

# Follow the Royal Road

## Friends of El Camino Real Historic Trail Site

Volume 1, No. 1

Newsletter Published Quarterly

January 2016

### Recent Events at El Camino

It was a busy fall, with the Friends sponsoring and assisting with several events.

#### September 19 – Native New Mexico

The Trail Site welcomed dance groups from Pojoaque Pueblo and the Piro-Manso-Tiwa Tribe, as well as speakers, artisans, and crafts people who presented lectures, artwork, and demonstrations of traditional crafts. Our resident rangers Brad & Thomas fired up the new horno built by our friend Francisco “Pancho” Ochoa, and turned out wonderful bread, cookies, turnovers, and other delicious goodies for everyone to sample. It was a lovely, cool day (unlike last year’s blistering hot event!) and more than 200 visitors enjoyed the festivities.

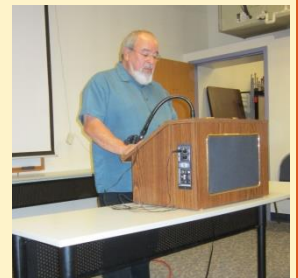


**Piro-Manso-Tiwa Dancers**

#### October 14 – Friends of El Camino Real Annual Meeting and 10th Anniversary Program & Celebration

The Friends hosted their 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Program at the Socorro Public Library, and attracted a full house of both members and guests. During a short business meeting the Friends took care of a few items, including affirming the new By-Laws for the organization and announcing Maria Smith-Vega’s appointment to fill the vacant position of Vice-President of the organization.

Then our speaker, noted genealogist and historian Francisco Sisneros, took the podium to introduce us to the outrageous antics of *Eusebio Durán y Chavez in the Court of King Charles III*. This persistent and evidently extremely irritating gentleman felt that he should be appointed to the important position of Alcalde of New Mexico, despite his total lack of qualifications—or political finesse. Our speaker’s lively and often amusing account of Eusebio’s trips to Spain (yes, multiple trips!) to unsuccessfully plead his case before the King, left the audience wanting to know much more about his fascinating adventures. It was a delightful and informative presentation, followed by delicious refreshments.



**Franciso Sisneros**



## **November 21 – El Camino Real Historic Trail Site Festival of the Trail and Tenth Anniversary Celebration**

It was another bright and beautiful day at the Trail Site, with many visitors coming to enjoy the museum and the special events. There were several excellent speakers, costumed historic reenactors, great music, and plenty of good food including more treats from the horno. Some nice items were raffled off for the benefit of Friends programs, and the Museum Store was bustling with lots of folks starting their early Christmas shopping.



*Spanish Soldier  
Ready for Action*

### **So, what's an horno? And why is there one at the Trail Site?**



Simply put, this is an horno (pronounced ór-no – accent on first syllable, h is silent)

Using native materials and working by hand, this horno was recently built here by Pancho Ochoa. It is a remarkable example of cross-cultural exchange and adaptation. Hornos have been used in the Southwest for hundreds of years, and are most commonly found in use to this day in Pueblo Indian villages in New Mexico and Arizona. In fact, many people believe they are indigenous here, but this is not the case. The concept of the outdoor baking oven was brought here by Spanish colonists, but they are not native to Spain either. They come from North Africa by way of the Moorish conquest and occupation of Spain for some 700 years. So, from North Africa to Spain to New Mexico by way of *El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro*, the horno survives into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

An horno is simple to use: A fire is built in it and allowed to burn for quite some time to heat the adobe walls, giving time for preparation of loaves of oven bread or other goodies. Once the oven is hot enough, the coals are scraped out and the food slides in to bake to a perfect golden brown goodness.

*Muchas Gracias, Pancho!*



## **December 20 – La Pastorela – The Shepherds' Story of the First Christmas**

Los Pastores de Belen performed this age-old Christmas story at the Garcia Opera House in Socorro. The story of the shepherds traveling to visit the Christ Child was brought to New Mexico by early settlers who traveled El Camino Real, bringing their traditions and music with them

from Mexico and Spain. The Friends have sponsored this free public event for a number of years, with the Bursum family



donating the use of the restored Opera House at no charge. The annual performance has now become a Socorro tradition, passed down from year to year to celebrate the Christmas season.



*More Event Photos on Page 5*



## The Garcia Opera House



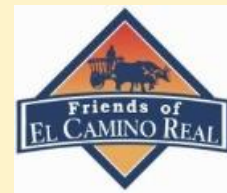
*Using the gold he had left her, [Francesca,] the widow of Juan Nepomuceno Garcia began construction of the Garcia Opera House in 1884. It was completed three years later in 1887. It served as the main center for cultural and community events including theatrical productions, balls, marriages etc. The curved shape of the massive 34-inch walls strengthened the building and improved acoustics. The "rake" stage is one of very few still in existence in the U.S. Restoration began in 1983 and was completed in 1985 by Holm Bursum, Jr. The Garcia Opera House is a National Historic Site.*



*Interior of Garcia Opera House during La Pastorela performance, showing the "rake" stage sloping upwards toward the back so all of the action could be seen by the audience*

The history of small opera houses is a long one, extending back at least into the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. The meaning of the term has narrowed considerably in modern times, so that the image which comes to our minds is probably of the Met, La Scala, or the Sydney Opera House. However, as soon as they could manage it, small towns tended to build multi-purpose community gathering places for meetings, graduations, social events and programs,

traveling lecturers, and the like. The venues were often in the second story of town commercial areas such as stores or even bars. As towns grew larger and more affluent, these community buildings developed into larger and more ornate structures, and the local Opera House was often the pride of the town. Although on the local level they were still much too small to host a production of *Aida* complete with elephant, many well-known names and programs such as Mark Twain, Sousa's band, Minstrel Shows, political hopefuls, and Suffragettes traveled the opera house circuit. Most of these wonderful old buildings are long gone, but quite a number have been preserved and restored, especially in western mining districts. They now serve the same purpose that they were originally built for: small theater groups, musical events, graduations, dances and small town gatherings. Socorro is very fortunate to have the restored Garcia Opera House serving us as it has served so many generations before us. Thank you Señora Garcia for building it for us, and thank you Holm Bursum, Jr. for restoring it.



### FYI – News & Notes

Are you a gardener – or a wanna be gardener? The Friends are hoping to renew and restore the native plant garden on the northeast side of the Museum building. No firm plans are in place yet, but if you like to dig in the dirt, keep your eyes on the Newsletter. We'll need help!!

### Board of Directors Meeting

**Friends of El Camino Real Board of Directors will meet on Saturday, January 16 at 10 am in the Administration Building of the Socorro Consolidated Schools, 700 Franklin St. in Socorro. Members are welcome to attend.**

## About the Friends

### Contact Us:

Friends of El Camino Historic Trail Site  
PO Box 399  
San Antonio, New Mexico 87832  
575-854-3600 – Ranger's Office  
575-854-3679 – Museum Shop

Website: [www.elcaminoreal.org](http://www.elcaminoreal.org)

### Find Us:



Take I-25 to Exit 115, which is about half way between Socorro and Truth or Consequences. Turn east for a very short distance and then right (south) on Highway 1 about 1½ miles. At the Rest Stop (which cannot be accessed from Highway 1), turn left (east) onto the paved road 3 miles to the El Camino Trail Site. Informational signs and picnic rest stops are along the way to the large parking lot at the Museum entrance.

### Board of Directors:

Kay Krehbiel – President  
Maria Smith-Vega – Vice President  
Lorraine Archuleta – Secretary  
Liz Vallejos – Treasurer  
Sandra Qureshi – Board Member  
Virginia Hawthorn – Board Member  
John Larson – Board Member



## Coming Events for 2016

### May 21 – El Camino Real Fiber Fair

This event celebrates New Mexico's rich, storied, and multi-cultural fiber arts tradition

### September 24 – Native New Mexico

Celebrate New Mexico's native peoples at a daylong festival of art, demonstrations, and music and dance performances

### November 19 – Festival of the Trail

This all-day, family-friendly event features music, talks, demonstrations and crafts and food available for purchase.

*Free Admission for all 3 special events –  
Mark your calendars!*

### Museum Shop Remodeling

Early in 2016 (we hope!) there will be some major repairs and remodeling work done at the Museum Shop. If you are counting on doing some shopping on your visit to the Trail Site you might want to call in advance to make sure the Shop is open, as we will be closed for at least a few days during construction.



### **Time to renew your Membership!!**

**Be A Friend - Don't miss out on Free Admission, 5 Visitor Passes for family or friends, 10% Gift Shop Discount, and The Newsletter! Fill in the form on page 6 and send it in TODAY. You'll be glad you did.**



# Native New Mexico



Red Turtle Dancers, Pojoaque Pueblo



Marlon Magdalena,  
Jemez Flute Maker,  
Musician & Speaker



Piro-Manso-Tiwa  
Drummer



Basket Weaving  
Demonstration



John McWilliams speaks  
on the life of Lozen, a  
19<sup>th</sup> Century female  
Apache Warrior

## Festival of the Trail

### Event Schedule

- 10:30-11:30 **Francisco Sisneros, Lecture**  
"History and Genealogy of the Spanish Colonial Families of the Camino Real"
- 11:45-12:45 **William Dunmire, Lecture**  
"New Mexico's Spanish Livestock History"
- 1:00-3:00 **Breaking Blue, Music**  
American Folk, Originals, and Select Covers
- 3:15-4:00 **Lone Piñon, Music**  
Traditional Spanish and Mexican Trio

### Ongoing Activities

Black Smithing Demonstrations, Adobe Horno Cooking, Churro Sheep, Historic Reenactors, Traditional Pueblo Weaving, Navajo Jewelry, Food for Purchase, and More.

Event made possible by the generous support of the New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs, Friends of El Camino Real Historic Trail Site, and the New Mexico Humanities Council.



Churro  
Sheep



Pat Garrett on the  
hunt for Billy the Kid

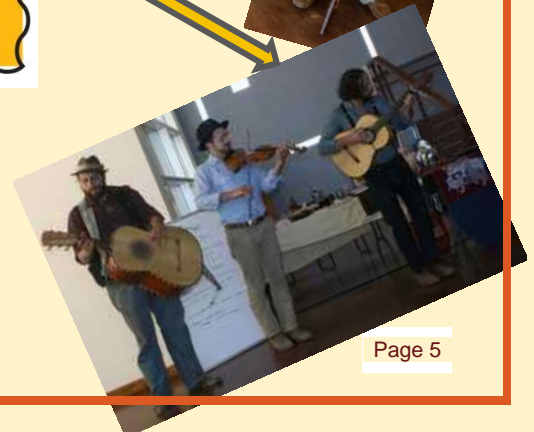
Mountain Man  
Shops for Books  
(Can't Read!)



All photos by Friends of El Camino

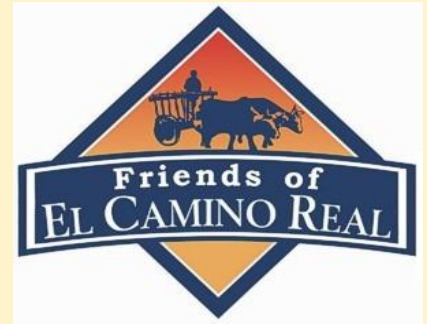


Blacksmith At Work



# Friends of El Camino Real Historic Trail Site

## Membership Application



☐ Memberships January 1 to December 31

☐ \$5.00 discount after July 1

<i>Date:</i>				<i>Please check here if this is a renewal:</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Member Name:</i>					
<i>Family Names for Family Membership:</i>					
<i>Mailing Address:</i>	<i>No./Street Address</i>				
	<i>City</i>	<i>State</i>			<i>Zip</i>
<i>Emails:</i>	<i>1:</i>		<i>2:</i>		
<i>Phones:</i>	<i>1</i>		<i>2:</i>		

### Select Your Interests (X)

	Contact me about planned giving.
	Let me know about volunteer opportunities at the site.
	I want to receive emails about current events & issues at the site.
	I want to help preserve the historic Camino Real Trail for the future.

### Select Membership Category (X)

	\$20	Individual		\$25	Family
	\$15	Senior/Student		\$200	Business/Sponsor

## Thank You!

Friends of El Camino Real Historic Trail Site, PO Box 399, San Antonio NM 87832  
For information: 575-824-3600