

CORAZON de los CAMINOS
HEART OF THE TRAIL CHAPTER
SANTA FE TRAIL ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER
November 2009

BUSINESS MEETING NOVEMBER 22

The Sunday, November 22 meeting of Corazon Chapter will be at Charlie's Spic and Span Bakery and Café, 713 Douglas Avenue, Las Vegas at 1 p.m. This will be the annual end-of-the-year business meeting including election of the Board of Directors for a two-year term. A slate of candidates will be presented but nominations are welcome from the floor.

The program will be a portrayal by Inez Ross of "Marion Russell on the Santa Fe Trail" based on Russell's book *The Land of Enchantment*. Inez, a Corazon Chapter member, is the author of Gothic romance novels with southwest settings including *The Adobe Castle* and *Perilous Pursuit on the Santa Fe Trail*. She and four other women made their own "perilous pursuit" a few years ago when they walked the Cimarron Route of the Trail.

TOUR NEW MEXICO HISTORY MUSEUM

On Saturday November 14, Corazon members are invited to join the End of the Trail Chapter on a tour of the New Mexico History Museum. Meet at the Museum, located just behind the Palace of the Governors in Santa Fe, at 1 p.m. Admission is \$6.00. Rene Harris, assistant museum director, will lead the tour, and SFTA president Joanne VanCoevern and vice-president Roger Slusher will be joining the group.

NOTES ALONG THE TRAIL

What do you like about our Chapter?

How can we make it better?

We are approaching the end of another year---seeing old friends and greeting new ones. Our meetings are always open to new folks.

It has been my pleasure to serve as your President for the past two years and I look forward to the next year just being on the sidelines. This meeting is our annual business meeting. Election of office will be held. I did not formally appoint a nominating committee. Folks have volunteered. But please, nominate from the floor or volunteer. The new officers will need your help and suggestions. Planning next year's agenda, field trips and speakers is always a HUGE and challenging task.

Everyone should be aware of threats along the Trail. We protect and educate folks along the way.

All is well at the Point of Rocks. Even though more moisture would have been welcome, we fared better than some.

I leave you with these thoughts:

Live simply

Love generously

Care deeply

Speak kindly
And leave the rest to God.
Faye

JUAN de ONATE'S ROUTE

On October 18th, eight members and friends of the Corazon Santa Fe Trail Chapter met in Las Vegas to accompany Harry Myers on a portion of Juan de Onate's route toward Llano Estacado. We traveled down Highway 104 from Las Vegas to Tucumcari, stopping at three historic places—the Canadian Escarpment at Corazon Hill, the Narrows East of Conchas Dam and the Roadside Marker pointing out the location of abandoned Fort Bascom. This is a part of an old and heavily used route connecting the Llano and the Rio Grande Pueblos.

In 1595, Onate was awarded a contract by King Philip of Spain to settle Nuevo Mexico. Financing the project himself, he hoped to spread Catholicism among the natives and to find silver mines and other riches. It was not until 1598 that he was finally able to head north from New Spain; in May of 1598 he forded the Rio Grande at El Paso de Norte, took possession of Nuevo Mexico in the name of King Philip and made contact with the first of the many pueblos of the northern Rio Grande valley. In July 1598 he established the headquarters of the Nuevo Mexico colony at San Juan Pueblo north of present day Santa Fe. During the next three years he searched unsuccessfully for silver and dealt severely with mutiny and desertion by his followers and an Indian revolt at Acoma. (It is his extreme punishment of the Acoma Indians that is now most remembered and forms his historic legacy.) By 1601, he was still trying to bring prosperity to the colony by sending out prospecting expeditions. On June 23, 1601, he started a journey to the plains and Quivira. It was part of this route that we traveled.

In his article *The Mystery of the Buffalo Plains: Coronado's Route from Pecos to the Llano*, Harry describes the journey as follows: Onate led his expedition out of San Gabriel and headed for Galisteo. After several days they headed east along Canon Blanco, reaching the Pecos River near Anton Chico. The next day they reached the Gallinas River, probably near Park Springs. Another three days of marching brought the party to a third river which Onate named Magdalena, but which can now be identified as the Canadian. Onate states, "At first we did not think much of it, because we struck it at a place where it was hemmed in by rocks, making it unattractive." A map drawn by Martinez in 1602 shows many physical features of the area, such as the Ute and Rita Blanca Creeks flowing into the Canadian, the various meanders and fords of the Canadian, and the route from San Gabriel, and confirms that the Onate expedition reached the Canadian at the Narrows. Josiah Gregg, writing in 1844 about the Santa Fe Trail, described the Narrows as a spot where "we found the point of a table plain projecting abruptly against the river, so as to render it impossible for wagons to pass without great risk." And Lt. Col. Benjamin S. Roberts, writing in 1860 says that "Mesa Rica extends for several miles along the right bank and on the left bank a series of lower broken mesas pressed in on the river, causing it to flow, narrower and swifter, between high banks and cliffs, for about six miles through the "Angosturas" (narrows). These

similar descriptions and the Martinez map leads Harry to conclude that there is little doubt that Onate was at the Narrows east of Conchas Dam.

---Reported by Martha McCaffrey

MANY THANKS, MARTHA

My sincere thanks to Martha McCaffrey for her excellent report on the October tour. It makes a job so much easier---and more pleasant—to have willing helpers. Thanks again, Martha.

FORT BASCOM IN HISTORY

Fort Bascom was located on the banks of the Canadian River 12 miles north of Tucumcari. Brig. Gen James H. Carleton established it in 1863 to control the Comanches, Kiowa and other tribes that frequented the territory, to watch over the Santa Fe and Goodnight-Loving Trails and to police the activities of the Comancheros.

Several expeditions were deployed from Fort Bascom against the Plains Indians. The best know of these is the clash led by Kit Carson that came to be called the Battle of Adobe Walls. Also, General Philip Sheridan sent a column east from there in the winter campaign of 1868-69,

When the post was abandoned in 1870, troops and supplies were sent to Fort Union. The sandstone officers' quarters and adobe buildings, never sturdy, quickly fell into disrepair. Today nothing remains---a roadside marker extols its history.

DID YOU KNOW?

Reynaldo Rivera created a 12-foot bronze equestrian statue of Onate for the Onate Monument and Visitors Center in Alcade. In January 1998, the 500th anniversary of his expedition, vandals cut a food off the statue to protest Onate and the harsh punishment of Acoma Pueblo Indians. The damage to the statue was quickly repaired, but not the reputation of Onate.

HAPPY THANKSGIVING, EVERYONE!

