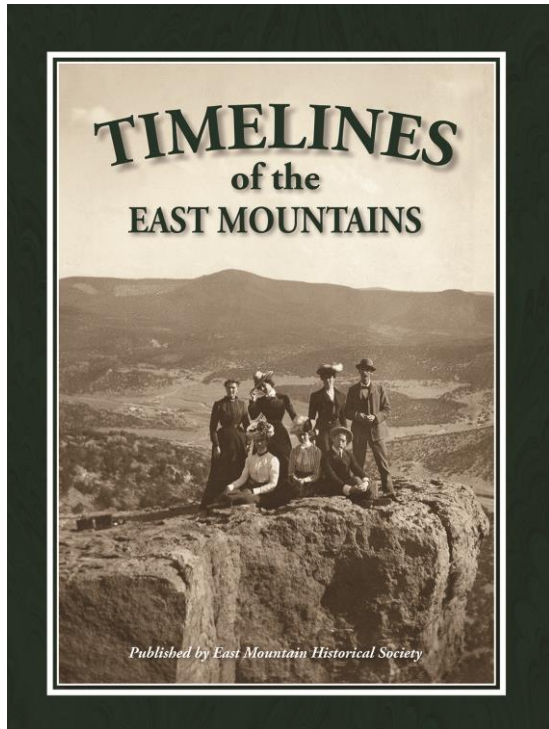


CULTURA DE LAS MONTAÑAS

eastmountainhistory.org

EAST MOUNTAIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY Newsletter

Double Issue Second and Third Quarters 2020



TIMELINES Is Sold Out; Compliments Pour In *Second Printing Is Ordered*

“Awesome.” “Amazing.” “Grand.”

Congratulations have been pouring in to our postal and email boxes since publication in April of the East Mountain Historical Society’s monumental book, *TIMELINES of the East Mountains*.

And in just a little over three months, thanks to pre-orders and subsequent sales via the EMHS website, essentially all 100 hardcover editions and 300 softcover editions have been sold. This is despite the postponement of our book launch celebration and cancelation of the state history conference in Silver City, where we had planned to have a sales table. (Both delays were due to the pandemic.) Flush with

money from these sales, the board has voted to order a second printing.

See story on pg. 2

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History Book Sells Out, Congratulations Pour In

The EMHS board during the week of Aug. 17 voted to order a second printing of *TIMELINES of the East Mountains*, as the first printing is sold out and we are still receiving orders and inquiries.

Despite lack of a physical sales outlet these past three months, EMHS has recouped its investment in the first printing and has the money to do a reprint. The Ohio business used for the first printing, however, has closed shop, as have many printers because of the pandemic. Kathy Rich, who oversaw production of the book, and Kris Thacher, book editor, researched options in terms of finding a new printer, and found that publishers who remain will not print fewer than 500 at a time. They also found prices for printing and bindery have increased.

The new publisher offered a choice of printing all 500 as softcovers, or 400 softcovers and 100 hardcovers, and considering the costs of each option, the EMHS board agreed that excluding the more expensive hardcover option would be better in terms of our treasury.



Boxes of the first printing of *TIMELINES* just after they arrived and were stacked on pallets in Rick Holben's garage.

Photo by Rick Holben

So, the board has voted to print 500 softcovers. The reprint order was placed Aug. 20, and we do not yet have a firm publication date as the company has other orders in its schedule. We hope to have the new edition in time for holiday shopping in December, if not before.

Going with a solid company that offered us comparable text and better bindery, Kathy and Kris have calculated that the retail cost of the book will need to increase from the \$30 we charged for the original edition, to \$45 for the second edition.

However, considering the positive feedback we have received on the first book, it's clear that many consider *TIMELINES*, weighing in at more than 700 pages, is an excellent buy, worth more than what we charged in the first printing. The board also feels we still have many more opportunities for future book sales.

Since publication in April, we have enjoyed brisk sales via our online store. After filling 88 pre-orders, Vice President Rick Holben reported we had more orders in May after Denise Tessier sent a story announcing the book's publication to *The Independent* and to members and others on our email list. *The Independent* devoted a half page to the story and picture of the book's cover. In a report to the board, Rick noted that in addition to buying books, customers also were ordering other items from the website, including our historic map, Chris Wilson architecture book, calendars and other publications.

Denise contacted the *Albuquerque Journal* in June and we experienced another surge of sales after Book Editor David Steinberg published in the Aug. 2 *Sunday Journal*, “[Years-long collaboration yields a comprehensive and compelling history of the East Mountains.](#)” This resulted in more orders and even memberships outside of Albuquerque.

The Historical Society of New Mexico plans to run a story in its magazine, *La Cronica*, and other outlets have expressed an interest in running stories and reviews. We still plan to host a book celebration whenever it is safe to do so, and we anticipate selling *TIMELINES* at the next HSNM state history conference and at other events, including our own, well into the future.

TIMELINES: Nine Years in the Making

At more than 700 pages, the comprehensive history *TIMELINES of the East Mountains* represents more than three years of work by a core committee of dedicated volunteers of the East Mountain Historical Society.

The seed for *TIMELINES* germinated, however, nine years ago, in 2011. At that point, the newly installed EMHS board participated in a goals brainstorming session, facilitated by incoming President Denise Tessier. It didn’t result in the idea of a book per se, but it was clear that among several goals, the group foremost wanted to get back to recording oral histories, maybe make a map of the area, and do things that would bring in funds.

While not abandoning EMHS’ long pursuit of a physical “home” for the EMHS organization and archives, board members agreed that it would be nice to shift focus and tackle other goals. We literally never looked back as one project led to another: from conducting oral histories → to making a map → to producing a book.

Kris Thacher got word of a Bernalillo County Neighborhood Association grant that mentioned oral history projects. Together she and Denise pursued that grant – an arduous process involving several meetings, tons of paperwork and, because we were not a neighborhood, a partnership with the East Mountain Coalition. Success in obtaining the grant meant we had funds to buy recording equipment and hire a professional trainer for our interviewers. And so we launched the project, which coincidentally culminated with the state’s 2012 Centennial. Kris took the helm of the committee and lined up our oral history instructor, Rose Diaz. After we had interviewed a dozen people, it was 2012, and as part of our grant requirement, we shared the results with the community. We did so by holding a public celebration of our project, celebrating our interviewees, the East Mountains and the state of New Mexico. Our “Great People, Great Stories” was a tremendous project for all of us, and a tremendous, fulfilling success.

From that award-winning project, the board agreed we should create a map of all the obscure and vanished East Mountain places we’d heard of while doing the oral histories. Again, a committee was formed, again headed by Kris, and we involved community members who remembered places that should be included. With help from a Historical Society of New Mexico grant, we created a 6’ x 6’ display map – *Mapping Our Vanishing Past* – which proved so popular, we created a personal-size version. We are almost sold out of that map’s printing of 1,000.

Nine Years in the Making. . .

Continued from pg. 3

TIMELINES of the East Mountains is an encyclopedia of all the places on that map – and more. Again, we were blessed with a dedicated and involved committee. Kris kept the group organized (and fed) through three years of meetings at her home and countless correspondence. We came up with a style sheet so we'd all be on the same page. Rick Holben had already vastly improved the state of our treasury when he created a booklet about Forest Park subdivision and facilitated seven years of EMHS *Then and Now* history photo calendars. Doing these educational and fundraising projects, we'd developed a kind of publication team – Rick organized photos and wrote captions; Kathy Rich printed the calendars, books, maps, and sales materials; Denise and Kris edited these publications; Denise handled publicity; our EMHS board helped with sales.

For *TIMELINES*, Rick and Kris fully engaged in researching most of the more than 200 sites on the map. As chief researchers, they pored over historical records, newspapers, official papers, genealogy and government websites, plus our own oral history archives – this time going back to EMHS' founding in 1992. They used this information not only to produce stories and timelines, but to fact-check what was written by other authors in the book. Kris also came up with the idea of featuring wives' names in the "People" chapter headlines, giving credit to history-making women who are often overlooked as men's names dominate the historic papers recording mining ventures, businesses, land deeds, farming, ranching, and exploration. Rick coordinated use of photos, maps and graphics, many of which came from his personal collection of East Mountain relics and ephemera he has acquired over decades.

In addition to Kris, the book committee included three other professional writers – journalists Joyce Mendel and Denise, and former engineer-turned-book-author Dick Brown. These three reworked and used a few stories they'd already published, then created more.

Founding member Anabel Maldonado Sanchez contributed stories, photos, and help with Spanish translations, as did Maria Herrera Dresser. Another East Mountain native, Sandra Walton Lee, contributed photos and valuable information and helped us secure \$2,000 from an angel donor, in addition to being one of our three main reps in terms of fundraising sales. Others stepped up to help, including Beverly Neville, Susan Olsen, and East Mountain native Constance Baca Busheme.

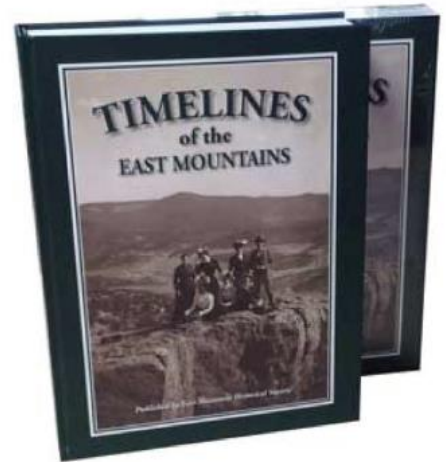
Kathy Rich, with the help of Christine Koch, took on the yeoman's task of laying out our book and incorporating hundreds of edits and corrections by Kris, Rick, Denise, and Dick. The Historical Society of New Mexico gave us \$1,700 toward publication.

It's almost a harmonic convergence that brought together so many who not only love the history of our East Mountain area but were willing to devote thousands of hours to preserve it by creating this book. And while we are all volunteers, part of a small non-profit, we have tried to share this information in as professional, accurate, and consistent a manner as possible. It's possibly the most complete history of our East Mountain area that has ever been done.

Pre-Order Our Second Printing of the Softcover *TIMELINES*, Online or by Using This Form

Inspiration for our book originated with the popular EMHS map "Mapping Our Vanishing Past," which in turn, was inspired by our ongoing Great People, Great Stories oral history project. *TIMELINES OF THE EAST MOUNTAINS* covers about 400 square miles and 400 years of history. It includes hundreds of photos and a Special Section of Maps.

You can order your book by using this paper form and mailing us a check, or you can order online at our website: www.eastmountainhistory.org and use PayPal.



Mail Order Form

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Mail to: **EMHS
PO Box 106
Tijeras, NM 87059**

or Order Online at:
www.EastMountainHistory.org

Iconic Lodge Sign Has Left the Mountains

By Denise Tessier

Those who regularly take Route 66 through Tijeras Canyon probably have noticed: A part of East Mountain history is gone.

The long-endangered Mountain Lodge sign – with its hat-topped, sandal-footed hombre atop a burro – on April 16 was dismantled and removed from Carnuel, where it had greeted travelers since the early



Photo by Denise Tessier

1950s. Reportedly, its wood pole supports were rotting, posing danger to the sign and nearby power lines, and the sign is now in storage in Belen until it can be restored.

Plans call for it to be displayed far from the canyon – at a proposed Route 66 Visitors Center on West Central at Nine Mile Hill, a project of the City of Albuquerque.

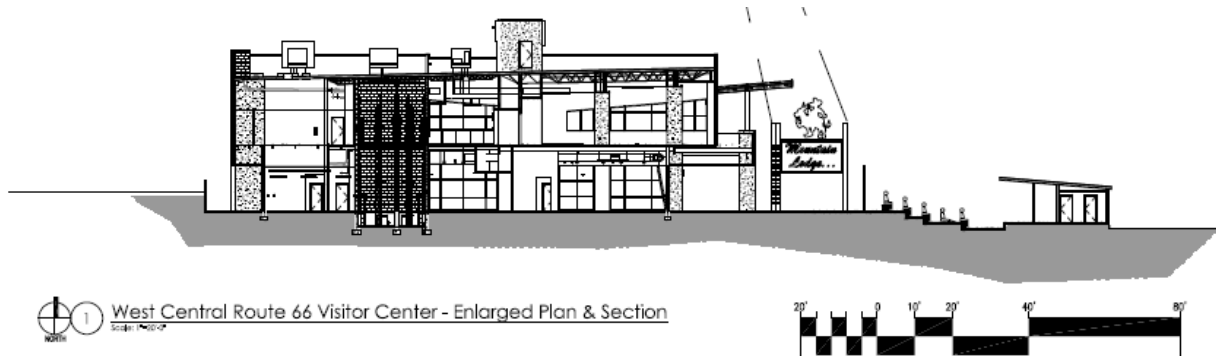
An Associated Press report and the city’s website say the sign was donated to the city by Owen St. Germain, who AP said “was close to having it demolished” after buying the Mountain Lodge property to build a home. “I have been amazed at the interest the sign has been to locals as well as tourists who ... stop by daily to take pictures,” he told AP.

The day after the sign’s removal, Route 66 Association of New Mexico reacted on facebook with “great sadness”: “In spite of the efforts of the New Mexico Route 66 Association, the City of Albuquerque’s Historic Preservation department, members of the Carnuel community and the East Mountain Historical Society, the current owner of the property was insistent the sign be removed as soon as possible.” After speaking to several parties involved in trying to save the sign, St. Germain apparently posted the sign for “\$1/free” on Facebook Marketplace; it was quickly picked up by the city.

Luis Hernandez Jr., executive director of the West Central Community Development Group, told EMHS Newsletter the Mountain Lodge sign will be “displayed prominently” at the Route 66 Visitor’s Center, set to open January 2022. The sign has already been incorporated into architectural drawings for the project (see plans on pg. 7); construction is to start in December. Lucas Luna of Belen, as part of the sign removal agreement, will store the sign one year and has submitted a proposal for its restoration, Hernandez said.

In February, Sandra Lee alerted fellow EMHS board members something was afoot with the sign; board member Robyn Hoffman volunteered to investigate. She spoke to EMHS member Rob Easterling, now living in Oklahoma, who had worked on the sign’s preservation in the past. The property had changed ownership since. On Feb. 27, Robyn met with St. Germain, who said he wanted the sign removed by March 1. He told Robyn he had been contacted by the Monticello Homeowners Association, Route 66 Association and others interested in saving the sign.

By March 2, St. Germain had agreed to keep the sign up another two weeks. Robyn said Jennifer Getz of the Monticello Homeowners Association had spent a month gathering information and raised \$1,100 toward removing and storing the sign. Robyn also spoke with Johnnie Meier of the Route 66 Association, who told her Johnny Plath, association board member and president of the New Mexico Sign Association, had offered free labor and expertise, and had contacted PNM and the DOT in anticipation of removing the sign. Efforts were still ongoing when the city donation announcement was made.



The Mountain Lodge sign is already part of plans for the West Central Route 66 Visitor Center. (Look closely; it’s to the right of the building.) *Courtesy West Central Community Development Group*

In a sad, stunning footnote to this saga, Johnny died May 8 due to complications of coronavirus. He had been caring for his father, who unknowingly had been infected at a rehab center before he was released. The elder John Plath died a month before Johnny, on April 8. As Ron Warnick posted on route66news.com: “Just weeks before his passing, an energized and vibrant Johnny joined a team of preservationists onsite to develop a plan for preserving the endangered Mountain Lodge neon sign in Carnuel. Johnny, applying his expertise in sign construction and design, put forth a plan, generously donating thousands of dollars of his professional time.”

Among other sign projects, Johnny Plath restored the rare Rotosphere in Moriarty. He is included by name (along with his brother Larry) in the Rotosphere chapter in *TIMELINES of the East Mountains*. The Rotosphere is a landmark on the EMHS map, *Mapping Our Vanishing Past*.

As Rick Holben wrote in *TIMELINES*, Mountain Lodge was built 1947-48 by C.B. and Marie Saunders. In the 1970s, the property sold to the Blankley family, who ran the motel, then turned it into apartments, which on Dec. 18, 2014, were destroyed by fire. Not long after the fire, the Blankleys contacted EMHS about the historic significance of the motel and we encouraged preservation of the sign, with Rob Easterling spearheading the effort.

On a personal note: The Mountain Lodge sign was built by Albuquerque-based Last-Ever Neon Sign Co., according to Rowland Tessier Jr. (your newsletter editor’s dad), who worked at Last-Ever in 1947. The first locally owned neon shop in the state, Last-Ever was a family business founded by Tessiers in 1932. Tessier said the Mountain Lodge sign was wired by his cousin Fred “Huck” Temme, “best flasher man in the shop.” *There’s no question the sign had neon (after its original wooden incarnation), but: did it “flash” or “move”?* Please write me at newsletter@eastmountainhistory.org if you remember.

Our History Exhibit Panels Get Spruced Up

The EMHS board has discussed recreating our History of the East Mountains display panels on easily transported materials, so they can become a traveling exhibit. Meanwhile, the original wood-framed panels – photographs, maps and information on foam board – continue to delight the public when displayed at events and during our annual open house. Over the years, however, pieces of the panels have routinely fallen off and been patched up piecemeal – and the gaps have been showing.



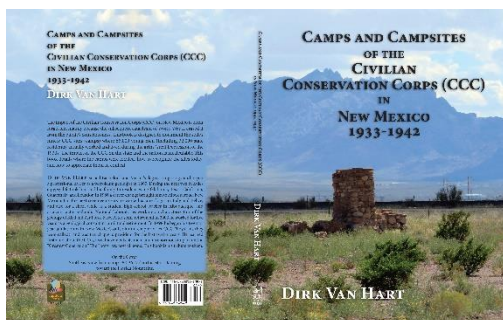
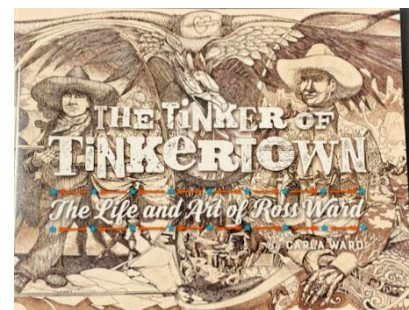
Early this year, Joyce Mendel met with Denise Tessier and Sandra Lee in the historic little Tijeras church to comprehensively search for missing pieces with the hope of making repairs. Denise found a large block of text for the introductory panel and reattached it. After taking measurements and assessing what else was missing, Joyce continued to work to fill in the gaps.

She contacted Andre Larroque, who in April recreated the large "Ancient East Mountain Pueblos" map (photo above) that had been missing from the Native Americans panel. Joyce reports that the new map is “like the original but with small improvements.” Joyce, Andre, Denise and others were part of the original committee that created the panels back in 1994, with help from a grant secured by Joyce. Created entirely by EMHS volunteers, the panels were built to be displayed in the little church. At one time, the panels were carted by volunteers to schools, community centers and events throughout the area – but they have proven too heavy to be moved any more. Ideally, the refurbished panels will remain in the church for which they were built, and a light, portable version of the exhibit will be made for sharing with the community in the future.

Two EMHS Members Release Books

Two East Mountain Historical Society members report they’ve released books this year.

Carla Ward’s biography of her late husband Ross Ward, *The Tinker of Tinkertown*, includes full-color reproductions of Ross’ art – from detailed drawings he did on old machine tape (at age 8!) to his full-blown artistry in later drawings, paintings and woodcuts, and, of course, his Tinkertown carvings and creations. Tinkertown is closed because of the pandemic, but the book is available for \$19.95 online at Tinkertown.com.



Dirk Van Hart in early March released *Camps and Campsites of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in New Mexico, 1933-1942*, published by Sunstone Press. Dirk, who has given talks for EMHS on more than one occasion, covered this topic at an EMHS public event in January 2016. It’s available at Amazon.com or from Dirk directly, and sells for \$29, including tax.

East Mountain Historical
Society
Newsletter
Published Quarterly

Denise Tessier....Writer/Editor

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 ideas or stories for future newsletters to the Editor, P.O. Box 379, Cedar Crest, NM 87008, or by email: newsletter@eastmountainhistory.org

All stories and photos by **Denise Tessier** unless noted otherwise. Many thanks to **Dick Brown** and **Anabel Sanchez** for proofing, and to **Sandra Lee** for help with the folding and stamping of the paper version that goes to members without email.

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 and landscapes, artifacts, records, or any item considered to be of historical significance. EMHS will also identify, collect and archive historical material of

News and Notes . . .

A big welcome to our new members: **John Arnold** of Cedar Crest, **Michael Noltensmeyer** of Ruidoso, **Dennis Kellogg** of Sandia Park and **Debra Johnson** of Modesto, Calif. Thank you for joining and for your support!



Rob Easterling (see Mountain Lodge story) has moved to historic Guthrie, Okla., where he is again active in preserving history (his dad once directed the Oklahoma Historical Society). We're happy to report he intends to remain an EMHS member and has generously sent us \$500, to be used wherever the need is greatest. Thank you, Rob!



Tijeras Mayor Jake Bruton who, on taking office Jan. 3 became the first new village mayor in 20 years, attended our Feb. 22 EMHS board meeting. "I definitely want to support the society in any way I can," he told the board. At the time, he had bought four EMHS 2020 calendars and planned to buy a copy of *TIMELINES* to put in the village office lobby.

Bruton also said he was hoping to pursue a number of repair projects, such as grading drainage away from the historic little church used by EMHS, as well as conducting repairs in the church and at the nearby Senior Center. He said he had already hired someone to fix things. However, Luis Garcia Park (where the church is located) and the center were closed in subsequent months because of the pandemic.



In light of state distancing requirements, the EMHS board has not held an in-person meeting since March; business has been conducted by email. If any member has experience conducting Zoom meetings, we would love to have you share your expertise. Please contact president@eastmountainhistory.org if you can help.



Bonnie Parks, local artist and shop owner whose painting on a saw blade is featured in our book (p. 299, Reno & Mary's Bar), passed away on March 6. Bonnie, who for many years was proprietress of Another Place 'n' Time in Tijeras, did not get to see the book, but had been told her work would be featured in *TIMELINES*.

EMHS Recipient Of Rectory Sign

EMHS has the sign that once directed parishioners to the rectory (priest's house) in Tijeras, thanks to long-time East Mountain resident Nancy Woodworth. Her late husband John "Woody" Woodworth bought the rectory on Criswell Road from the Cravens family around 1972 and the sign, painted on both sides, came with it. Nancy later lived in the house, and gave us the sign when she moved. "I'm very happy to give it to you because I know that's where it belongs," she told EMHS Newsletter.



Photo by Sandra Lee



Coming Soon: The 2021 East Mountain Historical Society Calendar, taking you down memory lane via Route 66! This year each month will feature an iconic Route 66 landmark and a historical New Mexico license plate.