

EAST MOUNTAIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Nominations of New Board Members

Nicolas Kennedy was raised in the East Mountains and currently serves as Clerk for the Village of Tijeras. He joined EMHS as an ex officio board member in 2022, building on the long-standing tradition of partnership and collaboration between the Village of Tijeras and EMHS. Nick has supported a number of EMHS projects and programs, including the current effort to restore the Campo Sanchez Stone House. He is a member of the Stone House Committee and assisted with successfully applying for and administering a District-Directed Funding grant from Bernalillo County District 5. As a student of history and someone who feels a deep connection to the East Mountains, Nick is eager to continue supporting the important work of EMHS by joining the board as Secretary.



Caroline Marie Browning Hess, a native New Mexican of the North Valley of Albuquerque, moved to the East Mountain region in October 2019. She served as the assistant Archivist during the grant program to set up the archive. She is an archivist, who is currently working on a digitization project with the Bureau of Reclamation. She continued her membership with the EMHS after the end of the grant to further the research into the history of this region. She is interested in revitalizing the oral history project.



At the EMHS Annual Meeting on November 12, 2023, the membership will vote for the slate of Board nominees for a two-year term. The following current Board members are up for re-election: Robyn Hoffman, Debbie Post, Jeannie Place, Rick Holben, Sandra Walton Lee, Lisa Darnold and Maria Herrera Dresser. The Board recommends the following to hold executive offices: President Robyn Hoffman; Vice-President Debbie Post; Secretary Nicolas Kennedy; Treasurer Jeannie Place. For information on the current Board members, please see the EMHS 2021 4th Quarter Newsletter, available at eastmountainhistory.org. The Board recommends the addition of two new members, Nicolas Kennedy and Caroline Browning Hess.

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

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Denise Tessier Takes Emeritus Status After 29 Years on the EMHS Board of Directors



Photo by Louise Waldron.



Known to many of us as the heart and soul of the East Mountain Historical Society, Denise Tessier has decided not to run again for a position on the Board of Directors. At the end of this year, Denise will be awarded Emeritus status, having served as a Board member for more than 25 years. Two others, Louise Waldron and Joyce Mendel, are emeritus members as co-founders of EMHS.

Denise joined the Board in 1994 and soon after was elected Recorder (Secretary). After three years as Recorder, she became editor of the EMHS Newsletter. For 24 years she wrote, laid out and produced that award-winning publication and also garnered publicity for EMHS with articles that appeared in many publications.

Before becoming President of the Board in 2011, she served as Co-Chair (co-president) with Louise Waldron, and Vice-Chair (VP), with Waldron as President. She was Vice President three years with President Anabel Sanchez and during that time, in 2008, Denise created EMHS' first website, writing its text and coding updates until East Mountain Graphics became webmaster in 2010. Denise served as President of the Board of Directors for seven very productive years.

EMHS undertook three major projects during her seven years leading the organization. Information gathered during the first – an oral history project – led EMHS to create a map of vanishing East Mountain places (Mapping Our Vanishing Past), which in turn led to EMHS' crowning achievement- the 700-page illustrated history book, of the East Mountains. With grant funds she helped obtain in partnership with the East Mountain Coalition, Denise interviewed community members and worked to plan the 2012 celebratory Centennial party for the East Mountain community. She was a working member of the map committee and, as a key member of the Book Committee, proofed and edited *Timelines*, to which she also contributed stories and photos.

Denise arranged many EMHS programs, introduced speakers and produced about 200 stories about EMHS for local media. As Newsletter editor, she managed the transition to email, while producing paper copies for members who did not have the then-new technology. She herself was a history speaker at times: on courthouses, Ojito de San Antonio, Carlito Springs and, at a state conference, the history of EMHS itself.

As EMHS' liaison, she attended coalition meetings that led to creation of Turquoise Trail/Gutierrez Canyon Open Space. In 2009, she started the EMHS Award of Recognition to cast a spotlight on preservation efforts of cultural and historic properties in the East Mountains; recipients include those responsible for restoring the stone schoolhouse in San Antonito; the Lucy Cemetery; signs and buildings along historic Route 66; and the Ross Ward mural at Triangle Grocery, among others. She helped produce EMHS's historic educational display panels often on view at the historic church in Tijeras. She has edited EMHS calendars and publications, and for several years had a regular route for sales of EMHS' postcards, maps and books.

Denise currently serves as EMHS Historian, and she has essentially served in that role since joining EMHS: acting as a recorder, collecting EMHS documents and preserving EMHS' history through the Newsletter. Denise chairs the Archives Committee and is the administrator of EMHS Archives, currently located in the Tijeras Senior Center. The EMHS Board adopted the Archives Guidelines and Acquisitions policy she developed.

EMHS has been so fortunate to have had the benefit of Denise's considerable talents and dedication for the past 29 years. She has brought the organization from initial development into an established, thriving and award-winning community organization. Denise began volunteering in the starting years of EMHS during her career as an award-winning daily newspaper reporter, editor and photographer. She wrote for numerous publications in her professional career, including the Albuquerque Journal, The New Mexico Lawyer, Pensions and Investments, American Archaeology, Nucleonics Week/Nuclear Fuel, Quantum, Spin and The New York Times. She served 25 years on the board of New Mexico Press Women, including a term as president and 20 years as historian. Some of her reporting work is on display through March 3, 2024 in the exhibit, "News for the People," at the Albuquerque Museum.

Denise has contributed so much to the preservation of the history and culture of the East Mountain community, the place she has lived in and loved for the past 45 years, and our lives are enriched by her work that is continuing.



Maria Herrera Dresser, her brother Adelicio, and Denise from a field trip about 20 years ago. Photo by Louise Waldron.

EMHS Annual Meeting

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE BY ROBYN HOFFMAN

Have you ever wondered where the turquoise is to be found on the Turquoise Trail? Come to the East Mountain Historical Society Annual Meeting Sunday November 12 and find out. Nationally known Santa Fe jeweler Douglas Magnus will present the afternoon's program on his ownership of the Tiffany Mine in Cerrillos.

Also you can hear from Board members and Committee chairs about EMHS' on-going programs and hear an update on the progress of the restoration of the Campo Stone House.

We will have the membership vote on the slate of nominees for the Board of Directors and executive officers. Short bios of the nominees appear in this edition on page 1. Two new members are joining the Board, and three are retiring after a combined 38 years of Board service!

If this does not entice you to come, Program Committee Chair Debbie Post has promised that there will be refreshments. Speaking of which, Debbie will soon be assuming the position of Vice-President, and is seeking volunteers for the hospitality aspect of EMHS programs. This is a fun and easy way to help which requires very limited finite time commitment. All of our Committee Chairs would like to have help from the membership, so if you are interested in volunteering on any activity of EMHS, you are most welcome.

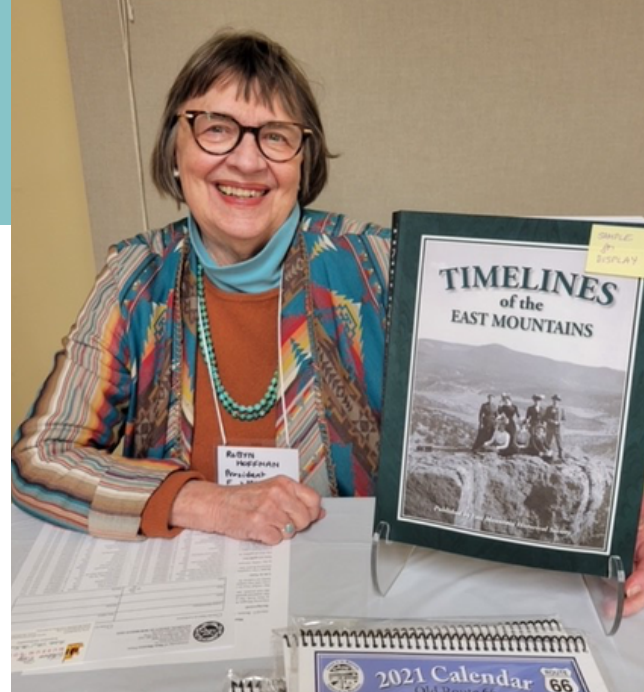
If you are not familiar with the programs and activities of EMHS, our newly designed website should have most all of the information you seek.

See you at the Annual Meeting! Please come say hello to us.

EMHS Celebrates the Annular Solar Eclipse

Participants at the BernCo East Mountain Celebration on Saturday, October 14, joined together in awe as the Annular Solar Eclipse unfolded. As the sun became a ring of fire, applause broke out across the field at Los Vecinos Community Center in Tijeras. Meanwhile, a constant stream of visitors and members came by the EMHS booth, and investigated the "Mapping Our Vanishing Past" map (newly reprinted!), browsed our award winning book *Timelines of the East Mountains*, delved into photo postcards, and snapped up copies of our new 2024 calendar. Debbie Post (EMHS Program Chair) handed out historical fact cards to the crowd, dressed in 1800s attire with bonnet and long skirt, while Rick Holben (EMHS Vice President) and Hallie Brown (EMHS Newsletter Editor and Board Member) shared history with visitors and members at the booth.

Thank you to Rick, Hallie and Debbie for setting up and staffing the booth, Nick Kennedy and the Village of Tijeras for tables, Jeannie Place for snacks and water, Lisa Darnold for reprinting maps, and Hallie and Rick for the new 2024 calendar printing and content.



Torrance: Terminus of the Santa Fe Central Railway

BY RICK HOLBEN

The town of Torrance, N.M., about eight miles northwest of Corona on N.M.-54, was established as the terminus of the 116-mile Santa Fe Central Railway that ran from Santa Fe through the Estancia valley to connect with the Rock Island Railroad system at “Torrance Station”.

The Santa Fe Central Railway was incorporated in 1901 by a group of Eastern entrepreneurs known as the Pennsylvania Development Company. One of the company’s promoters was Francis J. Torrance, after whom both the town and county of Torrance were named.

In early 1902, a post office was established at Torrance and A.G. Kennedy, chief engineer of the Santa Fe Railway, announced that a map for the townsite of Torrance had been completed. It was noted that the town was laid out with “wide streets” and, in addition to a

NEWS AND NOTES

A hearty welcome to our new and renewed members: **Mark and Julie Clevenger of Cedar Crest; Cecil Montano of Edgewood; Patrick and Sharolyn Eitenbichler, Dave and Suzanne Kitchen, Anne Merkley of Sandia Park; Claudia Breckenridge, Larry Larrichio, Dianne Rossbach of Albuquerque; and Claudia and Steve Huchting, Debra Post of Tijeras.**

EMHS is seeking volunteers to support various committees including Oral Histories, Historic Properties, and Information Technology. Please email president@eastmountainhistory.org if you are interested in learning more about our volunteer opportunities.



People gathered in front of the Torrance, N.M., train depot, about 1905. Photo Courtesy Rick Holben Collection.

“fine union depot” there were three city parks – one at the depot and two others, “Andrews” and “Hopewell”, named after other Santa Fe Central developers. It was proposed that water be piped into the town from wells being drilled eight miles away.

A 1903 New Mexico business directory lists the population of Torrance at 75. By 1905, the town had grown to include a handful of commercial businesses and perhaps a few private residences. In April 1905, an altercation at Torrance led to the shooting death of a deputy sheriff named James M. Chase. The two men charged in the shooting were Lincoln County cowboys Jasper “Jap” Clark and W.A. McKean. It was noted that bad blood had existed between the men for some time and their chance encounter at Torrance reignited tensions. The case of the killing and resulting court trials were covered heavily by New Mexico newspapers. From the detailed court testimony it would appear that most, if not all, of the commercial buildings of Torrance were involved in the incident. The buildings included the train depot, The Cottage Hotel, Dunlavy Mercantile Store, the James Davidson Saloon and another business known as both “The Gilbert” and “The Garvin House”.

In 1905, a state law was enacted that required a liquor license be issued only to businesses in settlements of at least 100 people. Due to this regulation, the James Davidson Saloon in Torrance was forced to close at the end of November. The Estancia News reported that the saloon building was going to be renovated and turned into a private school run by Miss Clara Pence of Estancia. In early 1906, Wilbur Dunlavy, manager of the Dunlavy Mercantile, was in Estancia reporting that everything was peaceful at Torrance and “the tough name the town has had was a thing of the past”, also noting that the school had 20 students attending.

As reported by the Roswell Daily Record, in early 1910 Rev. John C. Trapp and two of his sons were being held in the Roswell jail for the killing of deputy sheriff W.J. McAdams near Corona, where the Trapp family ran a truck farm on the Rock Island Railroad. Trapp had received a homestead patent for land that adjoined the townsite of Torrance on the west in 1908. Trapp and his family were from Arkansas and are recorded in the area as early as December 1904, when Rev. Trapp officiated the wedding of James H. Smart and Minnie Allen at Torrance. Smart was a section foreman for the Santa Fe Central. Over the next year or so, Trapp is noted as preaching sermons regularly at Estancia. Though all three were involved, the courts found only Trapp’s oldest son Malcom guilty in the killing of deputy sheriff McAdams. The Santa Fe Central Railway became part of the New Mexico Central Railroad in 1908 and due to financial difficulties the 116-mile railroad slowly declined and changed ownership several more times.

In 1930, under the ownership of the Santa Fe Railroad, the tracks between Torrance and Willard were removed from service. In 1912, the depot at Torrance was moved to Corona, where it was used by the Southern Pacific. Through newspaper references, directory listings and census records there is evidence at least a hotel and perhaps a store were still operating at Torrance until around 1920. Through the later 1920s and early 1930s no references to the town can be found. In 1935, a post office was again established at Torrance, with Florence Switzer as postmistress. Business directory listings show Switzer operated a store, gas station and post office at Torrance; her husband C.W. Switzer was “Grazing Inspector” and secretary of the Torrance Wool Growers Association.

The post office at Torrance was discontinued in 1947. In 1952, a Highway 54 road construction crew was reported to be camped at “Torrance Station”. That’s the last reference found for Torrance as a community or location, probably marking the end of its 50-year span of existence.

A Big Thank You to Our Retiring Board Members!

2023 was a very productive year for the EMHS, thanks to the efforts of our hard-working Board members. As detailed in the lead article, our prior leader Denise Tessier leaves the Board after 29 years of service. Fortunately she will remain volunteering her time and talent as Chair of the Archives and EMHS Historian. Dick Brown is leaving to pursue the publication of the second and third volumes of his trilogy of historical fiction novels after six years on the Board. Hallie Brown is stepping down after three years of Board service to apply her efforts to her full-time position as Executive Director of United Voices for Newcomer Rights. Rick Holben will take a breather from being Vice-President of the Board to have more breath for his significant contributions on the Stone House Planning Committee, while continuing on the board as EMHS merchandise custodian, shipper and handler, historic researcher and calendar writer.

Dick Brown, a 38-year resident of the Manzanitas, has been an EMHS member since 2015. He served six years on the Board of Directors and five years as Secretary, while also serving as Vice President and President of the Grand Canyon Historical Society. Dick helped draft the current Bylaws of EMHS, and worked on the committee that produced *Timelines of the East Mountains*, an award-winning book first published in April 2020; its three printings total 1,690 copies. Dick has contributed feature articles to the EMHS Quarterly Newsletter, presentations at EMHS programs and HSNM conferences. He is a retired systems engineer, former Navy submariner, balloon pilot, magazine editor, historian, published author of nine books, Balloon Fiesta Hall of Fame inductee, and recipient of the Federation Aeronautique Internationale's Diplome Montgolfier – the world's highest ballooning honor. A video about an historic ballooning feat in the East Mountains in 1909 as narrated by Dick is available on the EMHS website.



Hallie Brown [no relation] is leaving the Board after having served for three years -- one as ex officio member while the Clerk/Manager of the Village of Tijeras, and a two-year term after having been elected by the membership in 2021. Hallie's skills have been invaluable in procuring website design and updates, obtaining grants, and always showing up to assist with sales and programs. Hallie redesigned the EMHS newsletter, and made it possible for EMHS to accept card payments at special events, all while completing her Masters Degree in Public Policy at the



University of New Mexico. Although she will be leaving the Board in December, Hallie will continue to produce the EMHS Quarterly Newsletter. Hallie's leadership skills are now focused on directing the Albuquerque-based, nonprofit organization United Voices for Newcomer Rights, which works in partnership with newcomers (immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and others who are new to the U.S.) to support their mental health and well-being. If you are interested in learning more about this work, visit uvnr.org.

Looking Ahead at Upcoming Events

Mark your calendars for upcoming events of historical interest:

- Tuesday, November 7, 10am-12pm, 10 Tijeras Avenue, Tijeras, NM 87059, Tijeras Senior Center's One Year Anniversary of the Grand Reopening: EMHS will have panel displays of historical photographs and maps.*
- Sunday, November 12, 2pm-3:30pm, Tijeras Village Hall Council Chambers, 12 Camino Municipal, Tijeras, NM 87059, EMHS Annual Member Meeting and Program on the Tiffany Mine in Cerrillos. Refreshments will be served.*
- April 25-27, Historical Society of New Mexico Annual Conference, Embassy Suites, 1000 Woodward Place NE, Albuquerque. For more information: <https://hsnm.org/history-conference/>*

East Mountain Historical Society

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