

FORT STANTON INC. NEWSLETTER, AUGUST 2012



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Nick Skogland receiving The Sword
From Clinton
Photo by Joe Arcure

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

I cannot say Thank You enough. All of you made Fort Stanton Live 2012, the best show that we have had in years. You all worked hard and you worked as a team and you made it happen. It was a pleasure to be part of this team this year.

Many of the folks involved have already said that they want to be invited back for next year. So you have made the work next year that much easier.

We had the pleasure of hosting Mr. Richard Sims, Director of Monuments and Museums and I know that he was impressed with all the volunteers and their involvement.

There are much more interesting items in this newsletter so I won't take up anymore of your time, just know how very much I do appreciate all of your efforts and I look forward to working with all of you in the future.

Thanks,
Smitty

THE MEMBERSHIP CORNER

Just a reminder---we are a non-profit group and all of our monies go into either the Museum or doing something for the Fort. We cannot keep up the work we are doing without membership help and support. The memberships are due by the end of January each year and are tax deductible, as are any donations. Membership dues are accepted anytime during the year. If you have any questions concerning your membership, please email me at: pegw@valornet.com.

PEGGY WHITEMORE

DATES TO REMEMBER

What: Fort Stanton Board Meetings
When: Third Wednesday of each month 4:30 PM
Where: Fort Stanton Museum

What: Museum Hours - Summer
When: Mondays, Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays 10:00 am-4: 00 PM, Sundays 12:00-4:00 PM
Where: Fort Stanton Museum

What: Garrison
When: The third weekend of every month, Next – August 18th
Where: Fort Stanton

Fort Stanton Inc
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The Fort Stanton Inc Newsletter is published four times yearly by the organization for its members. Annual membership dues are due by the end of January each year, and are tax deductible, as are any donations. Membership dues are accepted anytime during the year. Send all address changes to Fort Stanton Foundation P.O. Box 1, Fort Stanton, NM 88323.

Remember our website:
www.Fortstanton.org

BETSY BURNETT, SUPERWOMAN

Anyone who knows Betsy is amazed at the many volunteer irons she has in the fire. It seems that this special lady is unable to say "No" to a good cause. Brought up on the East Coast, Betsy left college in the middle of her sophomore year (1967) to go to California. Unfortunately, she contracted hepatitis in 1968 and moved to Texas during her recovery. Seeking a new direction, she accepted an internship in Washington, D. C. In 1970 Betsy earned her Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Texas at Arlington, and began work as a Social Worker.

By 1973 she decided that Social Work was not for her, and she went to work for AT&T. In the beginning she climbed poles and installed phones. Eventually, Betsy's expertise was noticed, and she went into management. In that job, she traveled extensively and enjoyed seeing the country and meeting new people. These travels led to her residing in South Carolina, Pennsylvania and Maryland. Finally, in 1968, Betsy retired from AT&T headquarters in Bedminster, New Jersey.

This busy lady has been with her husband, Daryl Snyder, a retired carpenter from Lansdowne, Pennsylvania, for twenty-two years. They built their dream house in Ruidoso and settled down to enjoy the rewards of years on the job. Then volunteerism called to Betsy. The Ruidoso Concert Association needed a secretary; she answered the call and served on its Board until it closed in 2007. During that time she was also on the Chamber Music board. She began volunteering at the Spay and Neuter Clinic, sponsored by the Lincoln County Humane Society, serving on its Board. Betsy and Daryl, long-time members of the J Bar J Church, serve on its Pantry. This versatile lady, long a hummingbird fan, is a Board member of the Hummingbird Society.

Perhaps one of the most important jobs that Betsy has accepted is Secretary of the Fort Stanton, Inc. Board. Since 2009, she has efficiently and cheerfully helped in the many projects conducted by this organization. Her leadership in the recent "Fort Stanton Live" was responsible for much of its outstanding success. Her guidance in the organization of the event was remarkable.

In addition to all of this, Betsy is active in the political party of her choice. Betsy and Daryl enjoy their home, traveling, and most of all, their three pets. They are Geoffrey, a very large dog, and two rescued cats that fill Betsy and Daryl's lives with fun. Lincoln County is fortunate to have these two extraordinary individuals; Betsy and Daryl.

CHARLOTTE ROWE

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Photo by
Joe Arcure



LIVING HISTORY EVENT AT FORT STANTON

6-18-12

Members Present: Larry Auld, Mike Bilbo, Ken Davis, Dan Judy, Matt Midgett and Larry Pope. New members Brent Harty and his son Thomas and Luther Morton also joined us.

This event will probably stand out as one of the most memorable we will have. The top story will undoubtedly be the Little Bear Fire. In less than a week, it consumed over 38,000 acres, 242 homes and threatened Fort Stanton with destruction. Fortune and hard work by fire fighters, allowed Fort Stanton and its surrounding area to remain untouched. With the abatement of danger by mid-week, we were able to hold our regularly scheduled encampment on June 16.

Many members were unable to show up early, so the flag ceremony was delayed until after 10:30. Drill was short. Following this, a ration issue was conducted which consisted of soft bread, cheese, apples, corned beef and cabbage. Everyone ate heartily and prepared for a scout into the territory. Seven members were able to make the march to the old Fort cemetery. Along the way, we noticed a large amount of ash, soot and charcoal, all of which were lifted from the center of the fire miles away and deposited near Fort Stanton. This was evidence of the extreme danger Fort Stanton experienced. Strangely enough, while visiting the cemetery on the hill, we were driven off by nothing less than rain and lightning. Making it back to the safety of the Fort in short order, we spent most of the afternoon under the shelter of a tent fly.

An outdoor wedding had been scheduled for the afternoon on the parade ground; however the participants, expecting the normal short New Mexico rains, agreed to delay the ceremony for some time. The garrison was asked, in this interim, to provide an honor guard for the bride and groom. We accepted and took the opportunity to practice our parts, and then we waited on the rain..... and waited and waited. The wedding party finally decided to 'press on' and hold the ceremony in the rain. Members of the garrison formed up and provided the honor guard for the wedding becoming thoroughly soaked. At the conclusion of the wedding, we slogged over to the flagpole and retrieved the colors. The event broke early and most members headed for home. Mike and Larry remained in camp over night.

Sunday dawned cold with the previous day's rain and no activity took place on the parade. It was decided that the camp would be packed up as soon as everything was dry. About 9:00, however, a crowd of people began descending upon the Fort. These were parishioners of the Nazarene Church of Nogal, whose facilities were inaccessible due to the fire and they were to hold church service on the Fort grounds. Nearly 200 people showed up for service, fellowship and picnic, many of whom had lost houses only days before. This was a sobering thought amongst the joy of our own site being spared. With all the visitors at the Fort, Matt, who had come for the service hosted a tour of the Fort for a large group. Numerous visitors enjoyed the camp, which remained open due to the sudden influx of people. Out of the blue, so to say, came an important visitor no one had expected. New Mexico Governor Martinez appeared to visit with people who had experienced the fire. Mike, Matt and Larry were fortunate enough to engage the Governor in a short conversation and photo session. Hopefully, we represented the Fort and ourselves well. As the crowd waned, the Governor made her exit and it was decided to finally break camp. The Fort grounds were once again quiet by about 3:30. The camp area was cleaned as well as the nurse's quarters and its bathrooms which had been opened for the large amount of visitors. With all that had happened over the week, it all lent to a very good living history event.

Because of external activities, very little drill was done and no class time has had. This was balanced by the extreme dedication of the volunteers to participate in impromptu activities with adverse conditions. Many thanks to all of our garrison members for this dedication.

With the advent of Fort Stanton Live, there will be no Garrison encampment for July. We will once again hold a living history event on August 18. Suggested activities may include a discussion on military headgear, the Army supply system for Fort Stanton and a short march down the Rio Bonito in search of a limekiln.

LARRY POPE

Note: Pictures by Larry Pope of that event are on the next page.

Line for Ration Issue



Waiting out the rain with visitors



Garrison on the Field March



Meeting with the Governor



During Fort Stanton Live! Visitors were asked to fill out a brief questionnaire which will be used to determine future programs. As an incentive to fill it out, a drawing was held with the prize being a basket of items from the museum gift shop. The winner of that basket was Theresa Townsend of Ruidoso.

FORT STANTON INC. HAS RICH HISTORY OF VOLUNTERRISM, 1994 -2012

Fort Stanton Inc., a non-profit organization of volunteers, has been so busy promoting the Fort's history that it has not always recorded its own organizational past. While most residents and over 7,000 tourists in 2011 now know much more about the Fort founded in 1855, few recognize the contributions, successes, and cumulative impact of FSI since its founding.

In 1994 Sally Burkstaller of Roswell founded the organization. One of the smartest moves they made was to create a newsletter informing the public of the fact that the Fort was not protected and preserved even though the state had owned the Fort since the early 1950s. FSI also founded KEDU radio station with the same goal in mind.

In 1998 the group held the Fort Fete, a social event raising awareness. At that time according to Burkstaller, "We did not have ANY access to the Fort proper and could only look down at the grounds. Later, we got permission to use the historic quadrangle for ONE day a year but we had to pay to send the prisoners on a one day picnic so the people who wanted to see the historic place could actually step onto the grounds."

In 2001 FSI founded a museum at the little building previously known as the Recreation Center. Volunteers drove out to the Fort and sat in a chilly building so they could promote Fort history. Trink Edmonds was among dozens of volunteers. There the museum offered a view into a Mescalero deer skin dress, hand-carved soldiers by Jake Ross, WPA watercolor paintings, and a baker's pot. FSI museum volunteers could only "walk visitors over to that small slab of concrete on the Southeast corner of the quad (without cameras) so they could actually say they saw the Fort."

FSI acted as the defacto spokesperson for the future of the Fort. In 2003 the state decided to create a Fort Stanton Development Commission (FSDC) to determine its future. The state was slow to include FSI members and advocates but did so eventually.

In 2005 FSI created "Fort Stanton Live," a re-enactment event to promote the Fort's 19th century past. Tony and Nisha Hoffman were the force behind this effort. Re-enactors came onto the scene as did 19th century women in costume. The New Mexico Humanities Council funded Chautauqua impersonators Governor Lew Wallace, Hispanic Major Rafael Chacon, and military wife Lydia Lane to explain their historic roles to visitors.

In 2005 the Fort celebrated its 150th anniversary and I spearheaded a commemorative event.

Conference attendants learned about how the Fort nearly decimated the Mescalero populace and how it took about a century for the Mescalero to replace their original numbers. We also learned about soldiers, outlaws, African American women laundresses, architecture, and whiskey. And since the Fort became a tuberculosis hospital we learned of nurses, doctors, and patients who included Navajos.

In 2007 FSI partnered with Cornerstones, a historic preservation organization, to restore the stables. Not only were the stables key to the Fort's military days, they were also part of an immense ranch that made the Fort a little more self-sufficient during the Fort's second career as a hospital from 1897 to 1953.

Also in 2007 FSI worked to prevent extreme residential/commercial development. FSI believes in finding ways to make the Fort self-sustaining or profitable but this plan would have endangered the historic character of the complex.

That same year Dr. Earl Pittman, "retired" professional historian, generously gave his time to write a grant for the "Save America's Treasures" funds. He did not earn a cent. However, he was successful and obtained over \$1 million to have the Fort administration building restored.

In 2007 FSDC made the Fort a state monument. Since then the Fort has been controlled by the state's Department of Cultural Affairs. Unfortunately, no staff or monies came with this designation. Still, the public now has much better access to viewing Fort grounds.

Around 2008 Fort Stanton cavers found a new cave, Snowy River. Senator Pete Domenici made helped pass legislation to name it a national treasure.

In 2009 FSI volunteers Joseph Acure, professional photographer and Carolyn Acure, producer, created a twelve minute video "Fort Stanton: History of a New Mexico Cavalry Post" with all proceeds going to FSI. It has educated the public and can still be purchased at the ENMU Ruidoso bookstore.

In 2009 FSI volunteers enrolled in ENMU Ruidoso "Fort Stanton History" class to learn more about the Fort. That same year FSI worked with the Hubbard Museum of the American West to create an exhibit about the Fort. The Hubbard later donated that exhibit to the new museum.

In 2009 FST opened the new and better museum in the Junior Officers' Quarters/Hospital Administration Bldg., possible because of the Save America's Treasure funds.

This year 2012 marks another upcoming Fort Stanton Live event slated for July 13 and 14.

While we have a national treasure in our midst, our state government is in charge and funds designated for Lincoln County have been few. There we can honor our military heritage and support one of our major tourist attractions. Locals and tourists alike will find fun and entertaining events at Live. After 18 years of volunteer work, Fort Stanton Inc. deserves our support. For more information visit FortStanton.org.

DR. CYNTHIA E. OROZOCO, ENMU RUIDOSO, HISTORY & HUMANITIES DEPARTMENT

FORT STANTON KIDS ENJOY ANOTHER REUNION

Despite our advanced ages, a number of Fort Stanton Kids made it back to our old hometown for another Fort Stanton Live! in July and as always had a wonderful time reminiscing about the "good old days," touring the museum and other buildings and telling visitors about how "things used to be."

We were especially pleased to have the opportunity to meet with new State Monuments Director Richard Sims and share with him our history and our hopes for an expanded restoration program and a proper repository and archive for the historic items that many of us possess.

We ended the day with a private dinner at the Dolan House in Lincoln (thank you, Beverly Strauser!) attended by about 30 guests including Richard Sims; authors of wonderful books about us Jim McBride (and wife Barbara) and Lynda Sanchez; David Tremblay (photographer) and wife Deedee; TB researcher Nancy Owens Lewis; Fort Stanton custodian extraordinaire Sam Townley; and Kids Eva Howard McCollum, Godfrey Chavez, Alfred Sanchez, Claire Boyd Fluharty, Tom Gould, John Kusianovich and Danna Kusianovich Henderson, Dorothy Heck Williams, Dick Cox, Eddy Womack, and assorted family members.

DANNA KUSIANOVICH HENDERSON



We took over the Dolan House in Lincoln for a "Kids dinner" on Saturday night and about 30 people attended. In this photo, from right to left, are the new Monument Director Richard Sims, Kids Tom Gould, John Kusianovich and Danna Kusianovich Henderson, and non-Kid Deedee Tremblay (photo by David Tremblay).



FS Kids
Alfred Sanchez and
Eva Howard
McCollum.



The sign at our booth.



Childhood friends Ruth Jean Craig McAdoo (daughter of Fort Stanton Kid Jean Berry) and Claire Boyd Fluharty at our booth, John Kusianovich in the background.



Danna Kusianovich Henderson at far left and Tom (Skip) Gould at far right.

THE VIEW FROM THE PORCH, THE VISTA FROM THE RIDGE

I'm not sure whether to call it the front porch or the back porch. Or whether to call it the barracks, the administration building, or the museum. I take that back. I'll call it the museum, for that's what it is today. And I must be sitting on the front porch, for I am facing the parade grounds. But I came in a front door on the other side of the building, to enter the museum. I'm a bit turned around. Fort Stanton will do that to you, for it has seen itself and its dozens of buildings turned around as several versions of public institutions over the past century and a half. Now that I am oriented, or pleasantly disoriented, it is time to enjoy the day. Fort Stanton Live! on July 13-14, attracted over 2,000 visitors. From my chair on the front porch, I imagined the many footfalls of the day, the many different kinds of footwear strolling the Fort, from historical boots worn by infantry re-enactors, to the moccasins worn by the Mescalero Apache dancers, to the sandals and sneakers worn by the tourists. The spacious field of green had not seen such activity in quite a while, I supposed. Time-traveling on the porch, a patient observer, I was taken back to the 1850s, and the beginnings of a U.S. military presence in New Mexico. The salty sutler trading his goods while gracing his tent with cigar smoke; the quartermaster, rationing his hardtack as though it was fine pastry; the polished and proud buffalo soldier ready to pass any inspection; the adjutant, ever-worried and ever-busy, making sure regimental behavior was observed at all times; and the mounted officer, impressing the crowd with his saber motions and his attentive and fast horse.

Now the moccasins are taking part, worn by the dancers portraying the mountain gods, worn by the intermediaries who bring their messages, worn by the young women who dance on the perimeter, around the fire and around again. The Mescalero Apache have brought an ancient dimension; have taken us front-porchers further back in time, to when time was not measured in minutes, but in the rhythmic impact of all the senses, holding fast to the land through ceremony and song.

Surrounding all of this colorful pageantry were the buildings of Fort Stanton, in dignified repose. "They also serve who stand and wait," as the biblical passage goes. Waiting for renewal, waiting for new roles, maybe some familiar roles, to play on the western landscape.

Two days later, I'm hiking the Cedar Ridge Trail, wishing it wasn't so hot so early in the morning. It is a new trail, receptive to my old boots, and I quickly gain elevation. From a vantagepoint that featured a cooling breeze, I gazed west to the little valley that embraces Fort Stanton, three miles away. Beyond were the blackened ridges of that recent tragic fire and in the plain below were horsemen and women, getting ready to ride. In that sweeping vista, between nature's wrath and spirited steeds, almost hidden in the groves of old trees, was the fort, silently curating its many stories, standing and waiting, serving all the while, and with many servants helping, ready to serve anew.

RICHARD SIMS
DIRECTOR, NEW MEXICO STATE MONUMENTS



Photo by Joe Arcure



FORT STANTON LIVE! 2012
Photos by Bill Jeffrey





JOIN FORT STANTON, INC. – HELP PRESERVE THE FORT

Membership

Student-----\$15.00 Individual--\$20.00

Family-----\$25.00 Life-----\$250.00

DONATIONS ARE WELCOME AND NEEDED

MEMBERSHIPS ARE DUE BY THE END OF JANUARY, BUT ARE ACCEPTED ANYTIME

AMOUNT ENCLOSED _____

NAME: _____

STREET / P.O. BOX: _____ CITY: _____

STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

TELEPHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO FORT STANTON, INC. – MEMBERSHIP
P.O. BOX 1, FORT STANTON, NM 88323