

WALK WITH ME



By
HARRY BRILEY

Chapter 6 – Socorro and College Before 1980

Revised 5/18/2022

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Table of Contents

Chapter 6 – Socorro and College	7
Socorro, New Mexico	7
Free State of Socorro	7
Gary Drummond in 1940s Socorro.....	11
Socorro Plaza	11
South of the Plaza	12
North of the Plaza	13
Donkey and 49-er Foal.....	14
Socorro Chieftain.....	15
Passenger Trains ... in Socorro?.....	16
The College	19
Campus Buildings.....	22
Bibliography about Socorro.....	25
Acknowledgments	27

Index of Maps

Map 1 - "Free State of Socorro Chronicle" (Facebook Group, 2019)	8
Map 2 - Socorro, New Mexico – 1971	9
Map 3 – Campus Layout (NMIMT 1973)	21

Index of Photographs

Cover – California Street, Socorro (Conrad Hilton Open Program 1973)	
Figure 1 - Free State of Socorro (LIFE Magazine 6/8/1953 pg.53).....	7
Figure 2 - South Side of Plaza (SCHS, circa 1920s)	12
Figure 3 - Crown Flour Mill (Socorro Tourism 1970)	12
Figure 4 - San Miguel Church (Socorro Tourism 1970 and SCHS 2006).....	13
Figure 5 - Illinois Brewery/Ice House (SCHS 1965).....	13
Figure 6 - Val Verde Hotel, Socorro (Socorro Tourism 1975).....	14
Figure 7 - California Job Case	15
Figure 8 - Santa Fe Non-passenger Doodlebug M160 (M.Bernard)	17
Figure 9 – Two Budd RDC-1 cars – Vancouver Island (A.McLellan 2009).....	18
Figure 10 - Socorro Depot (from C.Errington c.1971)	18
Figure 11- School of Mines, 1940s ("Of Earth and Sky", pg33, 1964).....	19
Figure 12 - Campus in Summer (T.Oliver/R.Gray/T.Dillion 1971).....	20
Figure 13 - Campus in Spring (NMIMT 1974)	21
Figure 14 - Brown Hall - Administration - 1972	22
Figure 15 – Speare Library ("It's a Starship!") - 1970	22
Figure 16 - Workman Computer Center and Bureau of Mines (NMIMT 1975).....	23

Chapter 6 – Socorro and College

Socorro, New Mexico

New Mexico is high desert with the largest city Albuquerque quartered by Interstate-40 and Interstate-25. South along the dry Rio Grande are the towns of Isleta, Belen, and Socorro. Socorro is center of the state at 4620 feet elevation. In 1971, including the college, it had a population of 6750. Continental Trailways provided bus service.

Free State of Socorro

Socorro (meaning, “Help”) was a stopover between El Paso and Albuquerque. When the United States annexed the territory, Mexican paperwork left the county unaccounted. Citizens took pleasure, with no tax benefits, in calling it the ‘Free State of Socorro’.



Figure 1 - Free State of Socorro (LIFE Magazine 6/8/1953 pg.53)

“Secession of Socorro”, LIFE Magazine 6/8/1953, page 53 (edited)

A New Mexico county claims it is not part of the U.S. Local courts make their own laws. They acquitted a county treasurer of making off with public funds. His lawyer pointed out the bonding company made good on the theft and anyway the treasurer was spending the money in the county. A few citizens, digging into old laws to straighten them out, found something to give the county a new chance.

Socorro escaped all legal transfers to [New Mexico]. They launched a movement for formal secession that quickly became a publicity stunt. Socorro has a port of entry and a border patrolman. As for the Arizona part of the grant, a citizen said, "We do not want Arizona. Half of it blows over here every spring anyway."

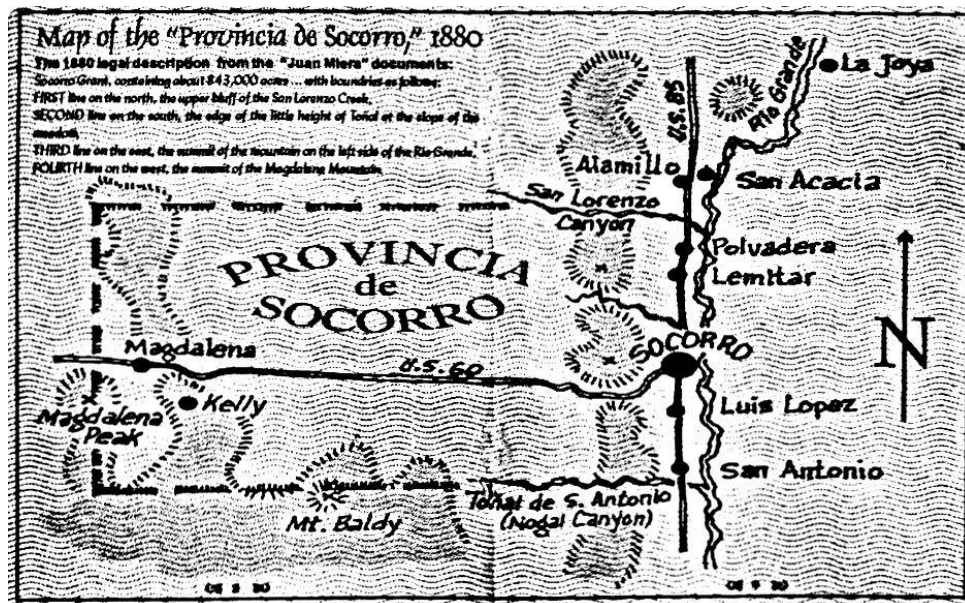
Paul Harden of the Socorro County Historical Society differed in the origin, having written a local weekly history column as follows.

El Defensor Chieftain, 10/17/2013 (edited)

It started in 2/1953, when the court found Socorro resident Elmer Brasher guilty of driving while intoxicated. Brasher hired local attorney Claron Waggoner to appeal. Waggoner argued that while DWI was against state law, he could find no such law in Socorro's ordinances. District Judge Charles Fowler, intrigued by this argument, suspended court to conduct his own investigation.

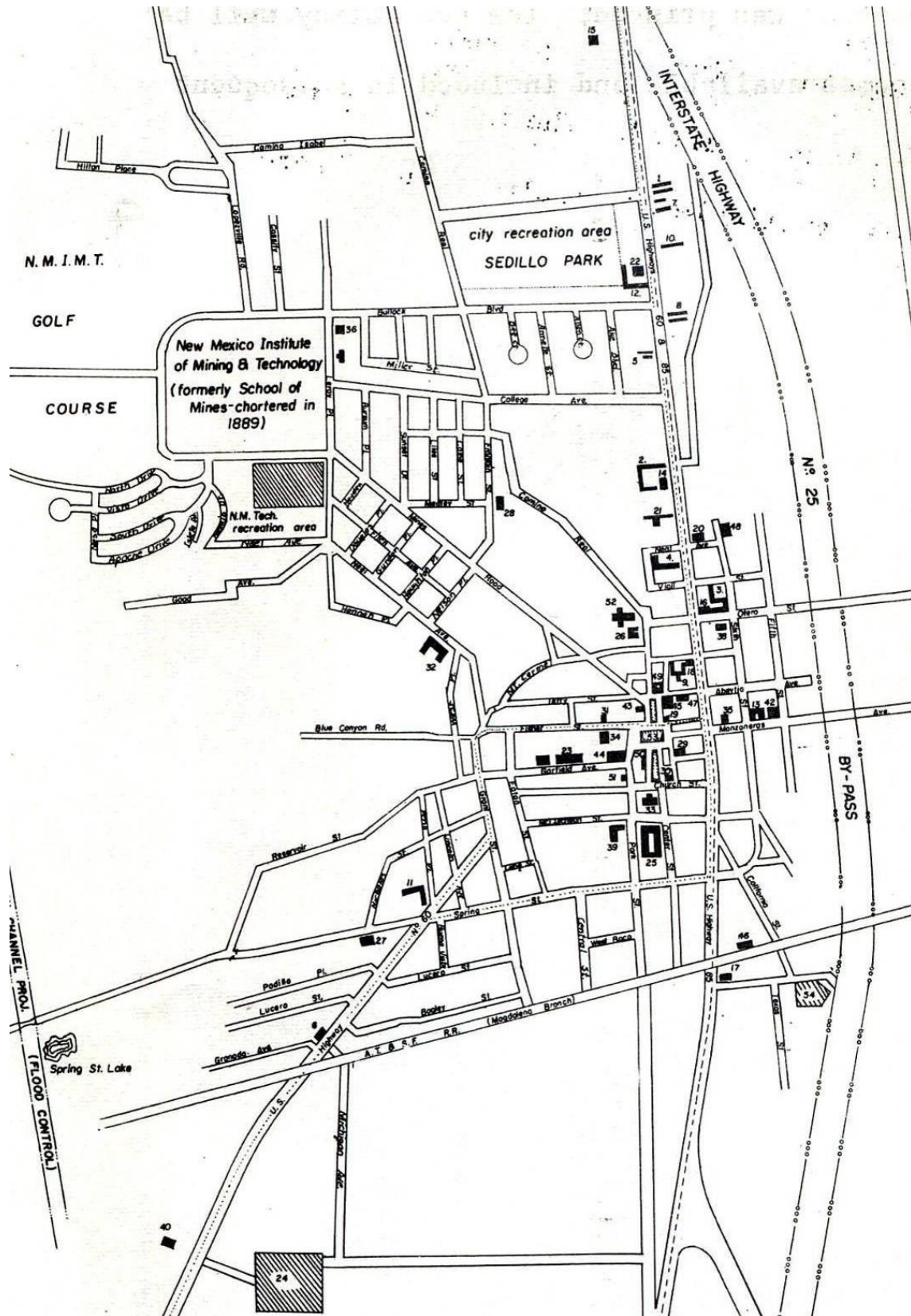
*Waggoner likewise investigated Socorro's legal history. When the Spanish empire fell in 1821, Spanish lands became Mexican land grants. With 1912 statehood, those land grants became part of New Mexico. The Spanish **Provincia de Socorro** land grant was never turned over to Mexico, omitted from the 1848 annexation to New Mexico territory, and still overlooked in 1912. Therefore, attorneys concluded Socorro County never was a legal part of New Mexico.*

Socorro Chieftain editor Thomas Dabney announced these findings and he speculated citizens were due a full refund of federal and state taxes since 1912. He published the official "Proclamation for the Free Republic of Socorro," in English and Spanish on April 9. Socorro erected a Port of Entry on U.S. 85 (now I-25) and charged 25 cents to pass. For \$1, you could become a citizen and travel all county highways free. Almost overnight, with the LIFE article in June, Socorro became a tourist destination. Thousands of travelers bypassed Santa Fe for Socorro. The heyday lasted into 1955, but revivals keep the movement alive.



Map 1 - "Free State of Socorro Chronicle" (Facebook Group, 2019)
Based upon the Juan Miera Land Grant documents of 1880.

Walk With Me – Socorro and College



Map 2 - Socorro, New Mexico – 1971

A REVIEW OF TECH (edited extracts)

The Silver Bar, New Mexico Tech, [Spring] 1975, Volume 1, page 15 and 26

By Umar Ahmad [using material from Richard Matthaei]

[Richard recounted his experience 1937-1941 to his recent tour in 1973.]

Development is slow in Socorro. The town is more or less the same as the early 20th century. Old buildings like its hotel Val Verde are dying out. Gone are old-time casinos, miners with gold pans, and gunfights. It has become "civilized".

"The death of President Wells and imprisonment of the Bursar were difficult time for the school in 1938. Students attended the trial at odd times. Justice in a bi-lingual courtroom was sometimes difficult to understand.

"One of the most interesting trials was for murder with the famous Elfego Baca as Defense Attorney. In his earlier days when New Mexico was still a territory, he was a real terror. As a Defense Attorney, he was something else.

"[Four of us students] lived in the Torreon in our senior year. The Torreon is caty-comer from the high school—but now pretty much run down.

"The Socorro Chieftain [newspaper] was published weekly on a site now occupied by the State Bank of Socorro. They published the Gold Pan every two weeks when we pushed hard. More often than not, it was regularly irregular.

"The Hilton Drug Store, Munday's Drug Store and Capital Bar are in the same locations. Willie Garza served a good scotch and soda for two bits and beer was still a dime. On the [original town] Plaza where now stands the Safeway Store was the Park Hotel and Cafe, and the Park Theatre along with the Bus Station.

"Mrs. Petty's place was a favorite student hangout between classes. She had her place where a portion of the Flower Shop now doing business was the site of the old Post Office. The [Post Office] too was a favored place at months end.

California Avenue (the main street) has most changes. The Coronado Bar was next to the Fair Store and Brannie Abeyta's "Bloody Bucket" across the street handled a good supply of "medicinals" at a low price.

[By 1973,] Jerry's Restaurant opened across from the Vagabond Motel on the north end. It is a hangout for students since open 24 hours. Behind Circle-K, Tastee Freeze opened its drive-in. On the other side of Circle-K, a new plaza houses Kentucky Fried Chicken, a fabric shop, and a men's clothing store.

Further [south] on California, Lot-a-Burger opened. An Olympic size pool opened in Sedillo Park. All this development [occurred 1971-1973]. Another big plaza will be built in 1975-1976 for a theater and shopping complex.

Gary Drummond in 1940s Socorro

My home and software career were in Livermore, California. Gary Drummond, Jr. (1930-2015), a published local historian in Livermore, spent his childhood (age 5 to 15) in Socorro. I interviewed Gary in 7/2015 at age 85, a few months before he died.

Old Highway 60/85 formed the main street with no stoplights. Interstate-25 later bypassed Socorro and the old section became the business route with freeway exits on both ends of town. Most of the town sat west of the highway and only two streets sat east. The city inexplicably renamed this former highway as California Street.

A long stretch due east of the Plaza led to the mostly ignored railroad station. A short roadway paralleled the tracks called Main Street (woefully misnamed after the mining boom). Trains ran from El Paso through Socorro onto Albuquerque. The rail traffic (all freight) did not stop in Socorro, therefore he never visited that Santa Fe passenger and baggage buildings. The dry sandy riverbed of the Rio Grande and open waterless desert lay just east of the railroad.

His simple suburban home fit on a deep but not wide lot with animals kept behind the house. Gary walked to school about one mile away. Initially, he attended Socorro Public School. His parents later moved him to a Catholic Parochial School (even though he identified as Presbyterian). At first, he wore shorts to first grade in 1935. Even in the 1940's young boys wore knickers (buttoned below the knee).

However, in cowboy, mining, and Spanish cultures, the dress code meant cowboy boot jeans. Hispanic children harassed him at school with "*Short pants! Short pants!*" Gary's parents quickly provided him with long pants. As a teen, he attended the 1920-built Socorro High School located a few blocks north of Plaza.

Socorro Plaza

The Plaza in Socorro is no more than a small rectangular shade-tree plot big enough for a bandstand and the requisite civil war cannon. Like all southwestern villages, the town radiated from that core plaza. Roadway traffic bounded the plaza on all four sides with limited parking for customers of the small-town businesses facing the plaza.

The plaza oriented on the east-west line. Narrow lawn strips, more like dirt medians between traffic lanes, pushed due north and due south of the plaza for one block each. Looking due south on the dirt median strip, down Center Street, one could see a portion of the County Courthouse from the Plaza.

Gary recalled the businesses encircling the plaza. The North side hosted the Post Office, a barbershop (whom had once butchered Gary's hair), a clothier, a Hilton Mercantile (general store, owned by "Old Ms. Hilton", age 75), and Socorro Drug Store. Conrad Hilton of hotel fame was born and raised in Socorro.



Figure 2 - South Side of Plaza (SCHS, circa 1920s)

The South side hosted the Socorro Chieftain Newspaper and Print Shop, a gun shop (owned by a woman as mean as the weaponry around her), [Keith's Garage,] the Gem Theater, [the Park Hotel,] and a small corner Soda Fountain type of café next door.

South of the Plaza

Five blocks south of the Plaza, the Crown Flour mill sat off the intersection of the highway and directly adjacent to the Magdalena branch line (east-west) of the railroad. Gary said it operated during his school years. The sign on the old wall implied the mill ground things other than flour, such as animal feed and cement powder.



Figure 3 - Crown Flour Mill (Socorro Tourism 1970)

North of the Plaza

San Miguel Catholic Church, a Spanish Mission output in 1628, sat three blocks north of the plaza. It suffered earthquake damage (and subsequent repair) in the 1970's.

San Miguel Mission was one of four missions built among the Piro Pueblos during the 1600s. During the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, the Teypanas pueblo Indians left with the Spaniards, establishing a new community further south. Socorro was not re-founded until late 1816. - <http://socorronm.org/about-socorro/history/>



Figure 4 - San Miguel Church (Socorro Tourism 1970 and SCHS 2006)

The Illinois Brewery sat northeast of the Church across the highway. The Hammel family brewed a Lager beer, later sodas and refreshing ice-cold water in the 1940's.

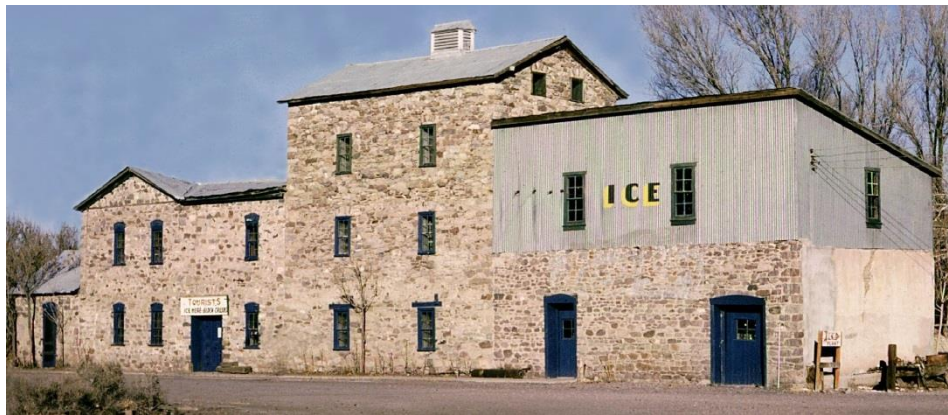


Figure 5 - Illinois Brewery/Ice House (SCHS 1965)

The Hammel Museum started as a beer garden and became a brewery, an ice plant, a soda bottling plant, and finally ended up still making ice. The ice plant closed in the mid-1950s. It is now preserved by the Socorro County Historical Society (SCHS). - <http://socorronm.org/attractions/hammel-museum/>

Donkey and 49-er Foal

In 1940, a man let his donkey loose, which munched on apples off a tree of a neighbor who did not take kindly to that. Socorro impounded the donkey and the man could not pay the fine, So Gary's father purchased it for Gary (then age 10) for \$2.50 from the city.

The donkey was a jenny and pregnant. They soon had a foal as a two-for-one deal. During a costume party with a miner-49er theme at the Val Verde Hotel, organizers asked him to bring over his donkeys. He tied the mother up at a pole outside the hotel front doors and escorted the foal into the lobby, whereupon the poor animal lost its footing on the highly polished floor. Down the foal went spread-eagled!

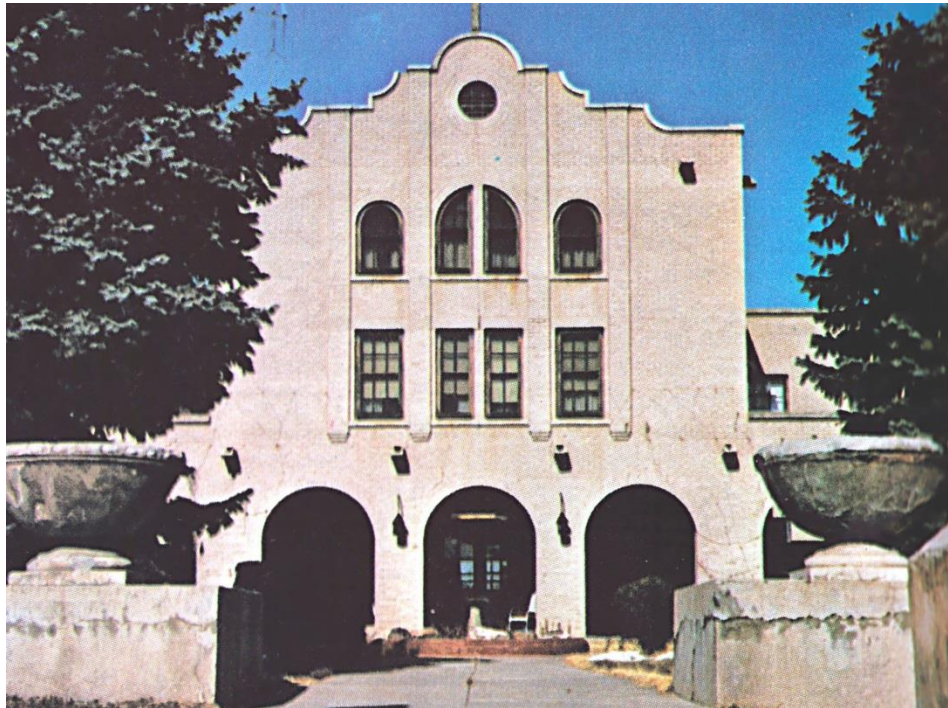


Figure 6 - Val Verde Hotel, Socorro (Socorro Tourism 1975)
(Two blocks due east of the Plaza, across US Highway 60/ 85)

Several people struggled to get the foal back on its wobbly feet and back to mom outside. As soon as Gary got the foal close to mom, the foal turned and chomped on Gary's tummy, hard, as if to nurse. Momma became unhappy that Gary interfered and so both animals were on his case. Gary had a scar to show for it.

The Forty-Niners celebration every October had a stormy history and started in 1921. By 1924, they added gambling with special paper money within the confines of the Gym decorated like a dance hall, saloon, and gambling den, and a costume ball [at the Val Verde Hotel]. A parade and barbeque was added, but the celebration remained [mostly] on-campus until World War II. Rowdy behavior in town suspended the event during the 1960's. – “Of Earth and Sky”

Socorro Chieftain

Gary’s family moved to Albuquerque for two years and Gary returned by age 14. He worked at the Socorro Chieftain Newspaper office through two owners. Three people ran the business: husband, wife, and Gary as office boy (called a printer’s devil).

Initially, Gary worked under a man who sang operatic arias while running the press. Next, he worked under Tom Dabney from New Orleans. Tom lived a half-mile from town and had aspirations of being a cowboy. He rode his horse to work as his “commute vehicle”, hitching his horse to a post in front of the newspaper office.

Gary folded papers, swept the shop, and returned type fonts back to their proper locations in the California Job Cases. His fingers blackened from the residual ink. He earned 25 cents an hour for his four hours work in the morning, a dollar each day in the shop.

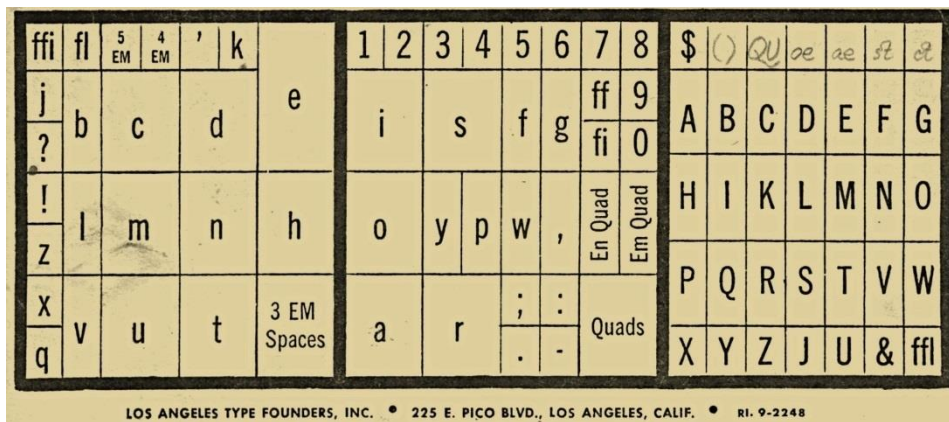


Figure 7 - California Job Case

Most rural newspapers, including this one, in the handset letterpress days were 8-pages. The press owner produced it weekly and dropped the stack of papers off at the local Post Office. There were no kiosks, sidewalk dispenser units, or home deliveries in Socorro. Residents came to the Post office on the Plaza to buy their newspaper each week.

The Socorro Chieftain (Socorro, N.M.) 1902-1959 (edited)

The Socorro Chieftain, one of the first newspapers established in the County, commenced weekly on May 8, 1884 through October 1959. The April 5, 1889 edition of the Socorro Chieftain [and for 18 years] stated that it was the official paper of the city and county of Socorro and a subscription cost \$2 for one year. The Socorro Chieftain published occasional Spanish text.

Dr. William Tell De Baun, once mayor of Socorro, first owned the newspaper. In 1900, the Chieftain was purchased by Republican businessmen, with E. A. Drake as editor. During the first half of that century, the Spanish-language El Defensor and the Socorro Chieftain co-existed. On November 5, 1959, the two papers merged to form the El Defensor Chieftain. - Data by: University of New Mexico - <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86090503/>

Passenger Trains ... in Socorro?

The railroad carried freight through town but no longer offered passenger service in 1971. Yet, indeed, passenger traffic once came to Socorro.

El Defensor Chieftain, 7/2/2010 (edited):

A rare group of Tech students, no more than 10 that year, arrived in Socorro in 9/1963, not by bus but over the rails of the Santa Fe's Rio Grande Division in the self-contained diesel [gasoline?] passenger consist called the Doodlebug. Upperclassman Leroy Eide met our entourage at the depot.

Michael Lipsie an older Computer Science student drove the college station wagon to the Socorro depot to meet the “train” for incoming students through 4/1968. Although Amtrak began in 5/1971, I arrived on the Santa Fe ‘El Capitan’ to Albuquerque still wearing its “war bonnet” red and yellow colors in June. My 1:10 pm arrival did not have connections to Socorro. A nighttime bus took us stranded students south to Socorro.

Dr. Richard Melzer, vice president of the Valencia County Historical Society wrote the article “*A-I-I-I-llll aboard!*” on 5/20/2004 (edited):

John McCall [wrote] the best book on Doodlebugs. A 1948 editorial in the News-Bulletin by Carter Waid [asserted that] passenger train names helped create their personalities [such as the] famous Santa Fe trains as the El Capitan, The Chief and, of course, the Super Chief. However, it was [especially] true of a local train.

No other train in Valencia County was more dependable, useful, appreciated and admired than a small motorcar known as the Doodlebug. The all-steel train was a local and like a 70-foot bus on tracks. It carried 44 passengers and the mail. Sometimes, a second car was attached for more travelers and light cargo.

The Doodlebug and its crew are remembered fondly. The car was always clean, with a distinctively clean smell inside. A friendly conductor helped people board. The helpful crew was kind. This favorite train went as far [south] as Socorro and employed Anglo conductors unsure how to pronounce it, saying, “S-a-a-c-a-row”

A roundtrip cost less than a dollar and saved on gas, especially during World War II rationing. Railroad families with free passes were frequent passengers. There were 48 [active] Doodlebugs from the early 1930s to the mid-1950s.

Operating the larger El Pasoan RDCs, daily from El Paso to Albuquerque, with stops in Belen and Los Lunas, cost \$146K in 1967 while revenue fell to \$61K. Unable to compete [against cars and buses], the Santa Fe shut down passenger service in Valencia County. The last Doodlebug stopped in Clovis in early 1967 and the last passenger train left Belen on 4/9/1968.

The [Belen?] Doodlebug was placed in storage and waits for remodeling so that it can be placed on display at the Sacramento Railroad Museum in California.



Figure 8 - Santa Fe Non-passenger Doodlebug M160 (M.Bernard)
This Santa Fe Doodlebug #M160 has sat in Clovis since 1/11/1967.
Preserved at the Museum of the American Railroad

“Doodlebugs, The Popular Motorized Rail Car” (reduced and edited):

Doodlebugs have a small size and quaint nature (serving bucolic towns and communities). Most were powered with gasoline engines and not diesels. This let railroads [serve] light branch and secondary lines that saw little traffic.

Do not confuse it with the [larger] Rail Diesel Car (RDC). They were quite different from interurban railcars and streetcars powered by [overhead] electricity. It had a boxy appearance and flat cab face with a hood headlight.

The first cars used a retrofitted automobile engine, featuring the common design for freight/mail [in front] and rear coach seating. The Chicago, Rock Island, & Pacific in 1927 took traction motors and the power plant from one car and added it in another. This featured traction motors on all four axles with two engines.

The Transportation Act of 1958 decreased how States could regulate passenger services over secondary lines. The routes either ended passenger operations or were outright abandoned thus dispelling the need for the car. Most [Doodlebugs] were gone by 1960. The term Doodlebug is derived perhaps by the way the car meandered or "doodled" through small towns and across the countryside.

*See: **Doodlebug Country: The Rail Motorcar on the Class 1 Railroads of the United States** by Edmund Keilty. - www.american-rails.com/doodlebugs.html*

I could not determine if the larger El Pasoan RDC trains stopped in Socorro as they sped through. They stopped in nearby Belen and Los Lunas before reaching Albuquerque.

The Santa Fe purchased only two RDCs (Model 1, 90 passengers). The Budd Rail Diesel Car (RDC) was a self-propelled diesel railcar built from 1949–1962. The cars were adapted from a standard 85-foot coach for rural traffic. They were less expensive to operate than a traditional diesel locomotive with coaches. The cars ran singly or coupled. -en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Budd_Rail_Diesel_Car



Figure 9 – Two Budd RDC-1 cars – Vancouver Island (A.McLellan 2009)

These were Santa Fe streamliner #13 [northbound?] and #14 [southbound?] in the middle 1960's. The late 1950's saw the switch over to the Rail Diesel Cars (RDC). After [passenger] trains' discontinuance in 4/1968, these [two] RDC's were orphaned and returned to Topeka. - www.trainorders.com/discussion

An iconic 1971 photo of the Socorro Depot portrayed the sense of a desolate rural area. The ubiquitous pick-up trucks of the Southwest crowd the photo. It showed signage for the Santa Fe (prior to the Burlington Northern merger). A 1970 or 1971 Plymouth Duster (not mine, with the horizontal slit taillights for those two model years) sits parked in front. Driving a pickup truck onto the rails seems a prank as the truck does not have rail adaptors. A ten-speed bicycle as commonly used by students stands in the foreground.



Figure 10 - Socorro Depot (from C.Errington c.1971)

The College

New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology (New Mexico Tech, NMIMT, NMT, or simply 'Tech') lies due west of town. It includes a golf course and 'M' Mountain further west. The 'M' stands for "School of Mines", the college's original name.

A rare aerial photograph shows the core campus during WWII.

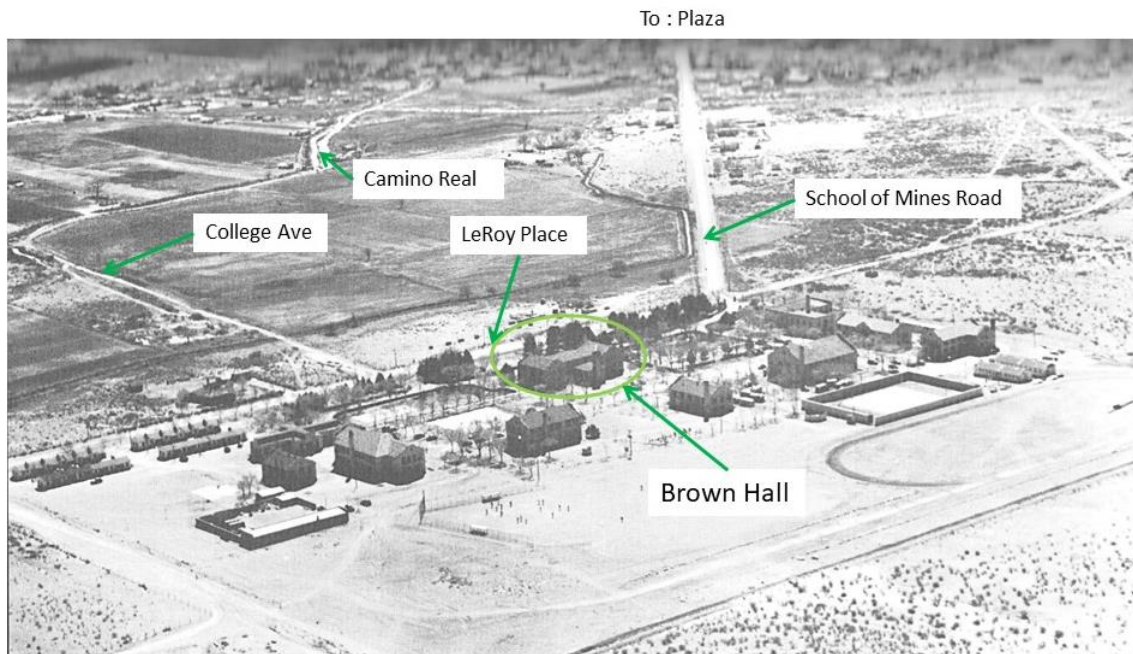


Figure 11- School of Mines, 1940s ("Of Earth and Sky", pg33, 1964)

Gary Drummond's father taught at School of Mines, likely in Engineering. The family lived across from campus and merely walked across the street to work.

Garrett Drummond, Sr served as a lieutenant colonel in the 103d Division, U.S. Army, in WWII from 1 Apr 1941 to 31 Oct 1943. He was a professor of civil engineering and mathematics at Mississippi State and at Oklahoma A&M; a member of the New Mexico State Board for Registration of Professional Engineers; a military historian; and a consulting engineer in Albuquerque, New Mexico. - www.rabgenealogy.com/p34.htm (8/15/2013)

Gary's father was a Major in the Reserves, a step between his rank of Lieutenant in 1926 (when he left the regular Army) and as Lt. Colonel in July 1942. He did not wear his uniform while teaching. The Army reactivated his Major's commission on 12/7/1941.

Kathy Hedges once wrote for the college web site (summarized):

*In 1889, Socorro was a mining boomtown, wild, raucous, and at a population of about 4500, **one of the largest towns** in New Mexico. The Territorial Legislature founded a **School of Mines** to train mining engineers. Silver and lead ores from the Magdalena Mountains came to the smelter of German immigrant Gustav Billings. The new school let students train near their eventual work and opened 9/5/1893, with one building, two professors, and **seven students**.*

*During 1930s, graduating students numbered only in dozens. Petroleum engineering quickly outpaced mining engineering. With WWII, the school arranged for an Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) for the military. The ASTP supplied most WWII students. The focus thus turned to physics and math. After the war, enrollment jumped in 1947 to **213 students**.*

*Dr. Workman then recruited a more diverse faculty with a strong research bent. In 1951, he altered the college name to **New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology**. A graduate program produced the first Ph.D. in 1956. Enrollment remained steady at 200 students, most in petroleum engineering.*

*After 1965, enrollment jumped to **800 students**. A computer science department founded in 1965 was one of the first in the country. During the early 1970's, astrophysics joined atmospheric physics as a major interest, especially after the National Radio Astronomy Observatory built its Very Large Array in Magdalena, 60 miles west of town. By the late 1970's, enrollment doubled to **1500 students**.*

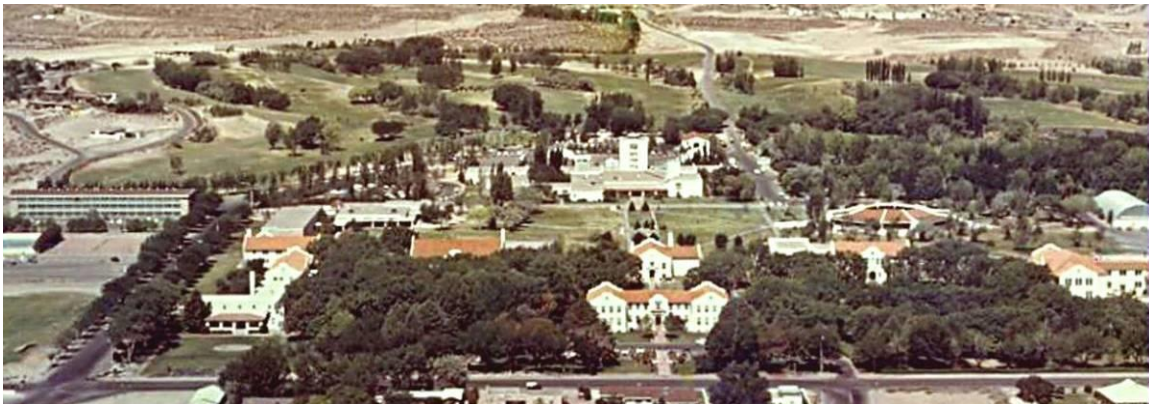


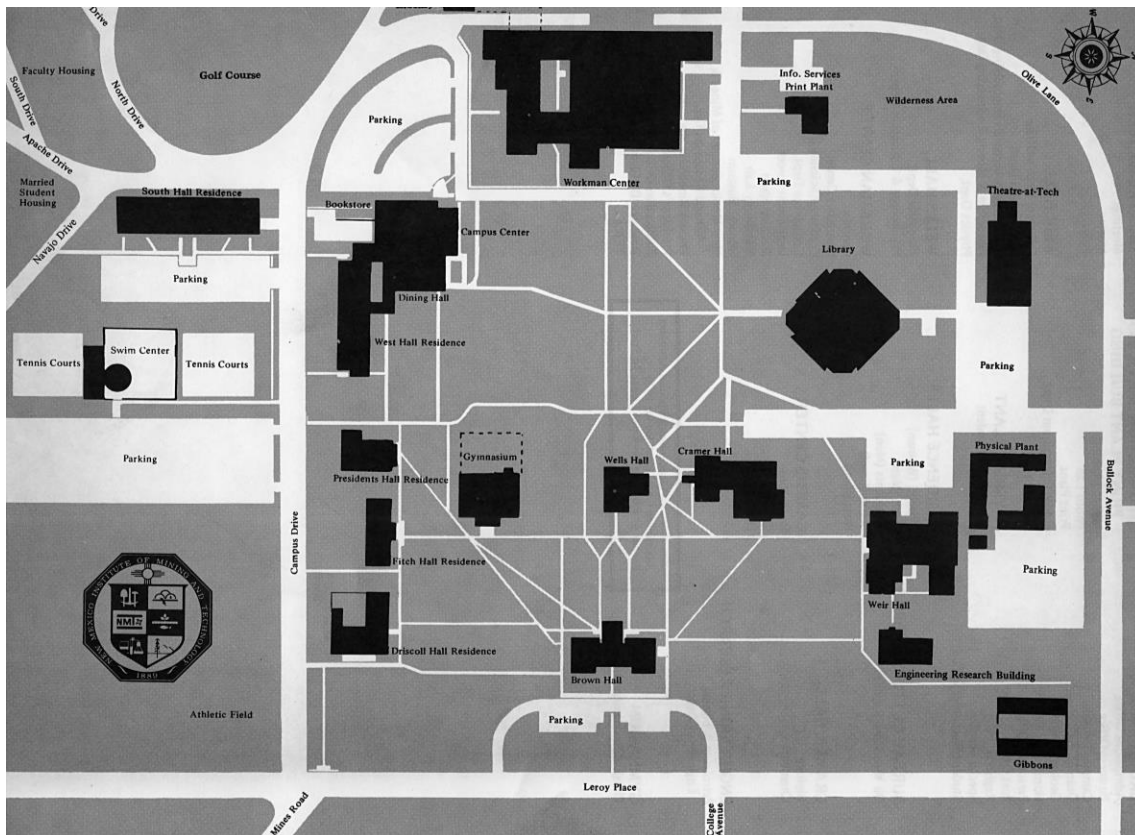
Figure 12 - Campus in Summer (T.Oliver/R.Gray/T.Dillion 1971)

Leroy Place fronted the campus. The diagonal School of Mines Road (on the southeast corner of the original campus) terminated a mile away at the downtown Socorro Plaza.

Walk With Me – Socorro and College



Figure 13 - Campus in Spring (NMIMT 1974)



Map 3 – Campus Layout (NMIMT 1973)

Campus Buildings

The college named the campus hub as Brown Hall in honor of a founding professor. The WPA during the 1930's Depression built this and several other campus buildings with red Mexican tile roof and beige stucco (but repainted bright white in the 1970's).

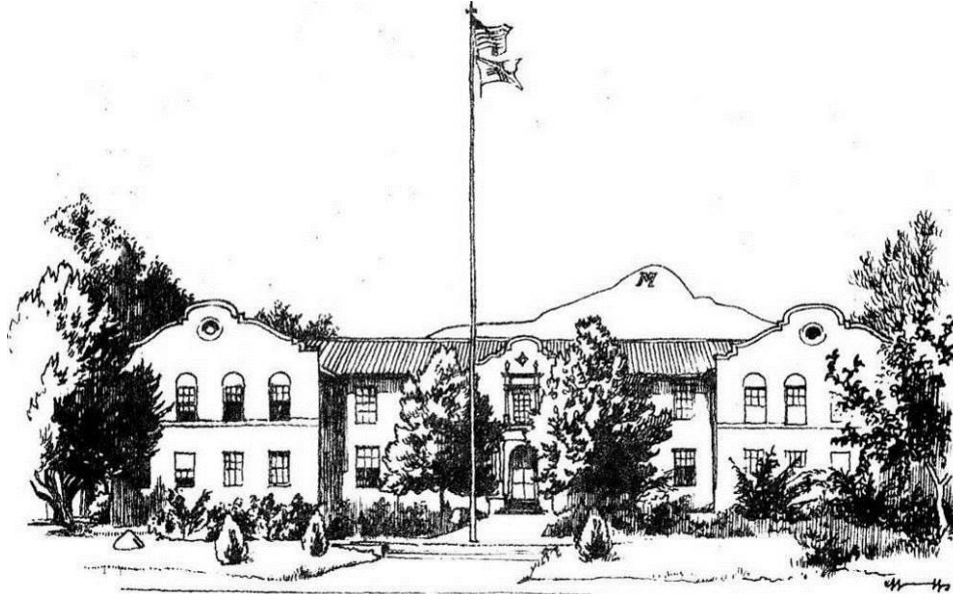


Figure 14 - Brown Hall - Administration - 1972

The Mustard Seed Coffeehouse (MSCH) set up shop in the western backside basement of Brown Hall. My senior year software office with the Business Office and the campus Post Office were both in north end of the basement.

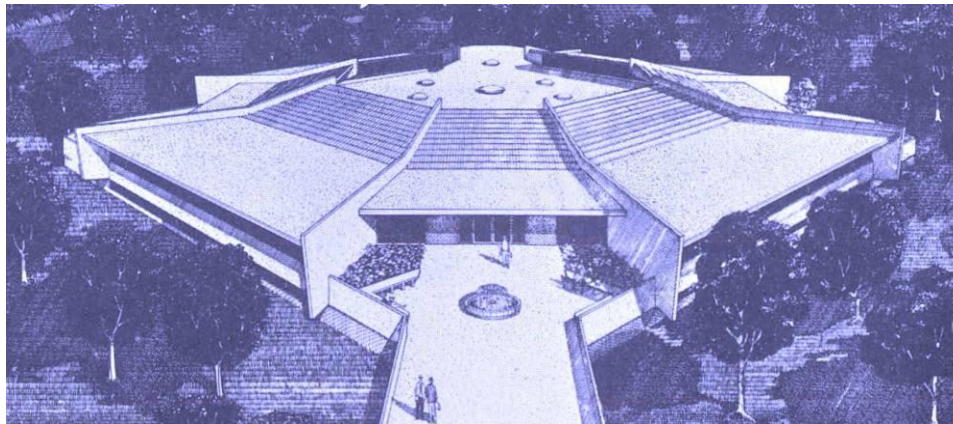


Figure 15 – Speare Library ("It's a Starship!") - 1970

The newly built two-story Speare library had a circular interior core with four side pods. In its first year (only), we had 24-hour access using our ID cards and a passcode. The half-submerged basement hosted an audio room with a high-end stereo, headphones, and turntable. I found the late night quiet conducive for completing homework. Abuse of the system forced the library to daytime hours only. That felt like a significant loss to me.



Figure 16 - Workman Computer Center and Bureau of Mines (NMIMT 1975)
Kimberly (d.2019) and Earl Eiland descend the steps.

A REVIEW OF TECH (edited extracts)

The Silver Bar, New Mexico Tech, [Spring] 1975, Volume 1, page 15 and 26

By Umar Ahmad [using material from Richard Matthaei]

Few of us will graduate from here, but Tech will stay in our memories for a long time. We the graduating class [of 1975], want to see it grow and improve.

We [interviewed] Richard Matthaei. He graduated from New Mexico School of Mines in 1941 in Metallurgical Engineering. The 'Porphyry' yearbook of 1941 lists him in Cooney Mining Club, Gold Pan [newspaper] Staff, vice president of student body, and basketball and baseball teams. He received his MS in Mining Engineering from Missouri School of Mines in 1952, and was an engineer in gold mines. He returned in 1973 for his PhD but a company made a [better] offer.

"[In my 1937] freshman year, we had the largest enrollment of about 125, including a lone gal. Total enrollment was 200 [and settled down to 125]. At graduation [in 6/1941], the Senior Class was [only] 26 (still the largest).

"Paved roads were the two main highways thru town and Mines Road with only a few houses. Gunter's Dairy occupied a large area north of Mines Road. All other roads went were graveled or trails of two ruts. The [college sole] entrance was over a cattle guard with the NMSM plaque affixed to a brick post on each side.

"All buildings were beige stucco with red tile roofs. Not too much vegetation. Parking was alongside Brown Hall across from the gym. The Geology Prof., Doc Talmage, warned [us how to park to] avoid sand blasted windshields.

"The farthest west buildings were the gym (and [former] pool), petroleum and chemical buildings. There was no salvage yard. Workman Hall replaced the old baseball diamond. Just north of that baseball field (hardball) was a sand trap

with touch football (6 man) and a softball field. The tennis court was across the road from the Chem. Lab. Our fair basketball team played the Aggies and UNM among others. The golf course was non-existent.

"No graduate, professional, or [South Hall] housing existed. The Tin House (where the basketball player's lived) stood where the Nursery Bldg. now stands. The Work Progress Administration (WPA) tore it down before it fell down.

The three [remaining real] dormitories: Driscoll, Fitch and Presidents [had a] dining room in the basement of Fitch for residents. Occasionally, "Hap" the cook gave some Townees a handout when they looked real "hungry".

During the WPA, local residents were building a stone sidewalk between [those dorms]. During the day, some progress [occurred]. During the evening, the stones were removed and staked lines relocated. After several weeks, higher authority intervened. The [students only wanted] the men steadily employed. Presidents, West, and Driscoll (girls) Halls [prior to 1970 were] "renovated".

"Brown Hall combined Administration and Lecture Halls [on the first floor], with the Library in one end of the basement. The Metallographic Lab and Bureau of Mines occupied the remainder of the [basement]. Geology Labs were on the second floor. The senior class each year gave a gift to the school and ours was the water fountain on the first floor in Brown Hall. As the poem (Gold Pan, 4/28/1941) says it never worked properly at least while we were still there.

The Library [recently] moved from Wells Hall to the new [Speare Library], located between Workman Center, Weir Hall, and the theater. The audio/visual aids and books, many obtained from a bond issue, reflect [much] improvement. However, the [1971] open-door policy was changed to limit the theft of books.

Northeast of Weir Hall, the building that was a day-care center (and everything else; apartments, clubs center, store house, etc.) has just been converted into VLA (Very Large Array) offices—a giant telescope being built near Magdalena. North of Weir Hall, Physical Plant built its own offices and workshops.

"Weir Hall had just been completed and named for Prof. Weir (Civil Eng.) who taught many years and suddenly passed away. The Assay Lab was completed later with a dirt floor in the basement. Mining rescue was taught there.

[Since 1969], metallurgy in Weir Hall expanded with little room to breathe. Plant is [now] installing an elevator. The physics lab, once on the first floor moved to the biology lab, which in turn moved to the basement of Cramer (science) Hall. The room vacated by Physics houses an electron microscope, an ion-plating lab, and a lab for extractive metallurgy. The chemical metallurgy lab in the basement became a furnace room. The X-ray lab moved up to the second floor [to make room for] four field-ion microscopes."

Bibliography about Socorro

Socorro County Historical Society (removed sophomore enthusiasm)

Socorro has a history. Historians statewide accessed old newspapers, old insurance building maps, and the archive of New Mexico's Universities concerning Socorro County. These historians wrote articles concerning architecture, mining, local yore, local people, and local sights.

*Is mining your [interest]? Check out Dr. Paige Christianson's new book: **The Story of Mining in New Mexico**. Published in-house at [\$2.50]*

How about photos of Socorro, Magdalena, [abandoned] Kelly [Mine], and Geronimo? Buy volume 7 of the Socorro Historical Society publications.

The Society (SHS) issued seven history assessments of Socorro (three out of print). Each issue contains several well-written articles by various SHS members. Our Dr. Paige Christianson is among them.

Few places in Socorro handle these booklets. They are the Tech Bookstore, Dr. Spencer Wilson, Socorro Office Supply, and Hilton Drug.

Regarding the issues out of print, contact any member to look at their personal copies. I bemoan their limited circulation. Dr. John McKee said with substantial interest, these issues could be reprinted (minimum of 50 paid in advance). Let us [show some interest] you history buffs!

Harry Briley, PayDirt [Campus Newspaper], 12/5/1975

Web Site: www.socorro-history.org – Socorro County Historical Society, P.O. Box 921, Socorro, New Mexico 87801 – Museum in former Hammel Brewery building. The original SCHS 1964-1975 printed publications listed below are no longer available.

Web Site: www.socorronm.org/about-socorro/history - Gwen Roath, Visit Socorro New Mexico (Tourism) and Socorro Heritage and Visitors Center. Historical summary #1.

Web Site: www.socorronm.gov/about-socorro - Gwen Roath. Historical summary #2.

Articles on Socorro and New Mexico - Editor: Paige W. Christiansen, 1965, Socorro County Historical Society (Vol.1), 36 pg. Five articles, excerpts from Socorro Chieftain, and list of Charter Members of SCHS.

Bienvenidos, Amigos: Guide to Historic Socorro and Magdalena, John McKee and Spencer Wilson, undated, Socorro County Historical Society, 8 pg.

Biographies of Old Socorro Residents - Editor: Paige W. Christiansen, 1967, Socorro County Historical Society (Vol.3), 24 pg.

College on the Rio Grande: The Story of a Small School - Paige W. Christiansen . – Not in my collection.

Of Earth and Sky - Paige W Christiansen, 1964 (without copyright notice), NMIMT (University of New Mexico Printing Plant), 107 pg. 75th anniversary college history

First Annual Announcement, New Mexico School of Mines, 1893, New Mexican Printing Company, 29 pg. Reprint of first admissions catalog for 1893-1894 year with signature of photographer Joseph E Smith on cover.

History of Socorro County, New Mexico, In Photographs, Assembled by Kay Brower (shortly before he died), 2006, Socorro County Historical Society. Data CD with many Joseph Edward Smith photographs and text summary ordered by topical area. The entire content appears here in 2022: www.socorro-history.org/HISTORY/pg.html

Life and Death of a Frontier Fort: Fort Craig, New Mexico, 1854-1885, Marion C Grinstead, Editors John McKee and Spencer Wilson, 1971, Socorro County Historical Society (Vol.7), 56 pg.

Old San Miguel Mission, Socorro, New Mexico – Publications Committee, 1974, 45 pg. Documents the yearlong restoration and dedication on 5/19/1974.

Pictures of Old Socorro and Catron Counties, Socorro County Historical Society (Vol.2 and 5), Two Parts. – Not in my collection.

Socorro Photographer, Joseph Edward Smith, 1858-1936 - John DeWitt McKee and Spencer Wilson, 1975, Socorro County Historical Society, 54 pg. Photo collection book came from glass plates by Joseph Edward Smith, the second commercial photographer in Socorro 1884 through 1896.

Socorro, New Mexico – 1970, 1973, 1975. Conrad Hilton Open Program. With reprint of “Bienvenidos, Amigos”, Socorro County Historical Society in 1975 edition.

Some Letters and Writings of James Barton Adams, Editor: Paige W Christiansen, Socorro County Historical Society (Vol.4), 1968, 29 pg.

Spanish Times and Boom Times, Toward an Architectural History of New Mexico - Charles L. Niemann, Socorro County Historical Society (Vol 6) . – Not in my collection.

Story of Mining in New Mexico - Paige W Christiansen, 1974, NM Bureau of Mines, NMIMT (University of New Mexico Printing Plant), 112 pg

Territorial History of Socorro - Bruce Ashcroft, 1988, Texas Western Press, University of Texas at El Paso, 70 pg. Spencer Wilson, the NM Bureau of Mines, and the Historical Society helped. Bruce graduated from Tech in 1972 but I never met him.

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