

T• Museum Times



NEW MEXICO HISTORY MUSEUM | PALACE OF THE GOVERNORS | HISTORY LIBRARY | PHOTO ARCHIVES | PALACE PRESS | PORTAL PROGRAM

Lowriders Hanging High

Wander into the Palace of the Governors entrance and you'll get a taste of the renovations being planned for our favorite National Historic Landmark. The front desk has been converted into a smaller, more appropriate size, clad in copper and topped with granite. On the walls, you'll see a contemporary take on New Mexico's Hispanic culture.

A few of Jack Parsons' images of Northern New Mexico lowriders make up a temporary exhibition that also celebrates the Photo Legacy Project. As dreamed up by the Palace of the Governors Photo Archives, the project collects the works of contemporary photographers. Parsons was an early and eager contributor.

The photos on display first appeared in the 2005 Museum of New Mexico Press book, *Low 'n Slow: Lowriding in New Mexico*, by Parsons, Carmella Padilla and Juan Estevan Arellano. Through Parsons' images, Padilla's essays and Arellano's slang-style dialogues, the book explored the lowrider lifestyle in ways that honored its dignity.

"The lobby area is the first step of a larger effort to freshen up the Palace's rooms," museum Director Frances Levine said. "Jack's photos give it color and liveliness while underscoring the Palace's 400-year-old tie to Spanish culture in the United States."

Parsons, who lives in Santa Fe, won a 2006 Governor's Award for Excellence and Achievement in the Arts. His work can be seen in numerous books, including *Dark Beauty* and *Santa Fe Style*.



Jack Parsons photographs on display in the Palace of the Governors lobby.



Santa hears two boys' Christmas wishes (above) while Christmas at the Palace visitors enjoy a courtyard bonfire (below).

Catch the Holiday Spirit

In the early 1970s, the San Antonio neighborhood near Acequia Madre and Paseo de Peralta gave birth to an event that grew into a Santa Fe tradition. Las Posadas, originally a celebration among neighbors who successfully warded off the construction of an apartment building, today draws participants from throughout the United States—many of whom plan their holiday travel based on its schedule.



In the early 1980s, the Palace of the Governors took over the event, which had grown beyond the capacity of the neighborhood's narrow streets, and moved it to the Santa Fe Plaza. Christmas at the Palace was also born, and this year marks its 29th incarnation.

Mark your calendars for Dec. 13–15, when Holidays at the Palace offers a bounty of activities—live music, arts and crafts from children of the Portal artisans, and a visit from a jolly elf with a decidedly German accent.

Christmas at the Palace kicks it off, 5:30 to 8 pm, on Friday, Dec. 13. Bring an item of non-perishable food as your donation to the evening's fun, which includes printing a holiday card on an antique press, chatting with Mr. and Mrs. Claus, enjoying hot cider and cookies, taking a swing at a piñata, making a paper-bag cowboy boot, and listening to these performances:

continued ►

Calendar

FREE FRIDAY EVENINGS REMINDER

The museum is open 5–8 PM for free on Fridays the first week of the month only through April. We'll return to an every-Friday-evening schedule in May.

FRIDAY, DEC. 6

Free First Friday Gallery Talk: "Toys Were Us: Historic Playthings," 5:30 and 6:30 PM, Telling New Mexico gallery

The history of toys reflects the history of our cultures. Educator Melanie LaBorwit explores lives once lived as seen through toys once used by children in New Mexico's forts. Free.



FRIDAY, DEC. 6

The Luminaria Awards, 5:30 PM

Museum Director Frances Levine is one of 10 people honored by the New Mexico Community Foundation as Luminarias—a tribute to outstanding individuals from throughout the state who make profound contributions to their communities. The awards dinner is at the Scottish Rite Center. For tickets, call (505) 820-6860, ext. 17.

SATURDAY, DEC. 7

Los Compadres del Palacio annual meeting, 10 AM to noon

Museum Director Fran Levine talks about what she learned in her visits to museums in India. Committee chairs report on the 2013 accomplishments of this key support group for the museum. Officers for 2014 will be elected.

MONDAY, DEC. 9

Museum Guides meeting

9 AM, Cowboy Christmas Brunch in the Meem Community Room; 9:30 AM program.

FRIDAY, DEC. 13

Christmas at the Palace, 5:30–8 PM

The 29th anniversary of this beloved community event includes hot cider, live music, a piñata for the kids, and some quality time with Mr. and Mrs. Claus in the Palace Courtyard. (See story for details on our holiday events.) Free. Donations of non-perishable food are encouraged.

Catch the Holiday Spirit *continued*

- 5:30–6:30 pm, Coro de Agua Fria, traditional Christmas carols in the Palace Courtyard.
- 5:30–6:30 pm, Santa Fe Talent Education ensemble, holiday and classical music within the *Santa Fe Found* exhibit inside the Palace.
- 5:30–6:30 pm, EPIK Youth of the Santa Fe Concert Association, Christmas carols and classical music in the Palace's Green Room.
- 6:40–7:30 pm, Schola Cantorum of Santa Fe, a cappella sacred masterpieces in *Santa Fe Found*.
- 6:40–7:30 pm, Ensembles from the New Mexico School for the Arts, holiday favorites and music of the Baroque and Classical masters in the Green Room.



A young jeweler displays her work at the Young Native Artists Holiday Show & Sale (above). The Las Posadas entourage makes its way around the plaza (below).

Come back during museum hours on Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 14 and 15, for the Young Native Artists Holiday Show & Sale in the classroom and Meem Community Room.



Las Posadas will be 5:30 to 7 pm on Sunday, Dec. 15. Based on a Catholic novena, our version compresses the activity

into one evening and adds devils on merchants' rooftops to drive the Holy Family away. Actors and a choir from the Church of the Holy Cross in Santa Cruz, with help from Coro de Agua Fria, lead hundreds of participants around the Plaza and its twinkling palette of Christmas lights. The search for an inn ends when everyone is welcomed into the Palace Courtyard for carols, hot cider and cookies.

Fray Diego de Sorio introduced Las Posadas to the Americas in 1578. The Augustinian missionary held the first one in the church of Acolman in Mexico. Since then, the liturgical novena conducted by priests, has been transformed to a Christmas pageant conducted by friends and neighbors all over New Mexico. Small communities host the nine-day events, in which people travel from home to home, often earning a steaming bowl of posole in return.

Two tips from Santa's elves: The museum closes at 3 pm on Dec. 13 and 15 so staff can prepare for the events. And Las Posadas requires street closures within the Plaza area, so plan extra time for parking.



Share the Cheer!

Interested in volunteering for any of our holiday events? Contact Tay Balenovic at (505) 476-5156, or email Tay.Balenovic@state.nm.us.

**SATURDAY AND SUNDAY,
DEC. 14 AND 15**
**Young Native Artists Holiday Show
& Sale**

Pick up some Christmas presents and get in on the ground floor of collecting from the next generation of Native artists. Children and grandchildren of the Palace Portal artists strut their stuff in the Meem Room and classroom. Saturday hours, 10 AM–4 PM; Sunday hours, 10 AM–3 PM. Enter through the Washington Avenue doors. Free.

SUNDAY, DEC. 15
Las Posadas, 5:30–7 PM

The annual candle-lit procession of Las Posadas travels around the Santa Fe Plaza and concludes in the Palace Courtyard with carols and cookies. (The museum will close at 3 PM on Dec. 13 and 15 to prepare for these special events.) Free.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 18
**“Deconstructing Hacienda de
los Martinez, Ranchitos de Taos,”
Noon, Meem Community Room**

Santa Fe photographer Cliff Mills delivers the last Brainpower & Brownbags Lecture of 2013. Free.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 25

Christmas holiday for state workers; museum closed.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 1

New Year’s holiday for state workers; museum closed.



FRIDAY, JAN. 3
**Free First Friday Gallery Talk:
“Postcards from the Past:
Fred Harvey’s Southwest,” 5:30 and
6:30 PM, Mezzanine**

Meredith Davidson, curator of 19th- and 20th-century Southwest collections, talks about the evolution of cultural tourism as seen through the postcards that followed Fred Harvey’s 1904 alliance with the Detroit Publishing Company. Free.



Bathinda School girls show Frances Levine and Steve Cox of Ohio’s Rio Grande University their henna (*mhendi*) decorations at the Chandigarh Museum.

**New Mexico’s India
Connection** *by Dr. Frances Levine*

Ask most people about their dream vacation, and more than a few would likely seek a lazy week on a beach or at an elegant spa. The vacation I took last month in Northern India may not have been relaxing in a luxury-resort sense, but it was a fulfilling experience.

It all began with an email from Sarab Nihal Singh, a friend and colleague from my days as an assistant dean at the Santa Fe Community College. His company and the Nihal Foundation were sponsoring a conference on teacher-training and awarding scholarships to village youths.

He asked me to join the conference, with support generously provided by the Nihal Foundation. After, we traveled throughout the Punjab, visiting museums and colleges, along with several of the remote villages where the foundation is sponsoring education scholarships and online employment for village youth.

My visit to Amritsar, home of the Golden Temple, was deeply moving. The temple is a place I had seen often in photographs, but hearing the kirtan (prayers from the Sikh sacred book, the Guru) sung to the accompaniment of a tabla and harmonium there was something I will never forget.

It’s rather amazing to think of the many connections that exist between New Mexico and the Punjab, many of which resulted from the spiritual work of Siri Singh Sahib (Yogi Bhajan) and Bhai Sahiba Dr. Inderjit Kaur Khalsa (Bibiji), who began the Guru Ram Das Ashram in Española in the 1970s. Their outreach work not only helps us understand the need to educate the whole person—mind, body and spirit—but has also connected New Mexicans to India.

In the three weeks that I was there, I experienced a deep connection to people, places and, of course, the cuisine. These connections are so deeply felt that I believe they came from my heart. Or was it that the feelings were released from my very own soul? I am sure there is a little bit of truth in both of these answers.



Frances Levine (top) at the spectacular Virsate-e-Khalsa Heritage Museum at Anandpur Sahib, near Chandigarh. Students at the Miri Piri School (bottom) near Amritsa. Yogi Bhajan started the school in the 1980s. It now has a worldwide student body of 110.

MONDAY, JAN. 13

Museum Guides meeting

9 AM, coffee in the Meem Community Room; 9:30 AM, "El Paso del Norte: Southern Gateway," a presentation by State Historian Rick Hendricks.



FRIDAY, JAN. 17

Cowboy Movie Night: *City Slickers*, 5:30 PM, Auditorium

Award-winning western author Johnny Boggs introduces a showing of the Billy Crystal movie about a trail drive, a mid-life crisis and a seemingly sinister Jack Palance. Part of *Cowboys Real and Imagined*. Free.

MONDAY, JAN. 20

Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday for state workers.



MONDAY, JAN. 27

Culture Day at the Capitol, 8 AM–5 PM

Visit the Roundhouse Rotunda to see what each of the Department of Cultural Affairs entities are up to these days. A special presentation at the noon hour will highlight DCA's contributions to the art, history, culture—and economy—of New Mexico. Free.

SUNDAY, FEB. 9

Closing day: *Tall Tales of the Wild West: The Stories of Karl May*

Last chance to see this Mezzanine exhibit on the German author who conjured a Wild West from his wild mind.



New kids, from left: Hannah Abelbeck, Rita Garcia, Arlene Ann, and Arcelia Pineda.

New Kids on the Block

Say hello to four new faces on the administrative team. Hannah Abelbeck works in the Photo Archives, digitizing and archiving images. Arlene Ann takes over Carla Ortiz's administrator role. Arcelia Pineda is our go-to person for all things financial. And Rita Garcia oversees front desk staff.

We asked them to answer a few questions to help us get to know them better.

Tell us a bit about yourselves.

Hanna: I am from Nebraska, studied English and art history at the University of Kansas and received an MA in English from Pennsylvania State University. I've also served as the marketing and communications director for the Dutchland Derby Rollers.

Arlene: I was born and raised in the Pacific Northwest. I used to be a commercial fisher-person in Alaska, and a forest firefighter in Washington state.

Arcelia: I moved here with my two daughters from Bakersfield, California, eight years ago. Before working at the History Museum, I was employed at the Department of Transportation for seven years. I also have a part-time job on the weekends as a hairstylist.

Rita: I was born and raised in Vaughn, New Mexico. I attended business college for a year, then started working in the data entry field. I have 14 years prior with the state Department of Health and Department of Human Services.

What's cool about working for the History Museum?

Hannah: Working with rare and usual materials, interpreting the past and sharing an appreciation of art objects and cultural artifacts with others.

Arlene: The exhibits and the staff.

Arcelia: Learning more about New Mexico history, culture and art.

Rita: I enjoy seeing items that my parents had and the process of using those items. I like traveling through time and through the stories of our relatives.

What do you do in your spare time?

Hannah: I love to travel. I like to bicycle, and I really like to refurbish antique and vintage bicycles. I roller skate, play roller derby, and occasionally referee. I enjoy hiking, camping and snowshoeing, and love photography and reading.

Arlene: We enjoy traveling, gardening and raising chickens for fresh eggs.

Arcelia: I enjoy staying home and spending time with my family.

Rita: I work two acres of land in the Northwest Valley of Albuquerque and three acres in Llano Quemado in Taos.



Pennie McBride with one of her favorite wedding gowns in the Collections Vault.

An Irish Rose Says 'Farewell'

Assistant Collections Manager Pennie McBride began working with the Palace in October 2003, when thousands of artifacts had to be moved out for the History Museum's construction. In October 2007, she took a fulltime job and since then completed the major milestone of rehousing all of the textiles in state-of-the-art perfection.

A part-time jewelry-maker, she's chosen to leave her subterranean office here to focus full-time on preparing for art festivals in the United States and her native Ireland.

On Dec. 2, we bid her a sad farewell, though we'll remain forever grateful for all she accomplished while here.

"It's wonderful to see the textiles stored with care and accessible to curators, visitors and researchers," she said. "It was a great opportunity to work with textile conservator Rebecca Tinkham, who taught me a lot about materials, rehousing techniques and preventative conservation. I loved overseeing the group of six dedicated volunteers who handled the textiles with care and made mounts with such precision.

"Currently, we're working on photographing the textiles and attached those images to the database is very rewarding."

Pennie assures us that she'll miss us as much as we'll miss her, adding, "There is never a dull moment here. The best memory was the day a cowboy arrived on horseback to see *Cowboys Real and Imagined*."



History Museum visitors check out Kumi Yamashita's *Fragments*. **Below:** Artist Kumi Yamashita.

Art in the Shadow of Itself

Since our 2009 grand opening, the second-floor art installation, *Fragments*, has been one of the museum's most popular features. Created by Kumi Yamashita, a New York-based artist, it features 40 cast-resin tiles arrayed in an oval shape. Though they appear to simply be colored blocks, when lit from the side, they reveal the shadows of human faces—actual New Mexicans, whose photographs Yamashita took on a statewide tour.

What's she's been up to since then? Plenty.

"I've done a little traveling in Vietnam and Laos, had my work shown at the Smithsonian in a portrait exhibition, recently opened up a new studio, and just installed a *Light & Shadow* sculpture for an exhibition in Como, Italy," Yamashita wrote in an email.

Fragments, she wrote, is "definitely a piece of which I have very fond memories. ... To gather the profiles, I was able to meet many wonderful people and learn a bit about them and their lives. The artwork is also special to me in that it is the most colorful work I've ever done."

In making it, she said, "I thought about all the fragments of pottery you can find when walking in the desert, fragments of objects that were once held by someone. For me, the ephemeral nature of shadows seemed appropriate."

Prior to starting the piece, Yamashita had logged time in New Mexico as a participant in La Union's Border Arts Residency and the Roswell Artist in Residence program. "When I saw the call for artists to apply for the commission, I was very happy to have the chance to return to a state that I really feel connected to."

She stays in touch with some of the people whose profiles are in the artwork and longs for the day when she can return.

"I often think of New Mexico and its big deep-blue sky and fantasize about returning to live in an adobe house one day—usually during my commute in rush-hour traffic in NYC!"



An Exhibit Earns an Encore

The 2012 exhibit, *Native American Portraits: Points of Inquiry*, enchanted visitors to the Mezzanine Gallery with rare, original images by photographers like Edward S. Curtis, Karl Moon and T. Harmon Parkhurst. Photo Archivist Daniel Kosharek organized it somewhat on the fly, with help from Diane Bird, photo archivist at the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture, and Andrew Smith of the Andrew Smith Gallery. They intended to fill a short-term hole in our exhibit schedule, but did such a fine job that the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture has picked up the exhibit and plans to mount it with additional materials on Feb. 16, continuing the show into next December.

Kosharek said that visitors to our sister museum will see new photographs, take part in public programs, and utilize a scanning station to submit their own images. (The museum might even have a photo booth.)

“One of the interesting things is we’re working with the conservation laboratory to take light readings of all the photographs and, at the end of the exhibit, we’ll have details on how they reacted to light—especially the old albumen prints,” Kosharek said. “We may find out they’re more stable than we think.”

The exhibit’s earliest photos date from the late 1860s and are among the earliest photographic images of Native peoples.

“I’m really glad this exhibit is getting another chance,” Kosharek said, “particularly at a place like MIAC.”



Unidentified woman and child, Jemez Pueblo, New Mexico, ca 1912. Photo by Jesse Nusbaum. Glass negative. Palace of the Governors Photo Archives 61712.



Students using the Routes and Roots program visit parts of *Telling New Mexico*, including the railroad era (above) and early Native life (below).

A New Route to Museum Education

Issues of immigration regularly make news headlines, but does that mean they’re something new? Not according to a new educational program at the History Museum.

This fall, we began offering Routes and Roots, a dialogue-based high-school curriculum developed as part of the museum’s affiliation with the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience. Routes and Roots takes students on a guided tour of *Telling New Mexico: Stories from Then and Now*, highlighting how New Mexico’s story consists of the interconnected movements and settlements of people of many different cultures. How does immigration continue to transform society and shape our shared experiences as Americans? That question underscores the program.

Each visit starts in the museum classroom for a short orientation before students hit the core exhibit, stopping at various places to consider different questions. Who lives in New Mexico? What is a homeland? Who is a New Mexican? Why do people create maps and mark territories? Who draws those boundaries and who or what is left outside of them? Who belongs and who does not? Who decides?

Students and teachers can utilize two pre-visit lesson plans, *Homescapes* and *Identity Recipes*, which promote discussions about how contemporary immigration is tied to local histories and cultures as well as world events and economic transformations.

Asked about their experience, one teacher wrote that the program is valuable because “it reinforces concepts from the classroom ... (and) brings images and artifacts to the students, which helps make history more real.” Comments from students included, “It was valuable because it was very understandable and easy to get a hold of,” and, “Even when you think you know something, you learn something new.”

The International Coalition of Sites of Conscience is a worldwide network of museums, historic sites and initiatives commemorating struggles for justice or human rights. As a member of the Immigration and Civil Rights Sites of Conscience Network in the United States, the History Museum uses our core exhibit to bridge the past to the present.

