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# EAST MOUNTAIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY Newsletter

Fourth Quarter 2013

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## EMHS Publishes 2014 Calendar Featuring East Mountain Photos from the Past

At right is the photo for January, one of 12 historic scenes from the EMHS collection that appear in our just-published 2014 East Mountain Historical Society calendar, created by member Kathy Rich.

Each photo includes a caption, and credits the person who donated the photo to us. Calendars may be purchased from the EMHS [online store](#) for \$10 each, plus \$5 shipping.



### **LUIS GONZALES BRINGING HOME THE WOOD, Primera Agua, 1957**

Luis Gonzales is bringing the load of wood, in a horse-drawn wagon, for the family's wood stoves. The photo was taken off Primera Agua Road, next to Camino de Santo Nino Road.

*Photo by Molly Simballa • Courtesy of Irene Gonzales Aragon*

## 2013 End of Year President's Letter

This past year started with the loss in January 2013 of one of our founding members, **Pat Rich**, who was East Mountain Historical Society treasurer and our treasured friend.

We were quite fortunate in that a member of our board, **Gerry Jones**, had worked as a treasurer for several other organizations, and Gerry stepped in to fill that void on the executive committee early in the year.

We are also fortunate that Pat's daughter, **Kathy Rich**, remains an active member of our board. She has been updating our web site, digitizing our photographs and creating booklets for EMHS. Last year, she produced an oral history booklet that featured all of our first "Great People, Great Stories" Oral History participants from 2012, New Mexico's Centennial year. This year, she published a booklet about the Village of Tijeras, written by member **Anabel Sanchez**, created in time for the village's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in August.

At our annual general membership meeting on Oct. 27, we unveiled Kathy's latest publication, a **2014 calendar with historic photographs** from the East Mountain Historical Society collection. We sold calendars at the annual meeting and they may also be ordered online from our web site store, at <http://eastmountainhistory.org/onlinestore.html>.

In 2013, we hosted three public programs: In February, expert **Elizabeth Chestnut** explained the ongoing efforts to save Albuquerque's De Anza Motor Lodge. In April, author/illustrator **Jerry Davis** told stories about his travels around the state in search of historic barns, which he put into a book: *Barns From the Land of Enchantment*, including several from the East Mountains. And in August, we hosted member **Laurie Frantz**, who shared fabulous stories and photographs from her book, *The Turquoise Trail*.

In August we also shared with the public our historic photos of the East Mountains, displaying the panels in the historic church as part of Tijeras's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration.

Our last event of the year will be a **holiday potluck for members at 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 8** at my house. (Details will follow.)

We will kick off 2014 with a planning meeting Jan. 11, at which we'll map out the coming year's priorities. Some highlights:

We will continue our **oral history project** (see story by Kris Thacher in this issue) and with the **Sandia Legacy project**, an idea from member **Melissa Howard**, in which we conduct oral histories with a particular emphasis on the history of the Sandia Mountains.

We plan to **revamp the photo exhibit**. After years of use, including travel to schools and community centers, pictures are missing, some need to be redone, and we need to update the display to be more portable and lightweight so we have more options in sharing it.

At the same time, we plan to add new panels: a **Wall of Fame** to honor our oral history participants, and another panel to honor veterans and military heroes of the East Mountains.

In 2014, we also will revive our popular **members-only field trips**. Thanks to **Eloy Jaramillo**, we have received permission from the Carnuel Land Grant to do a hike along the old wagon trail that runs parallel to Tijeras Creek, something I've wanted to do for a long time. So, if you haven't joined yet, that alone is a great reason to join us and support us as a member.

Here's to a prosperous new year – and happy trails!

*Denise Tessier, president*

## ***Oral History Project Update: “Great People, Great Stories” Participants Honored***

*Story and photos By Kris Thacher, project coordinator*

Our award-winning oral history project “Great People, Great Stories” celebrated its third year in 2013. In this short time, our team of dedicated volunteer community historians has interviewed a total of 20 extraordinary men and women from the East Mountain area.

Four 2013 participants were able to attend our Oct. 27 annual meeting to receive certificates and recognition for sharing their stories. Honored were Mercie Chavez of Carnuel, Ruth Luhrs of Sandia Park, Howard Calkins of Edgewood, and Gerry Jones of Albuquerque.



Gerry Jones



Mercie Chavez

East Mountain Historical Society President Denise Tessier and oral history project coordinator Kris Thacher presented “Living Treasure Award” certificates and recordings of the interviews to these four participants. Certificates are also being awarded to Reggie Fletcher and Marcella Atencio Lopez, who were unable to attend the annual meeting. Sadly, two other interviewees passed away this year. Certificates honoring Lois Pierson and Eugene Nugent Eidson will be presented to their families.

In the coming year, the historical society will be adding a “Wall of Fame” to its panel exhibit of historical photos.

Each of the oral history “Living Treasures” will be featured with a portrait photo. The entire photo exhibit will also undergo refurbishing next year and several events for raising funds to improve the display are being planned for 2014.

In addition, the historical society is developing a map of historical East Mountain locations, many of which are lost or are no longer depicted on modern maps. Please contact Kris Thacher (286-7707) if you have any old maps or photos of missing buildings or towns and would like to share these materials with us or place them in the EMHS archive.

**It's time to renew your membership in EMHS. You can do it online using Pay Pal or you may send your check to the East Mountain Historical Society, P.O. Box 106, Tijeras, NM 87049.**

*Thank you for your support of the society and its mission.*

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East Mountain Historical Society  
**Newsletter**  
Published Quarterly

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The EMHS Newsletter aims to inform members and prospective members of EMHS events and endeavors, including committee work, and to serve as a record of society activities. It is also a forum for stories about the area. Please send your ideas for future newsletter items to the Editor, P.O. Box 379, Cedar Crest, NM 87008, or by email: [newsletter@eastmountainhistory.org](mailto:newsletter@eastmountainhistory.org) Deadlines for future issues of the newsletter are Jan. 31, April 30, July 31, and Oct. 31.

#### **Mission Statement**

The Mission of the East Mountain Historical Society is to identify, preserve and present to the public the history and culture of the East Mountain area. EMHS will assist in protecting historical buildings and landscapes, artifacts, records, or any item considered to be of historical significance. EMHS will also identify, collect and archive historical material of significance to the area.

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## ***News and Notes . . .***

A hearty welcome to our new members: **Debra Post, Rick Holben, Sandra Lee, Judy Fry, and Ronald Lah.**



Our annual holiday potluck for members will be held at 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 8 at home of EMHS President **Denise Tessier**. For directions, contact her at [president@eastmountainhistory.org](mailto:president@eastmountainhistory.org).



Thanks to **Barbara and Ron McCarty** for their generosity in lending us a projector for our programs. Thanks to **Margaret Garcia** for lending us a card table to hold that projector.



Thanks to **Rick Holben** for donating to EMHS a complete set of New Mexico magazines, from 1982-1992, all clean and sorted by year. He also donated to us a group of old postcards he put together in a book. The vintage cards mostly depict scenes from the East Mountains, Tijeras Canyon and Albuquerque, and are a treasured addition to our archives.



At the annual meeting Oct. 27, the general membership elected the following officers for 2014:

President, **Denise Tessier**; Vice President, **Kristin Thacher**; Treasurer, **Gerry Jones**; and Secretary, **Beverly Neville**.

Directors were also elected to the EMHS board:

**Anabel Sanchez**, membership; **Marie Herrera Dresser**, at-large member; **Becky Schnelker**, programs; **Kathy Rich**, media/graphics; **Rick Holben**, at-large member; **Andre Larroque**, preservation; **Chuck Van Gelder**, archeology; and **Anne Dacey-Lucas**; at-large member.



Our condolences go out to member and past EMHS secretary **Marge Ussery** on the death of her husband, Al. Before moving to the mountains, the Usserys lived on Rio Grande Boulevard in Los Ranchos – noteworthy because until the mid 1990s, one could count on seeing some of their buffalo when driving by their grassy property along Rio Grande’s “S” curve.

## *Four Honored with EMHS ‘Awards of Recognition’*

Three members of the RETRO-Relive the Route committee – formed to revitalize and draw attention to Route 66 – were honored at the EMHS annual meeting for RETRO’s first-year accomplishments, notably: bringing together more than 100 East Mountain residents who cleaned up and painted the old Midway Trading Post, and raising enough money to refurbish old Whiting Brothers gas stations signs. “This has been a tremendous community effort, and the end result is not only visibility for Route 66, but it has greatly raised awareness about preserving and appreciating history,” EMHS President Denise Tessier said.



Roger Holden at EMHS Event

*Photo by Kris Thacher*

Awards of Recognition went to

RETRO Chairman **Roger Holden** (above) and Co-Chairs **Debbie Pogue** and **Madeline Heitzman**.

Holden, who accepted the award certificates on behalf of all three, gave a report on the group’s impressive accomplishments and plans for continued revitalization efforts on historic Route 66.



The fourth award went to **Anna King** (above right, in the oldest part of her Just Imagine Gallery) for stewardship of her historic property in Tijeras. Original portions of the old stone wall that run in front of the business are among the oldest structures in Tijeras.



View of the little church in Tijeras from behind the historic stone wall.

*Just Imagine photos by Denise Tessier*

The wall at the former Carpenter home and dance hall originally protected wagons of dance patrons. The site is also listed on



Old adobes contain on-site clay, straw, bones and corn cobs.

an old map as having been a fort, and some say the wall might have been part of a remount station.

King and her husband, who bought the property in 1998, have consistently repaired the once-crumbling rock wall. They restored the adobe in the house after tearing down wood planks that once covered it, and integrated old, massive beams found on-site into the structure. King is closing her business after 14 years, but hasn’t decided whether to sell the property, saying she wouldn’t sell to just anyone, but only to “someone who will honor its history.”

## *Remembering Forest Park and The Cedars*

**Rick Holben**, the newest member of the East Mountain Historical Society board, has been doing extensive research into the history of the Forest Park Resort-Lodge-Restaurant in Cedar Crest and has reached the point where he's reaching out to members and the public for help.



Photo courtesy of Rick Holben

*Forest Park – Then . . .*

He'd also like to talk with anyone who has any memories of the Forest Park Lodge and/or the people who operated it. Contact Rick by email at [newmexkan@aol.com](mailto:newmexkan@aol.com). We'll publish results of his research in a future newsletter.

Holben is seeking:

- ❖ Photos from any era depicting the lodge, cabins, facilities or surrounding area, including The Cedars restaurant that operated from the 1950s until the 1970s.
- ❖ Any kind of printed material – advertising brochures, menus from the lodge or promotional material for the Forest Park subdivision when it opened in the mid 1960s.

He'd also



*. . .And Today*

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