unconditionally insist upon and seek to enforce your legal rights, and thus to incur the unfriendly disposition of all the people of that community and live in constant trouble, litigation and bad blood with them, which condition in the long run may result in serious and fatal consequences, or to seek and arrive at a friendly adjustment of your difficulty with them, and in that way live in peace, in harmony and fraternal good will among yourselves. It is for you, and for you alone, to decide that question;<sup>21</sup>

Governor Larrazolo then offered to mediate the dispute, an offer that was quickly accepted by Becker and representatives of the group from Enseñada. On July 22, Larrazolo notified both parties he expected to be in Tierra Amarilla on August 3, and made arrangements to spend the night with Henry Abeyta, an old friend and merchant in nearby Los Ojos (Park View).<sup>22</sup> A week later, however, citing "unlooked for circumstances," the governor abruptly canceled the meeting.<sup>23</sup>

Governor Larrazolo's records provide no explanation for this sudden change of plans. His correspondence and the *Governor's Executive Record* seem to show a decrease in official activity during the first days of August, but subsequent correspondence does not show any effort to reschedule the meeting. Despite Larrazolo's apparent good faith effort to mediate the situation, his cancellation left a lingering mistrust in Tierra Amarilla. Decades later, the feeling persists that the governor had sold out. When Audoro Chávez, a respected life-long resident from Enseñada recalled these events half a century later, he sadly noted the time when, according to local tradition, "*compraron a Octaviano Larrazolo, Burns y los otros*."<sup>24</sup>

Quiet seems to have prevailed in Tierra Amarilla for a time, and reports of fence cutting and other destruction of property do not surface again until the Spring of 1924. As in the past, George Becker's fences were among the principal targets. Some barns and haystacks of other individuals were also burned, and proclamations that threatened a number of prominent residents in the region were reportedly posted on telephone poles and buildings. No originals of these proclamations have survived, but the awkwardly worded or poorly translated text of one was forwarded to Governor James F. Hinkle by Kenneth A. Heron of Rutheron. This particular poster, allegedly posted in Chama the night of April 28, 1924, is a tirade against Thomas D. Burns Jr. Heron's accompanying letter warned Governor Hinkle that "these parties...are burning, destroying and threatening the lives of all the Americans and natives of American sympathies in the valley."

#### Notice to Night or Day Watchers

Notice is hereby given to all watchers that they must watch their own business and leave the big (Whale T. D.) alone for he is the cause of all this doings.

Now mind this you watchers for we know

who they are and we know every step you make, they blame only the poor mexicans (sic) for all this doings, it is not so, there are members from every nationality, for there are Americans, mexicans (sic), Spaniards, Indians, and every kind of good citizens that want to defent (sic) the justice of the poor people. For we know that now a days there is no justice on the courts for the poor...You know who manage (sic) the courts...<sup>25</sup>  
(Signed) Kx. Kx. Kx.

It is not possible to determine if this "notice" is authentic or an attempt by the region's large land owners (of which Heron was one) to discredit the *mano negra* by implying an association with the Ku Klux Klan or its methods. It is also important to note that the words *mano negra* do not appear in any of the reports or correspondence related to this latest series of incidents. Instead, these latest incidents were generally attributed to "night riders," a term that continued in use for several years during episodic recurrence of similar activities. These events of late 1920s and early 1930s are further confused by the memoirs of New Mexico State Police Officer Bill Martin, who used the term *mano negra* as synonymous with the activities of several criminals and bootleggers who operated in Rio Arriba County during this period.<sup>26</sup>

There are no reported activities that can be clearly identified as related to land grant protests in Tierra Amarilla for the entire decade of the 1930s. But suddenly, on the night of June 25, 1940, nearly twenty miles of "four strand barbed wire" was cut at several locations throughout the grant. George Becker's fences were once again targeted, although much of the destruction concentrated on new fences erected near Chama and at Kenneth A. Heron's property west of the Chama River near Los Ojos.<sup>27</sup>

State Police Lieutenant J. P. Roach was sent to investigate this most recent outbreak. His report specifically attributed the fence cutting to the "apparent revival of the Black Hand gang, commonly known as the Tierra Amarilla Organization." Lt. Roach, however, failed to identify any suspects, and reported that "public sentiment as a whole is much in favor of the offenders." Roach concluded that subdivision and fencing of lands were "the basic cause for the present trouble." His report continued:

"The people feel as though the land belongs to them, and should not be fenced. They are living under the illusion that years ago the Tierra Amarilla Grant was disposed of by the Grant owners to Col. Catron without the heir's or relatives consent. Colonel Catron, in turn, disposed of parts of the Grant to individuals with a verbal permit to them to use adjoining lands for their grazing and wood provilages (sic - emphasis added)."<sup>28</sup>

Once again, Catron's alleged assurances surface. When Lt. Roach investigated this latest incidence of fence cutting, more than thirty years had passed since Catron had sold the grant in 1909. Yet, a full generation after the first outbreak of fence cutting was reported in 1919, the memory of Catron's long-broken promise obviously lingered. As in all previous incidents, this 1940 investigation produced no suspects. It is noteworthy that Lt. Roach's report contains the only official use of the term "black hand," or *mano negra*, in association with this type of activity in the Tierra Amarilla Grant. It is also interesting that none of these reports mentioned the trademark signature attributed to the *mano negra* by tradition and anecdote - a black hand print left behind wherever they struck.

Following the 1940 outbreak of fence cutting, national and international

affairs once again interfered with further developments. After World War II, there appears to have been a lull in these activities except for a few incidents of fence cutting and haystack burning reported in the 1950s and early 1960s. This restless slumber was broken on June 5, 1967, by the incident that has become known as the Tierra Amarilla Courthouse Raid. Significantly, this infamous courthouse raid was the first time people were injured during land grant protest activity in the Tierra Amarilla. Before 1967, fences, haystacks and a few buildings had been the only victims of the *mano negra* and subsequent land grant activism.

Despite the periodic outbreak of violence in Tierra Amarilla and persistent association of the *mano negra* with these events, the black hand in northern New Mexico remains an enigma. A strong oral tradition continues to credit the *mano negra* with much more than the activities described in the public record. However, there also remains a strong sense of secrecy about the organization, its origins and its membership. The few persons who have studied this phenomenon seem to have written very little because they left feeling a little like Mounted Police Officer J. Alcario Montoya in 1920 and State Police Lieutenant Roach in 1940. The only thing certain both of these officers found was that in Tierra Amarilla, people saw nothing, knew nothing, and said little about the *mano negra* to outsiders.

Ironically, my own research revealed little beyond what Montoya and Roach reported. Clearly, more extensive and sensitive research is necessary to explain and understand this extraordinary phenomenon. Future study may determine how the leadership of this enigmatic group developed, more about the motives for their actions and how they were organized. When and if such can be accomplished, we can then better understand the respect and admiration with which the *mano negra* is remembered and why the persons who sustain this memory make it clear they know much more than they care to share. We may one day come to understand why it seems that residents of Tierra Amarilla wait patiently, their wire cutters at the ready, for the mysterious call to gather and take their revenge on the entity that gave rise to the saying:

"cuando llegó el alambre,  
también llegó el hambre."<sup>29</sup>

#### Endnotes:

1. For purposes of this essay, the reader should note that Tierra Amarilla does not historically refer to the present-day village of that name. Instead, it refers to the region encompassed by the Tierra Amarilla Land Grant and its original communities of Los Ojos, La Puente, Los Brazos, Enseñada, and Las Nutritas. Las Nutritas' name was changed to Tierra Amarilla when the Rio Arriba County seat was moved there in 1880. Chapter XXXIV, *Local and Special Laws [of New Mexico]*, 1884.
2. Rosenbaum and Larson, "Mexicano Resistance to the Expropriation of Land Grants in New Mexico," in Charles L. Briggs and John R. Van Ness, Eds. *Land, Water, and Culture* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1987), p. 295, 306. Rosenbaum delves further into the concept of "Social Bandits" in *Mexicano Resistance in the Southwest* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981). For a discussion of the *gorras blancas*, see Anselmo Arellano, "The Never-Ending Land Grant Struggle," *La Herencia del Norte* (Summer 1996) pp. 15-17. The use of non-violent political protest during this period is described by Phillip B. Gonzales, "La Junta de Indignación: Hispano Repertoire of Collective Protest in New Mexico, 1884-1933," *Western Historical Quarterly* XXXI: 2 (Summer 2000): 161-186.
3. Frances Leon Swadesh, *Los Primeros Pobladores* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1974), pp. 157, 231. The

term anarchist does not often appear in the annals of New Mexico history, but in 1910, reports of a threat made to Flavio Chaves of San Acacio by "La Sociedad Anarquista" were filed with the New Mexico Mounted Police. The contents of the letter are not revealed in this report, but it was referred to the U. S. Postal Inspectors office in Denver for investigation. Fred Fornoff to Flavio Chaves, March 14, 1910; Chaves to Fornoff, March 15, 1910; Fornoff to Chaves, March 18, 1910; and C. Rhuiet (?) to Fornoff, March 18, 1910. Territorial Archives of New Mexico: New Mexico Mounted Police, Letters Sent, 1905-1911. New Mexico State Records Center and Archives, Santa Fe, NM (SRCA). It should also be noted that some observers felt Tierra Amarilla's residents had "turned Bolshevik" due to their perceived disrespect for law and opposition to those who had purchased large tracts of land in the area. B. C. Hernandez to J. M. C. Chavez (sic), Jr., July 17, 1923. J. C. Chaves Papers, Newberry Library, Chicago, Illinois. Microfilm at SRCA.

4. Frederico Antonio Reade, Jr., "Tierra y Justicia" (Master's Thesis, The University of New Mexico, 1992): 27.
5. Richard Gardner, *iGrito!* (New York: The Bobbs Merrill Company, Inc., 1970), p. 76. Gardner's statement appears to be based solely on the coincidence that the activities of the *mano negra* and boot legging took place during the same era. Rosenbaum and Larson also say the organization was involved in bootlegging, but they cite Gardner as their source for this information. Rosenbaum and Larson, p. 295.
6. *Santa Fe New Mexican*, June 17, 1908.
7. *Santa Fe New Mexican*, June 8 and June 9, 1909.
8. "The Black Hand Gets in the Game," April 1, 1914, and "Black Hand Made No Threat Against Governor McDonald," April 3, 1915, *Santa Fe New Mexican*.
9. "Wife-Murderer Taken From Jail and Stabbed to Death by Mob," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, March 31, 1914.
10. Charles H. Lange, Carroll L. Riley and Elizabeth L. Riley, *The Southwest Journals of Adolph F. Bandelier, 1889 - 1892* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984) p. 155. Also see Robert J. Tórréz, "From Bandelier's Journal: A Walk Through Rio Arriba," *iSalsa!* (August 1992): 6-7.
11. For more details on the fascinating history of the Tierra Amarilla Land Grant, see Malcolm Ebright, *The Tierra Amarilla Grant: A History of Chicanery* (Santa Fe: Center for Land Grant Studies, 1980); Robert J. Tórréz "La Merced de Tierra Amarilla: A Short History," in Anselmo Arellano, *La Tierra Amarilla: The People of the Chama Valley* (Tierra Amarilla: Chama Valley Public Schools, 1982) pp. 32-41; and Robert J. Tórréz, "The Tierra Amarilla Land Grant: A Case Study in the Editing of Land Grant Documents," *Southwest Heritage* (Fall 1983 / Winter 1984): 2-16. Catron's biography is found in Victor Westphall, *Thomas Benton Catron and His Era* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1973).
12. Theodore Seth, Manuel Romero, Juan Trujillo, et. al. vs. Thomas B. Catron, Rio Arriba County Civil #422, Rio Arriba County District Court Records, SRCA.
13. Thomas D. Catron vs. Miguel Chavez and Pablo Rivas, Rio Arriba County Civil #490, Rio Arriba District Court Records, SRCA.
14. Burns' life is described in Robert J. Tórréz, "El Borne: La Tierra Amarilla and T.D. Burns," *New Mexico Historical Review* 56:2 (April 1981): 161-175. Burns' influence in the region cannot be underestimated. A few years after Burns died in 1916, Benigno C. Hernandez, a prominent Hispano leader, lamented his passing and blamed some of the problems in Tierra Amarilla on the absence of his leadership and apparent heavy hand. In a letter to J. C. Chávez, Hernandez noted that Burns "[K]new how to deal with those people. They liked him and realized that when it was necessary to

punish troublemakers, he did so firmly." Hernandez to Chavez, July 17, 1923. A glimpse of Broad can be found in Robert J. Tórréz, "The Town That Wasn't," *New Mexico Magazine* 72:10 (October 1994): 20-25, and Tórréz, "Park View: A Chicago Agricultural Colony in Northern New Mexico," *New Mexico Historical Review* 76:2 (April 2001): 175-188.

15. *El Nuevo Estado*, Tierra Amarilla, New Mexico, August 11, 1919. Becker and Hall were T. D. Burns' sons-in-law.
16. "Cortan los Cercos Otra Vez," *El Nuevo Estado*, April 26, 1920. Translation from the Spanish by the author.
17. J. Alcario Montoya to Governor Octaviano A. Larrazolo, May 28, 1920. Octaviano A. Larrazolo Official Papers: Correspondence, Letters Received, 1920. Governors Papers, SRCA. Translation by the author.
18. Larrazolo to George R. Becker, July 2 and July 13, 1920. Larrazolo Official Papers: Correspondence, Letters Sent, 1920. Governors Papers, SRCA.
19. A. A. Sena to Governor Larrazolo, June 28, 1920 and July 12, 1920. Larrazolo Official Papers: Correspondence, Letters Received, 1920; Larrazolo to Sena, July 13, 1920. Letters Sent, 1920. SRCA. Mounted Police Captain A. A. Sena, in his Report of the Captain of the Mounted Police of the State of New Mexico, for the years 1919 and 1920, reported he and three officers had been in Rio Arriba County "a number of days" in July 1919 and January 1920 to investigate and "finally stopping an extensive campaign of fence cutting" in that region. These may have been the initial incidents reported earlier by *El Nuevo Estado*, but Sena's report is not specific. New Mexico Mounted Police, 1920. SRCA.
20. Larrazolo to Seferino Duran, July 2, 1920. Letters Sent, 1920. SRCA.
21. Larrazolo to Becker, July 2, 1920. Letters Sent, 1920. SRCA.
22. Larrazolo to Seferino Duran, July 16 and July 22, 1920; Larrazolo to Becker, July 16 and July 22, 1920; Larrazolo to Henry Abeyta, July 22, 1920. Letters Sent, 1920. SRCA.
23. Larrazolo to Becker, et. al., July 30, 1920. Letters Sent, 1920. SRCA.
24. Translation: "Octaviano Larrazolo was bought by Burns and the others." Author's personal interview with Mr. Audoro Chavez, Enseñada, New Mexico, October 8, 1976.
25. "Notice to Night or Day Watchers," enclosure with Kenneth Heron to Governor James F. Hinkle, April 29, 1924; Emma Burns Becker to Governor Hinkle, April 24, 1924. James F. Hinkle Official Papers: Special Issues, Violence in Rio Arriba County. Governors Papers, SRCA.
26. Bill Martin and Molly Radford Martin, Bill Martin, American (Caldwell: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1959) p. 135.
27. "Riders Terrorize Rio Arriba," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, July 18, 1940; "Tierra Amarilla y los Vandalos de la Mano Negra," *El Nuevo Méjicano*, July 25, 1940.
28. Report of Lt. J. P. Roach, June 5 - June 25, 1940. John E. Miles Official Papers: Correspondence, State Police, 1939-1942. Governors Papers, SRCA.
29. Translation: "When the [barbed] wire arrived, so did hunger." RJT

Robert J. Tórréz of Albuquerque will present a version of this paper at the HSNM 2006 Annual Conference. He retired in December 2000 as the New Mexico State Historian and is a Past President of the Historical Society of New Mexico. In the November 2001 (No. 55) issue of *La Crónica de Nuevo México* he wrote "Capital Punishment in New Mexico". He has written *UFOs Over Galisteo and Other Stories of New Mexico's History*, published by UNM Press.

## Letter from the Editors

This issue of *La Crónica de Nuevo México*, April 2006 (No. 67) is our annual conference issue. Whenever possible, we attempt to include articles which relate to the conference, as to its content and location. You may recall that for the 2005 Conference, we published "New Mexico's Wine Industry" by Paul Kraemer, a paper he presented. We also featured an article about the buffalo drive of 1955, which related to the history of Clayton, where we held our conference.

In this issue you will find articles by two of our presenters. Robert Tórréz has written about "La Mano Negra" and R. B. Brown tells us about itinerant painter León Trouset. Ann Carson will speak about Huning Highlands in Albuquerque and she will conduct a tour of that historic district. An article about her house is included in this issue. Bill Dunmire will be speaking about Spanish Colonial gardens. A review of his book "Gardens of New Spain" is included in this issue. We hope you will find the articles about Albuquerque's Public Art Collection entertaining and informative. *CCL and RRH*

# León Troussel: An Itinerant Painter in New Mexico

continued from page 3...

In two views of a Mexican textile factory owned by Mexicans and Germans, Troussel displays both the Mexican and the German flags. And so, it is not surprising that we see the Stars and Stripes hanging from the flag pole in Albuquerque.

In 1908, some nine years after his last known work, *The Río Grande Republican* carried the following article:

"Painting of Las Cruces in the Early Days

Las Cruces, N.M., June 6 - Hanging on the north wall of the Palmilla club on Main Street, is an oil painting of old Las Cruces in the days of the cattle wars and gun men. It was painted by T. L. Trousett (sic), the old artist whose has painted a number of scenes in and around El Paso and Juarez, including the full length picture of hidalgo, the Mexican liberator, that hangs in the Juarez city hall. The painting of Las Cruces is about 3½ by 5 feet and was painted in 1887. It is done in colors and is as bright and fresh today as the day it was painted. The foreground of the historic old picture shows the Santa Fe depot, the same old one that is still doing service, with an A. T. & S. F. freight car being unloaded into a mountain wagon. A wagonette is just going away from the station with a load of passengers. The new court house is surrounded by a waste tract of land, the only building near it is the old jail on the rear of the court house lot.

On the square where the W. I. A. park is now located, a cow puncher sits on his horse watching a handful of long horn cattle grazing nearby. A small clump of adobe houses mark where Las Cruces avenue first got its start, and over the roofs of these can be seen the towers of San Genevieve church with its twin crosses shining in the sun. Further down Main street the building now occupied by the Las Cruces Realty company can be seen, the remainder of the street being adobe buildings."

## Bibliography

Chalmers, Claudine (2001)

*Splendide Californie: French Artists' Impressions of the Golden State, 1786 - 1900*, California Historical Society, San Francisco, CA

Beckett, Pat H. (2003) *Las Cruces, New Mexico 1881: As Seen by her Newspapers*, Coas Publishing and Research Co., Las Cruces, NM

Kiser, Bill: *New Mexico Trade Tokens Las Cruces NM: Kiser* (2004)

Kluck, Frederick, (2002) "Leon Troussel: Nineteenth Century French Painter of Texas and Northern Mexico," paper presented to the Texas State Historical Association Annual Meeting, 7-9 March, 2002, El Paso, TX

## Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Jorge Alvarez Compeán, Robin Arney, Claudine Chalmers, Pat Beckett, Dennis Daily, Rick Hendricks, Nicolas Houser, Billy Kiser, Frederick Kluck, J. Sam Moore and Nikki Silva for sharing their knowledge and their continued support.

A version of this article presented at the 2006 Historical Society Annual Conference. RBB

Roy B. Brown studied archaeology and anthropology at the University of Arizona and has worked largely in northern Mexico. The need to find illustrations for archaeological reports planted the seed that has led him to study nineteenth century travelers, artists and photographers such as Adolph Wislizenus, Thomas Moran, Ben Wittick, Philipp Rondé and León Troussel. He has published numerous articles, chapters and books, both in English and Spanish, covering different aspects of archaeology, history, paleontology and anthropology. He is a member of a number of local, national and international professional organizations. He is Head of the Anthropology Section of the Texas Academy of Science and International Liaison Officer of CARTA: The Camino Real Trail Association.

## Books:

### Gardens of New Spain: How Mediterranean Plants and Foods Changed America

by William W. Dunmire

Illustrated by Evangeline L. Dunmire

375 pp.; notes, bibliography, and index.

Paperback \$24.95 cloth \$65.00

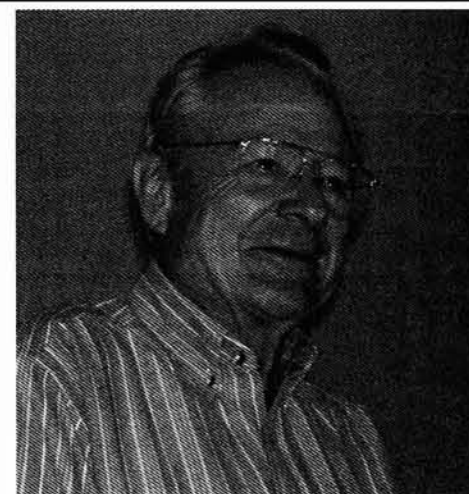
University of Texas Press, 2004

Review by Baker H. Morrow, FASLA

William W. Dunmire, the distinguished National Park Service naturalist and former superintendent of Carlsbad Caverns National Park, has written a thought-provoking account of the introduction of European plants into North America some five hundred years ago. Cherries appear here, along with grapes and wine, wheat and "flour" tortillas, dates and date palms from North Africa. So do our modern grazing animals - horses, sheep, cattle, and other familiar domestic livestock.

But Dunmire's enthusiasm for the cultivated plants of the Southwest and their history goes a great distance beyond simple plant introductions. The farming and gardening techniques employed by the Spaniards both in Iberia and the New World are key components of this book. "Water, of course, was the life blood that sustained farm operations," he says. He explains complex Spanish aqueduct construction in San Antonio, Texas, and Las Trampas, New Mexico; these sites respectively employed late Renaissance masonry and carpentry that adapted in ingenious ways to the conditions of the New World. And he notes that European food plants added "flavor and nutritional variety to the [Pueblo] diet," and that "cold-hardy Mediterranean plants such as wheat, garlic, onions, lettuce, and peas" could be planted in the off-months of the year, essentially doubling the production season for Puebloan foods.

Dunmire gives us an admirable history of Native American gardening in Mexico and the Southwest before the coming of the Europeans. In one instance, terrace farms in the Valley of Mexico prove to be so useful that they are still employed by the citizens of an ancient Aztec town. "One spectacular series of them can be found on a gentle hillside east of the city of Texcoco," he says. They are very productive of maguey and prickly pear, two of the multiple-use plants that so often characterize these early gardens of North America. You can eat their stems and



William W. "Bill" Dunmire author of "Gardens of New Spain" recipient of the Gaspar Perez de Villagra Award 2005

Photograph by Agnesa Reeve, August 2005

fruits, weave textiles or make sandals from their fibers, and perhaps enjoy the pungent liquor produced from a steady supply of fermented sap.

The Spanish introduction of orchards, vineyards, grazing pastures, physic gardens in courtyards, and dozens of new field crops on a continental scale makes for fascinating reading. "Juan [de] Oñate brought garbanzos to New Mexico in 1598, and broad beans made their appearance shortly thereafter," says Dunmire.

The history of the New World following the discoveries of Columbus in the late 1400s is perhaps most familiar to us through accounts of political and social change, or through detailed reviews of the subsequent development of art and architecture in the Americas. Bernal Diaz's *The Conquest of Mexico* and *Art and Revolution in Latin America* by David Craven come to mind. Dunmire's history takes a different tack: it looks at these past few centuries in North America from the standpoint of human sustenance and ongoing achievement in the production of food and cultivated plants. It is the only account of gardening practice to tackle the entire Southwest from California to Texas - not to mention the Republic of Mexico - in a comprehensive way.

*Gardens of New Spain* is unique in its cataloguing of widespread Native American accomplishment in plant cultivation and usage before the Conquest as well. Clearly written, compelling, and lively, it is a masterful piece of scholarship that very likely will become a Southwestern classic. BHM

## "Madonna of the Trail"

### Tribute to Pioneer Mothers

By Carleen C. Lazzell



"Madonna of the Trail"  
US Federal Courthouse  
Downtown Albuquerque

Photograph by Carleen Lazzell Marck 2006

Albuquerque is not unique in the fact that it has a "Madonna of the Trail" statue. The Daughters of the American Revolution, in the 1920s, decided to commemorate old roads and historic trails with statues of a pioneer woman. The project materialized as the "Madonna of the Trail," designed by Auguste Leimbach of St. Louis, an architectural sculptor. The ten-foot-tall statues were cast from cement made from Missouri granite (Algonite), which gave the statues a warm pinkish hue. In 1928, the DAR began to place them in 12 states.

"The Madonna of the Trail" depicts a pioneer woman clasping her baby with her young son clinging to her skirt. The sculptures themselves are of heroic proportions, 10' high with each weighing 5 tons. The base on which the figure stands is 6' high and weighs 12 tons. The base was then placed on a foundation, which was two feet above ground. The total height of the monument is 18 feet.

A dozen identical statues were dedicated during 1928 and 1929 in various locations throughout the United States.

Springfield, Ohio	July 4, 1928
Wheeling, West Virginia	July 7, 1928
Council Grove, Kansas	September 7, 1928
Lexington, Missouri	September 17, 1928
Lamar, Colorado	September 24, 1928
Albuquerque, New Mexico	September 27, 1928
Springerville, Arizona	September 29, 1928
Vandalia, Illinois	October 26, 1928
Richmond, Virginia	October 28, 1928
Washington County Pennsylvania	December 8, 1928
Upland, California	February 1, 1929
Bethesda, Maryland	Week of April 19, 1929

In 1928, Albuquerque's "Madonna of the Trail" was placed in McClelland Park just north of downtown, adjacent to Fourth

Street, then a segment of both El Camino Real and Route 66. At that time, the Albuquerque members of the Daughters of the American Revolution placed a "memory box" in the statue's base. In 1978, on the 50th anniversary of the dedication, the DAR held a ceremony and attempted to find the box, but were unsuccessful. In 1996, "The Madonna of the Trail" was removed from the park in preparation for clearing the site for the new federal courthouse. Workers who were bulldozing the park found the "memory box" buried by the statue's base. It contained newspaper clippings, two books and some ledgers.

Architect Charlene Brown was in charge of the restoration of the statue, which took several months. Brown had previously restored the Braden Memorial Fountain. After the completion of the Federal Courthouse, the "Madonna of the Trail" was placed on a site very near to where she had been in McClelland Park. Today, the Pete V. Domenici United States Federal Courthouse stands on the site of the former urban park.

The sculpture was rededicated on September 28, 1998, on its 60th anniversary. At that time, the "Madonna of the Trail" became part of the Albuquerque Public Art Collection. CCL



This Newspaper is published by  
**HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO**  
 P.O. Box 1912  
 Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504

**EDITOR**  
 Carleen C. Lazzell

**ASSOCIATE EDITOR**  
 Ronald R. Hadad

**OFFICERS**  
 Richard Melzer - President  
 Michael Stevenson - 1st Vice President  
 Kathryn Flynn - 2nd Vice President  
 John Ramsay - Treasurer  
 John Porter Bloom - Secretary

**DIRECTORS**  
 Jan Dodson Barnhart  
 Cecilia Jensen Bell  
 Ken Earle  
 Fred Friedman  
 René Harris  
 Carleen Lazzell  
 Margaret Espinosa McDonald  
 Estévan Rael-Gálvez  
 Agnesa Reeve  
 Rick Hendricks - Past President

The opinions expressed in signed articles are not necessarily those of the Historical Society of New Mexico. Mention of a product, service or professional in these columns is not to be considered an endorsement of that product, service or profession by the Historical Society of New Mexico. Printed by Tri-State Printing.

**www.hsnm.org**

**La Crónica**  
 de Nuevo México

Number 67

**HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO**  
 Post Office Box 1912  
 Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504

TO:

Non-Profit Organization  
**U.S. POSTAGE PAID**  
 Santa Fe, New Mexico  
 87501  
 Permit No. 95

## Other Examples of Albuquerque's Public Art Collection



*"The Tree of Life" by Beverley Magennis (1999)*  
 Photograph by Lynn Adkins March 2006

A large tiled sculpture "The Tree of Life" by Beverley Magennis (1999) is on the southeast corner of Montano and Fourth Street. This artwork recognizes the imagery of early cultures, which influenced peoples of New Mexico. The south side has black and white Mimbres animal designs. On the front are colorful images from the Mayan culture.



One sculpture of historical significance in this 300th anniversary of the founding of Albuquerque, is the bronze equestrian statue of "Don Francisco Cuervo y Valdes," by Buck McCain (1988) located at the corner of Romero Street and Rio Grande Boulevard. A water wall fountain and flowers serve as a backdrop for Governor Cuervo as he welcomes visitors to Old Town.

When the dedication of the Cuervo y Valdes statue took place approximately fifteen years ago, it was an impressive ceremony with several dignitaries attending. Historian Marc Simmons, author of *Albuquerque: A Narrative History* delivered the main address. The local television stations covered the big event.



*"Don Francisco Cuervo y Valdes, Founder of Albuquerque" by Buck McCain (1988)*  
 Photograph from cabq.gov



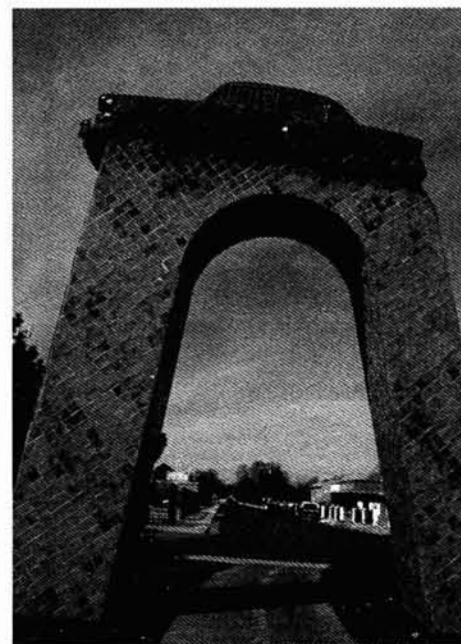
*"Wind and Rain" by William Moyers (1990)*  
 Albuquerque Museum  
 Photograph by Lynn Adkins, March 2006

Celebrating the "cowboy culture" of the state is a bronze sculpture titled "Wind and Rain" (1990) by well-known Western artist William Moyers. This was a purchase by the Albuquerque museum in 1989 and is placed prominently in front of the museum.



*"Dream of Flight" by Lincoln Fox (1989)*  
 Albuquerque Sunport  
 Photograph from coping.org

"Dream of Flight" 14 feet long and cantilevered 30 degrees so that it appears to fly above the ground as you walk toward the gates at the Albuquerque Sunport.



*"Cruising San Mateo" by Barbara Gyrgutis (1991)*  
 Photograph by Lynn Adkins March 2006

Probably one of the most recognizable and somewhat controversial sculptures is "Cruising San Mateo," more popularly known as "Chevy on a Stick," by Barbara Gyrgutis (1991) located on the northwest corner of San Mateo and Gibson boulevards. When this tiled sculpture of a '50s vintage Chevy was installed high on an arch, the public was in shock. Many had questions as to what it represented, such as is it a tribute to Route 66? Perhaps, because of the publicity it has garnered, the artwork may be one of Albuquerque's best-known public art pieces.



Please visit the Historical Society of New Mexico web site!  
**www.hsnm.org**