

Highlights of the past year from the
Friends of the Coronado [and Jemez] Historic Sites (FCHS)
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During 2022, the Friends of Coronado Historic Site (FCHS), a 501.3c organization, continued its activities to offer opportunities for persons interested in learning about and preserving the history and culture of the NM Historic Sites of Coronado (Kuaua pueblo ruins) and Jemez (Guisewa pueblo ruins and the old Spanish San Jose Mission). The FCHS members work alongside the state staff of these historic sites, providing volunteer work and targeted donations benefiting historic site objectives, as well as interesting activities for its members. Since mid-year of 2022, there were two major organizational changes related to the three sites included in the objectives of the FCHS.

In July of 2022, Matt Barbour, the regional director for the historic sites of Coronado, Jemez and Los Luceros, moved to become the deputy director of the New Mexico Historic Sites programs and services under the NM Department of Cultural Affairs, thereby spreading his capabilities across all the NM Historic Sites. Since October 2022, the FCHS has been coordinating its activities with the management objectives and program philosophy of the new regional director, Dr. Elisabeth Stone. Elisabeth has a strong background and wide experience in archeology and museum education and commitment to pueblo and community-led action. In recent months the docents and other volunteers from the FCHS membership group have been provided training sessions and other opportunities organized by Elisabeth and site staff focused on ways to enhance the experience and learning by visitors to the historic sites.

Since early in 2022, the Board of the FCHS has again been holding in-person gatherings typically used to promote and provide activities that represent the benefits FCHS membership is designed to provide. During this past year, the FCHS has maintained a membership of 350-some members and provided hundreds of volunteer hours to benefit the sites and support site staff activities. Given that the interests of the membership generally vary across culture, history and archeology, so do the range of activities that the FCHS has promoted and provided to its membership since the summer of 2022. Following are examples of the recent activities of the FCHS.

Field trips, which are a popular benefit for the members of FCHS, have recently included group visits to the historic Gutierrez Hubbell House and cultural center, tour of the backstage activities at the Albuquerque airport, the “grounded in clay” pottery exhibit at the Museum of Indian Art and Culture, the astonishing collections at the Dr. Frank Hibben House, the Albuquerque Museum’s exhibit “Indigenous Art, Culture and Community, and the historic airways museum in Milan, NM.

The monthly lectures, free and open to the public, ranged across topics, including details on the varied members of the Coronado Expedition, trend data on climate variability and extremes in the Rio Grande Valley, dating of prehistoric footprints at the White Sands Monument,

reminiscences of growing up on a Navajo trading post, and history of the rumored treasure at Victorio Peak at White Sands, and a report on the latest pottery research done at the Coronado Site. Most of the lectures are videotaped and will be eventually posted on the Friends' website: www/kuaua.org .

Fund-raising activities by the Friends' group included organizing a space for native arts vendors to display and sell their goods at the Coronado site during Balloon Festival, and guided craft workshops using the hardy stocks of local yucca for walking sticks, gourds for Christmas ornaments, and devil's claw seed pods and feathers for the creation of outrageous birds. In coming months, the Friends will be hosting a Fiesta of Cultures at the Coronado Site which has been a popular attraction for nearby community residents in years past. This spring and summer a guided hands-on 5-day workshop for how to make a traditional *horno* will be offered at the Coronado Historic Site and then at the Jemez Historic Site.

Coming up at the end of the summer the Friends will be celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Friends of Coronado Historic Site.