

AYER Y HOY en TAOS

Yesterday and Today in Taos County and Northern New Mexico

Summer 2022

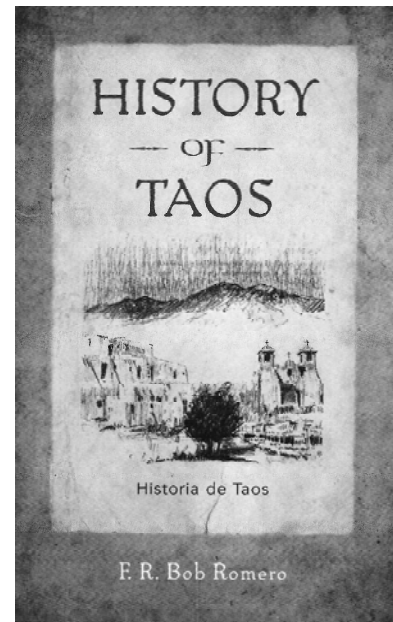
Issue #52

Eulogy For Antonio "Toné" Vigil 1929-2020



by David Maes

In Memorium: Nita Murphy & Charles "Corky" Hawk



A Chronology History of Taos



Santa Rosa de Lima & Santo Tomas of Abiquiu

A Chronology Essay by Analinda Dunning

A publication of the Taos County Historical Society

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Taos County Historical Society's publication, *Ayer y Hoy en Taos - Taos County and Northern New Mexico*, is published semi-annually by the Historical Society.

We invite articles of a scholarly nature, as well as book reviews of recent publications pertinent to the Taos and northern New Mexico area. We are open to publishing occasional reminiscences, folklore, oral history and poetry that are of historical interest.

The Taos County Historical Society endeavors to maintain high standards of quality in *AYER Y HOY*, and we seek to make improvements as we go along. Readers' comments and suggestions are welcome.

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AYER Y HOY is distributed to all members of the Taos County Historical Society as a benefit of membership.

Editor

Dave Cordova

The Taos County Historical Society is a New Mexico non-profit organization dedicated to the study and preservation of the historical resources of Taos County and Northern New Mexico. Membership is open to any interested person, regardless of residence.

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A Message from the TCHS President Ernestina Cordova

Dear Friends and Members,

I hope that everyone reading this is well and prosperous after the isolation brought on by Covid. Already, 2022 has started out to be very productive for the Taos County Historical Society (TCHS). In January, the board members started the year with a retreat to set the yearly goals and objectives. Several new committees were formed and



include: The Archival and Library Gift Committee, Special Events Committee, and a Scholarship Committee that will award a scholarship this year to an undergraduate student doing research. TCHS also partnered with the Taos Community Foundation and opened an endowment fund account.

With heavy-hearts we report that the TCHS lost two very active members. Charles "Corky" Hawk and Nita Murphy. Corky was leading the preservation work of the Duran Molino Project. Nita was a genealogist and historical archivist. Both Corky and Nita contributed to the publication of "Taos: A Topical History." Always appreciated, their contributions to TCHS will be greatly and dearly missed.

In March, Anita Rodriguez was our featured speaker, reminiscing of "Growing up in Taos." In April, Denise Tessier was our featured speaker presented "Within These Solemn Walls," the history of New Mexico District Courthouses and sensational, history making cases and events.

For our Annual Honoree Luncheon, the TCHS chose to honor the "Enjarre Preservers of the San Francisco Asis Church in Ranchos de Taos," and listen to Spanish *Cuentos* by our featured speaker Elmo Baca.

The Taos County Historical Society is pleased to support a community that cares about the history of Taos and New Mexico. The more that we involve and collaborate with our community, the greater the opportunity to preserve our history for future generations. We need to show our next generations about the importance of the history and find relevant connections to the future. We are all participants in our past, present and future.

On behalf of the TCHS I extend my appreciation and thanks to our Board and Committee members for their continued support and work to preserve our history. We also extend a special "Thank You" to everyone that supports the TCHS. Together we will continue our mission "To Preserve the Irrevocable."

Sincerely,

Ernestina Cordova, President
Taos County Historical Society

EULOGY FOR ANTONIO VIGIL - 1929-2020

November 17, 2020 by David Maes

My last meeting with “Toné” – as we knew him – was about six weeks ago. I delivered him a box of apples which I had just picked from my orchard. The apple visit had become an annual ritual: I would drop by his house, deliver the apples, and we would sit on his porch or around the kitchen table and visit. Tone wore his feelings “on his sleeve” as the saying goes. He was warm and friendly, but more to his nature he was genuine, unpretentious and sincere. I always felt welcomed in his home; that he was glad to see me. Tony would always offer me something to drink and eat. Maybe it was cookies, tortillas or whatever he had on the stove. During one of my visits - when Tony’s wife Francis was alive, I walked away with, at least, half a cake. They offered me the whole cake, but I felt guilty taking all the cake.



The practice of inviting a visitor into your house and offering something to eat was a common custom, a cultural tradition, of the “old Taos” or in our case, the “old Ranchos.” That was the social norm when Ranchos was a small, tight-knit community where everyone cared for and shared with each other. This was the world into which Tony was born. Even as the world around him changed, Tony continued to live and practice those old values of community caring and sharing. I was fortunate to have been born early enough to have lived in the waning years of those “good old days” and I miss them and I miss Tony. Even though we were separated by many years, and were technically only second cousins, I enjoyed a close, brotherly friendship with Tony. He was more a “big brother” than a distant cousin.

Our relationship grew from familiarity to brotherhood after I retired from the Coast Guard in 2007 and returned to Taos. That was the year that my dad Abiguel, Tone’s first cousin, passed away. Theirs was truly a “brother” relationship. Especially during their retirement years, Tony would frequently drop by our house to visit with my Dad. They would sit on my dad’s porch and talk for what seemed like hours. And, they would laugh. Oh, would they laugh. Belly-roll laughs. They would remember the “old days” and recall humorous events. I remember one conversation when my dad described Tio Antonio, Tony’s father and my Dad’s uncle, climbing onto his white horse and riding off to perform his duties as *acequia mayordomo*.

Tio Antonio was a big, husky, heavy man. The horse was old with wobbly legs. The horse would sway from side to side and occasionally stumble as he trotted down the road. They would laugh and laugh remembering the scene. The brotherhood relationship was real. My Dad actually lived with Tio Antonio and his family for several years. My dad’s mother, Fidelia, and Tio Antonio were brother and sister. In 1932, in the middle of the great depression, my dad left his native Saguache, Colorado, and came to Taos in search of work. My dad was 20 years old and had recently graduated high school. He had been working as a sheep herder and a farm hand in southern Colorado. My grandpa Herman Maez urged my dad to leave Saguache, go out into the world and find a better life. That’s how my dad came to Taos. He was received into Tio Antonio’s family which included Antonio’s wife, Higinia, and seven children. A few years ago, there was a buyer interested in purchasing the old Vigil house. He wanted to know about the history of the old structure. I introduced him to Tony who graciously gave us a walk-through tour of the house. The long portion of the house had only 3 rooms - the *zaguan*, a bedroom and the kitchen. Tio Antonio and Higinia’s bedroom was perpendicular to and off the kitchen. That meant that all the seven children plus a visiting cousin from Saguache slept in one bedroom.

“Where did everyone sleep?” I asked Tony.

“Oh, we managed” Tony replied.

Tony used the word *zaguan* instead of “*sala*.” It is an old Spanish word for “receiving room” similar to a foyer. Tony explained that the room was often used for holding community events.

Frequently, the Vigil family would host weddings, baptisms, and funeral receptions at their home. Folks from the Ranchos neighborhood would gather in the zaguan to celebrate the event. Food would be served and there would be music and songs. The Vigil house was constructed on a strategic location, on the “*ceja de la loma*”, or brow of the hill. It overlooks the location where the Miranda canyon opens into the Ranchos Valley. This was the route that the Comanches used to enter the Valley during their raids throughout the 17 and early 1800s. In the early 1700’s, the Spaniards who settled the Valley, our ancestors, lived in small haciendas scattered along the Valley floor, next to the river. Due to frequent, deadly, Comanche attacks the settlers eventually constructed and moved into the Ranchos plaza-fort, with the Church at its center. Over time, the Comanche threat lessened, but was not totally eliminated. Even as the Spaniards moved out of the plaza-fort, they kept their guard up. Evidence of this is the *torreon* next to the Vigil house. The location of the house and the *torreon* support the fact that the Vigil house was one of the first homes constructed outside the walls of the Ranchos plaza, in the early 1800’s. Tio Antonio’s *grandfather* was likely the builder of the Vigil house and the *torreon*. Tio Antonio’s *father*, Miguel, was the second generation to live in the Vigil house. Tio Antonio and his family were the third. My dad once showed me a picture of Miguel Vigil, Tio Antonio’s father. He had a handle-bar mustache and wore a tall cowboy hat. He was a territorial judge during the years that New Mexico was a territory of the United States. The Vigils were a very prominent family in Ranchos history. These folks were Tony’s ancestors. They are our ancestors.

When my dad moved in with Tio Antonio’s family, Tony was a 3-year-old boy. My dad got along well with the other Vigil children, but he developed a very close, personal relationship with Tony. Perhaps it was a big-brother, little-brother bonding. The friendship continued after my Dad moved out on his own, all throughout their adult lives. After my Dad passed away in 2007, Tony continued coming by our house. We sat out on my porch and visited, just as they had done. I sat in my Dad’s chair, as it were. At times Tony’s conversation drifted into memories of past times, as if he were talking to Abiguel. I listened. I smiled and I understood. I felt honored to have moved into my dad’s chair, and inherit the warm friendship between Tony and my dad. When I recall those porch conversations, I remember one of Tony’s special mannerisms. When he was about to share a bit of *mitote*, or a joke, he would break into a mischievous smile, shuffle forward in his chair, and lean into you as if to tell a secret. Then he would spill the beans. That is the Tony I will remember.

Tony was born in 1929 to Antonio J. Vigil and Higinia Gutierrez. Tony was the 6th of 7 children, and the youngest male. All siblings have passed on except for Antonita who is a retired teacher and Dominican nun. She lives in a retirement home in Albuquerque. Tony attended St. Francis elementary school, with the Dominican nuns, here in Ranchos. He went on to attend and graduate from Taos High School. Tony served in the U.S. Army during the waning years of the Korean war. In 1948 Tony married Francis, a beautiful woman from the Ranchos area. They were very happily married 68 years and raised 5 children: Daughters Diana Gurule and Gloria Godina, and sons Joseph Vigil and Floyd Sisneros.

One child, a girl named Dolores, died shortly after childbirth. Tony and Francis have 6 grandchildren and 15 great grandchildren.

Tony loved the outdoors and was lucky to have spent his professional life working there. His love of the outdoors started early in life. In one of our porch conversations, Tony described working long summer days in the Vigil fields, tending crops. Antonio Vigil owned extensive property extending northward from their home to a point around Este Es road. Young Tony would leave home early in the morning, spend the day working in the fields, and start the walk back home in the afternoon. The work was hard, but Tony learned to love being outdoors in the fresh air and sunshine. Tony spent his professional life working for the Forest Service, here in Taos. He was a squad boss for fire-fighting crews. Outside of fire-fighting season he served as a supervisor of work crews charged with managing the vast forest lands surrounding Taos. Tony retired from the Forest Service after 25 years of service.

Tony’s true avocation was carpentry. He was a gifted artist working with wood. In his shop next to his house, he would while away the hours creating fine pieces of furniture and wooden artwork. One of his finest pieces is the wooden Altar in our Ranchos church. The *candelabro* set that adorns the altar is also Tony’s work.

Perhaps Tony’s favorite pastime was hauling wood in the fall. Any true native *Taoseno* knows that wood hauling in the fall is not really work, but a fun tradition. Diane Taylor, Tony’s daughter in law, would frequently accompany Tony on wood hauling trips. Her favorite memory was spending the day “making a load” with Tony. Tony would cut and Diane would stack. Tony was a perfectionist. He required Diane to follow an exact stacking plan: stack the wood evenly, filling voids and stacking high in front. After the load was made came the best part of the trip: sitting down in the shade of a tree and enjoying the delicious lunch prepared by Grandma Francis. On the trip home, Tony would reach into his shirt and pull out a bottle of tylenol. He would take one pill and offer one to Diane. That was their routine. These are Diana’s fond memories of wood hauling with Tony.

I conclude my farewell to Tony with a memory of my own, entitled: “Tony to the rescue.” One morning I was out on my porch getting ready to do a few chores around the house. I was having trouble getting into my work boots. Perhaps I hadn’t loosen the shoe laces enough. I grabbed the top of the boots and pulled hard, trying to force my foot into the boot. Suddenly I heard a pop in my back and felt a bolt of electricity run from my lower back down into my legs. I fell to the ground and had no feeling from my waist down. I couldn’t feel or move my legs. I wasn’t so much in pain as I felt numb. I didn’t have my cell phone with me so I couldn’t call anyone. I lay there for what seemed like a long time. I thought I might lay there hours more until Margarita came home from work. Then I heard the sound of tires rolling over gravel. It was Tony, dropping by for a visit. What luck!! Slowly, very slowly, pulling and pushing, Tony managed to get me up onto a porch chair. From there I draped my arms over his shoulders and around his neck. He lifted me unto his back and dragged me into my house and then into the living room where

he backed me unto my easy chair. He sat next to me and we laughed together at the comedy scene of an old guy dragging his younger buddy into the house. Tony offered to stay with me until Margarita returned home, but I told him I was fine. He brought me a glass of water, the TV remote and my cell phone. I was all set. I'll forever remember that day - Tony showing up in my time of need, lending a helping hand, showing me love and support. That was classic Tony.

Rest in peace, Tone, *mi hermano*. David Maes

Author's Notes

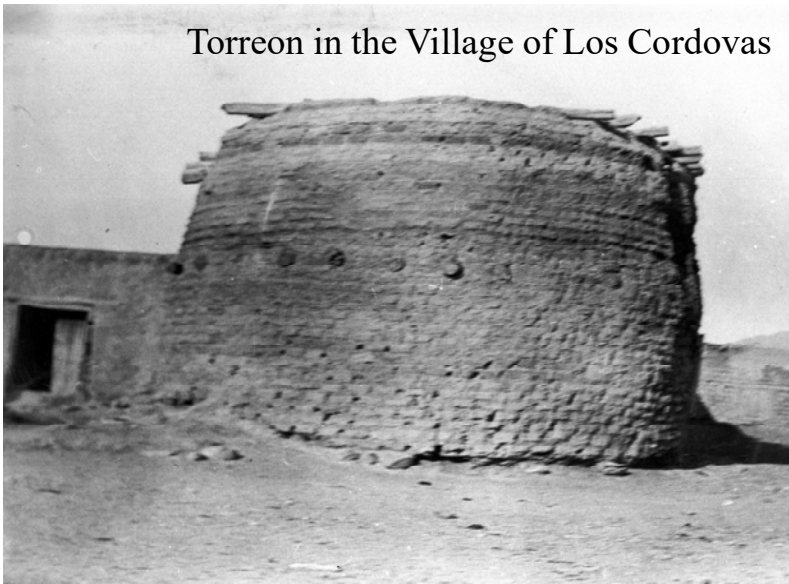
Photos of the Talpa or Vigil *torreon* appear with this article because the *torreon* is located right next to the Vigil family home and was part of the Vigil property. Antonio Vigil, my great uncle and Tony's father, is featured in some of the photos. A few years ago, I visited the Vigil family home with Tony, my friend and cousin. He talked at length about the history of the home and *torreon*. Tony reported that in earlier years, the 1800s, the family home and *torreon* were connected by *latilla* and adobe walls, forming a "fort" complex. The connecting walls have long since disappeared. The *torreon* is located perhaps 10 yards to the north of the family home.



The Talpa Torreon as depicted in a photograph probably made in 1955 according to Corina Santistevan. Pictured (left) Helen Blumenschien and torreón owner Antonio José Vigil (right).

The Ranchos *morada* and associated graveyard is located about 100 yards to the east of the Vigil home. The Rio *Chiquito acequia*, which provides irrigation water to much of Talpa, Ranchos, La Cordillera, and Los Cordovas, runs alongside the *morada*. Today, the Ranchos Elementary School and the *Descanso* cemetery are located in the same general area. All these entities indicate that this area was and still is the heart or hub of the neighborhood that lies between the Ranchos and Talpa settlements.

Torreón in the Village of Los Cordovas



A *torreon* is a circular fortification, constructed of rocks, stones or adobe by Hispanic settlers in the mid-1800s throughout the southwest. *Torreons* were tall structures, usually 10 to 12 feet high and 10 to 16 feet in diameter. These towers had a second floor constructed of vigas, and had an open roof from which those taking refuge could have a lookout. The towers were defensive structures for protection from the raiding Native tribes of northern New Mexico. The residents of the *Plazuela* cared for and maintained the *torreon*, and was always ready for use.

Every community would have at least one *torreon* for the protection of the residents. When a raiding band approached the community, an alarm was sounded and the residents would climb the ladders into the structure and pull

the ladders up so that the Indian raiders could not threaten the residents. Entrance was gained through an opening on the roof, there were no door into the building from ground level. To improve their chances of survival, the residents left baskets of grains, vegetables and perhaps a sheep or two to satisfy the raiders and spare their lives.

Survival was important to the community and the natives that survived by scavenging and marauding from the Spanish settlements within their territory. From time to time these natives drove the settlers out of the area, only to discover that their sources of plunder were ended when the settlers were driven away. It is believed that the settlers and natives coexisted, by understanding their places in the "uncomfortable" relationships so important to their survival.

SANTA ROSA DE LIMA AND SANTO TOMAS DE APOSTLE

A Chronological Essay by Analinda Dunning - 2018

Santa Rosa de Lima Chapel



Photo by Analinda Dunning

The Pueblo Revolt of 1680 removed all Spanish from New Spain. Spanish families began to return in 1693. The first half of the 18th century over 30 land grants were issued to Spanish families in Rio Arriba County as families came to reclaim and resettle the region. (i) The settlers in Santa Rosa de Lima de Abiquiu were frequent victims of raids by nomadic Indians. They would retreat into the safety of Santa Cruz de la Cañada. They were told by the Spanish government that they must return to their lands and if not, their land grants would be given to others. They were told to construct fortified settlements and refrain from building the isolated dwellings that were harder to defend. The settlers in Santa Rosa de Lima refused to follow these building orders and continued to build their separate homes ...and continued to be harassed by the nomadic Indians.



Photo by Analinda Dunning

Miguel Martín Serrano, resident of nearby San Miguel and his son-in-law, Francisco Quintana, had built a chapel for Santa Rosa de Lima de Abiquiu. Originally, the chapel was located at San Miguel de la Puente, but later relocated about a mile upstream on the south bank of the River Chama where its ruins remain today. (ii)

Only a few records of the Abiquiu settlements between the 1730s and the late 1740s have survived. The first license for the Chapel at Santa Rosa was apparently issued by the Bishop of Durango and Visito General Don Martin de Elisacochea in 1737. (iii) The chapel's patron saint was listed as Santa Rosa de Lima. Records show that the chapel was still unfinished in 1746. Although the chapel later became an auxiliary chapel of the church established in the plaza of Abiquiu in 1754 for the resident Genízaros, it was relicensed as a chapel during the visit of Bishop Pedro Tamaron y Romeral of Durango in 1760. (iv) The 1826 account by Vicar General Fernandez San Vicente is the last surviving document that describes Santa Rosa. The site was deeded to the Archdiocese of Santa Fe on August 30, 1975, on the Feast of Santa Rosa de Lima. (v) In 2010 the small chapel adjacent to the sacristy in the present day Santo Tomás de Apostle Church in Abiquiu was dedicated and renamed La Capilla de Santa Rosa de Lima.

Santo Tomás de Apostle Catholic Church



This appears to be the church built after the fire of 1867.

Grant Family Photo

The Spanish settlements continued to experience periods of abandonment and resettlement due to the Indian raids. In an effort to establish a more permanent frontier outpost that the government could control and could employ a military presence led to Governor Tomás Velez Cachupin to establish the land grant of May 1754 for the *genízaro* families living on the mesa about a mile and half from the Spanish settlement of Santa Rosas de Lima. The land grant documents were based on the requirements defined in the *Recopilación de Leyes*, more commonly known as the Laws of the Indies. These compilations of Spanish colonial law were published to the Spanish colonies after the revolt of 1680. These laws identified the Abiquiu Genízaro Land Grant as a *reducción*. Non-Indians could not live at a *reducción*, and only those Indians specifically assigned to the mission were allowed to be residents. (ii)

The *Recopilación* stated that: The site on which towns were to be established should have ample water, land, forest, easy accesses and tillable soil, and be at least one league long, where the Indians

can have their herds without mixing with those of the Spanish. (iii) The same land grant documents stated that a “doctrinal teacher” would be provided to the community as well as specifying the construction of a mission church. Fray Félix Joseph Ordoñez y Machado became the first priest for Santo Tomás de Apostle Catholic Church in Abiquiú. Santo Tomás was the patron saint of Governor Tomás Velez Cachupin.

Indoctrination at the mission of Abiquiú was noted in Father Dominguez description in 1776 of the administrative routine of the mission Father:

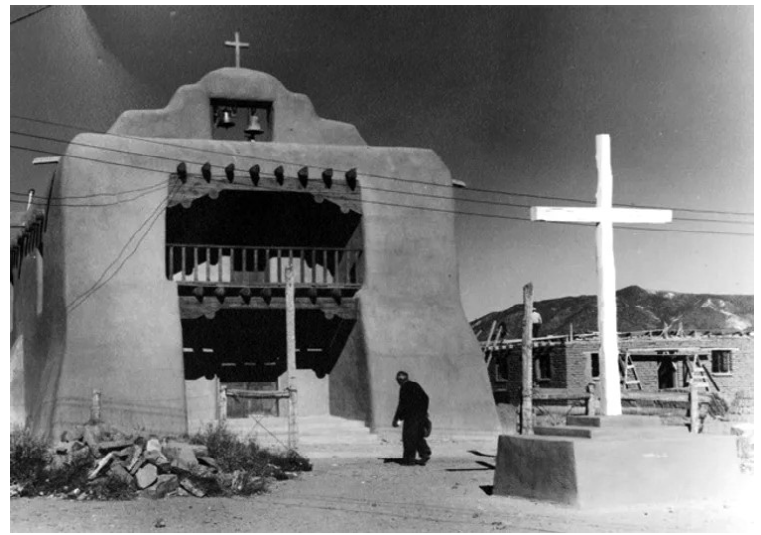
Every day, morning and evening, the unmarried people go to catechism, which they recite with the Father and there is always an explanation at some point in their recitation. On feast day, the same recitation before or after Mass, during which there is usually a doctrinal sermon to settlers and Indians. Saturday and feasts of Our Lady, Rosary with the Father, and later, after dark, discipline attended by those who come voluntarily, because the Father merely proposed it to them, and following his good example, there is a crowd of Indians and citizens. (iv)

By the early 1800s, Indian raids were less of a threat to Abiquiú Genizaros than were land sales by individual Indians to Hispanics elites. The decline in farming at Abiquiú and the 1812 laws allowing privatization of unused pueblo lands created a situation that was ripe for exploitation by Hispanic citizens... including the priest at Abiquiú. Fray Teodoro Alcina was one of the worst offenders in the practice of wresting land from the Abiquiú Genizaros. He would refuse church rites to those who could not pay and would take land as payment, even though he had been given land from which he was to use the profits for the church. Abiqueños organized against this unscrupulous priest and many others over the years who tried to carve pieces out of their rightful land grant. There were many claims from neighboring land grant owners who were encroaching on the Abiquiú Land Grant as well as from Spanish families who had to relinquish parts of their land when the Abiquiú Land Grant was established. All claims were finally settled by the Land Claims Court and a patent was finally issued to the Abiquiú Board of Grant Commissioners on 11 November 1909. The patent included all the land cited in the original land grant except for a small piece of land contested by the change in the flow of the Chama River. (v)



Note Bode's store in the background.

Palace of Governors Photo Negative 08554



Note construction of Convent and current Parish Office to the right.

Palace of Governors Photo Negative 08668

Fray Juan José Toledo, who was minister here between 1756 and 1771, built a convent and put up the walls for a church. In 1772, the area was ministered to from the Pueblo of Santa Clara, and the following year Fray Sebastian Angel Fernandez moved into the convent and finished the church by 1773. The church of Santo Tomás de Abiquiú burned down in October of 1867. After the fire, the people of Abiquiú rebuilt the church but by 1930s it was decided that a new church was needed. (vi)

The present church was begun in 1935. The prominent Santa Fe architect, John Gaw Meem was contracted to design the church. John Gaw Meem IV (1894 - 1983) was an American architect based in Santa Fe, New Mexico. He is best known for his instrumental role in the development and popularization of the Pueblo Revival Style and as a proponent of architectural Regionalism in the face of international modernism. Meem is regarded as one of the most important and influential architects to have worked in New Mexico. (Wikipedia)

The church was a community effort. If families could not afford to donate money for the purchase of materials they were expected to donate their time in the building effort. Many hands went to work making adobe bricks. The large timbers for the massive vigas floated down the Chama River from Burns Canyon and were then dragged up to the village by teams of horses or mules. Children were always underfoot since their family members were the builders. The local saloon owner “hired” the youngsters to peel the many latillas used in the church ceiling. If they showed up with the proper tool, sometimes it would be a kitchen knife with one end wrapped in a rag, they would be put to work peeling the thin aspen poles. For their day's labor the saloon keeper would give each 25 pennies, which would soon end back up in the saloon coffers as the children would spend their wages on candies and treats sold in the saloon.

Building progressed smoothly until it was noticed that the architect had positioned the door to the church facing east, which was the custom for most churches. The Abiquiú church had always faced the south and the people of Abiquiú insisted that they retain this orientation. Architect Meem and the Archdiocese officials insisted that the church face the easterly direction.

IN MEMORIAM

NITA L. MURPHY

Nita Murphy long time TCHS member has gone home to be with the Lord. She will be greatly missed.



Nita was one very active member of the society, she served as secretary early on and in the board of directors. She contributed to TCHS endeavors. She, jointly with Art Bachrach, wrote chapter 23 of "Taos, A Topical History". She was an active genealogy expert, contributed to TCHS endeavors and always willing to help. She was a founding member of the Taos Mountain Chapter DAR and she worked at the UNM Southwest reach center for many years.

CHARLES "CORKY" HAWK



We also received sad news that Corky Hawk has suddenly passed away. Corky was also TCHS member, past board of director and preservation committee chair. He is the one that headed the preservation of the Duran Molina. He was also an author of "Taos a Topical history". Corky prepared and received many grants for the Duran Molino.

Santa Rosa de Lima & Santo Tomas de Apostle (continued)

Work stopped as a deadlock was reached between the big city designers and local builders. It was resolved in a most unique manner. It is recorded as either a drunken school bus driver, a local Model-T driver or a concerted effort by a group of locals with their teams of oxen, mules, and plows that tore into the unfinished foundation of the new church. The result was that the repair and further building of the church had its front doors oriented towards the south, looking towards the ancient mesa of the Moqui and further on into their well-guarded land grant. John Gaw Meem washed his hands of the project and did not attend the dedication ceremonies when the church was finished. However, amongst the many buildings attributed to his design, mission churches, Santa Fe Hotels, U&M buildings, and private residences, there is listed the "Saint Thomas Church, Abiquiu - 1935".

Conclusion: If only the priests who served in Abiquiu had kept journals of their time from 1754 to present day- what a treasure trove of history that would be. The motivation for the establishment of Santa Rosa de Lima Chapel and Santo Tomás Church were very different. The chapel started out as a private chapel for a group of Spanish settlers who would not or could not follow the dictates of the Spanish government in settling and maintaining their land grants. The *Genízaro* church was established as a way of controlling a group of people who could in turn provide a fortified village under Spanish civil and military control. Over time, when the threats of Indian raids abated the two entities meshed into one. Most of Abiquiu's history revolve around the church. One thing that comes across loud and clear when discussing the history of Santa Tomás de Apostle in Abiquiu is that it was the tenacity, perseverance and fortitude of the people that have kept it thriving. Perhaps it was the strict regiment of catechism during the *reducción* period and the

establishment of their own church that lay the groundwork for the *Genízaro* spirit that was able to combat land-grabbing priests, defy big city architects and fight against encroachments on their land grant. There is a devotion and pride of place that flows through the veins of the people of Santa Tomás de Apostle de Abiquiu Catholic Church.

i *Rio Arriba, A New Mexico County*, compiled by Robert J. Torrez and Robert Trapp, 2010

ii *Abiquiú and Don Cacahuat: a Folk history of a New Mexican Village*, Gilberto Benito Córdova, 1973

iii *Abiquiú: A History of Santa Rosa de Lima de Abiquiú*, Charles M. Carrillo

iv *Ibid*

v *Four Hundred Years of Faith, Seeds of Struggle - Harvest of Faith, A History of the Catholic Church in New Mexico*, Archdiocese of Santa Fe, 1998

vi *Reducción*, in Spanish Colonial America, an Indian community set up under ecclesiastical or royal authority to facilitate colonization. Native peoples, many of whom had lived in small villages or hamlets before contact with Europeans, were forcibly relocated to these new settlements. At *reducciones*, missionaries and other colonial administrators attempted to convert Indians to Christianity and to teach them better farming methods and simple crafts. The Indians lived under a strict regimen and were required to contribute their labor to various agricultural and construction enterprises. (Encyclopedia Britannica)

ii *Pedagogy of Missionization: Reducción and Hispanicization of Santo Thomas Apostle de Abiquiu*, Gilberto Benito Córdova, 1978

iii *Ibid*


iv *Ibid*

v *Rio Arriba, A New Mexico County*, compiled by Robert J. Torrez and Robert Trapp, 2010

vi *Four Hundred Years of Faith, Seeds of Struggle - Harvest of Faith, A History of the Catholic Church in New Mexico*, Archdiocese of Santa Fe, 1998

CHRONOLOGY OF THE HISTORY OF TAOS

by F. R. Romero

Pre-History	The discovery of a "Cody Knife" in frijoles canyon in 1988 provided definitive evidence that there were people who hunted near Taos at least 9000 years ago.	1540-41	Captain Hernando de Alvarado of the Coronado Expedition was in Taos. This was the first documented account of Europeans in Taos.
3000 BC	There is some archeological evidence that people lived in and around Taos Valley some 5,000 years ago.	1581	The Rodriguez-Chamuscado Expedition may have reached Taos Pueblo.
100 BC – AD 700	The Anazazi Culture dates back to about 100 B.C. Between A.D. 700 and 1100 the Anazazi culture evolved into the Pueblos.	1590	Gaspar Castano de Sosa was in Taos County (Picuris Pueblo) with an entire mining colony or "Contra Banda" of 170 persons. He was apprehended by Juan Morlette and then escorted back to New Spain (Mexico).
1000	In Taos Valley there exist countless ruins of pithouses and small pueblos. The major Anazazi site was Pot Creek which developed around A.D. 1000 and had substantial activity until around 1300.	1598	Don Juan de Onate was in Taos as early as July 14, 1598 after planting a colony in San Gabriel near Espanola.
1350	The Taos Pueblo structures were probably built between A.D. 1300 and 1450. Some "experts" place the date at 1350 when the Pot Creek Pueblo became abandoned and some of the inhabitants apparently moved to Picuris Pueblo and others moved to Taos Pueblo.	1601	Fray Francisco de Zamora was based at the Taos Pueblo to begin to spread the Catholic faith in the Taos Valley. The first mission church was founded around 1610-12 or 1617 and became known as Mision de San Geronomio.
	 <p>Pen & Ink by Helen Blumenschein</p>	1615	There were surely some Spanish settlers in the Taos Valley who lived near the Pueblo. The first building of the Village of Taos were begun. Chronologically, Taos is probably the fourth oldest of the existing European settlements in the U.S. after St. Augustine, FL, Jameston VA, and Santa Fe, NM.
		1680	Pueblo Revolt; The families of Don Fernando de Chaves and Diego Lucero de Godoy were living close to the Taos Pueblo. Both men had received landgrants from the Spanish Government. The families of both men were murdered along with the Catholic missionaries during the Revolt of 1680. Both Lucero de Godoy and Chaves and his son Cristobal were away from Taos during the Revolt and were the only survivors of about 70 Spanish Colonists that lived in the Taos Valley .. Pope, a San Juan Pueblo Indian planned and directed the Revolt while headquartered in Taos which resulted in the Spaniards being driven out of Pueblo Country and south to the El Paso area.
		1692-1696	Don Diego De Vargas completed the Re-Conquista of NM with the last phase being completed in 1696 when De Vargas persuaded the Taos Pueblo Indians to drop their arms and come back out of the mountains.
	One legend has it that a great chief following an eagle led his people up a sparkling stream to the foot of a mystic mountain where two plumes from the eagle fell on either side of the stream. This vision signaled the site where they should build their permanent home. Another legend says that two Indian groups arrived at the Rio Pueblo being fed by Blue Lake at the same time. The two groups established themselves at either side of the river.		
	Consequently the Taos Pueblo is one of the oldest if not the oldest continuously inhabited communities in the same location in the U.S.		

1715	Cristobal de la Serna petitioned for and received the old Chaves Landgrant and it became the Serna Landgrant.		According to Father Dominguez, a Plaza was being built in 1776, and according to tradition a church was usually the first building built in a Spanish plaza. The Ranchos Church records are contradictory and indicate that official permission to build the Church was given in 1813 and in 1814. Father Benito Pereyo informed the Cathedral Chapter of Durango that he had completed the Church. Oral history and tradition is that a church or chapel existed on the location in the early 1700s and it is possible that this was the case and that the foundation and even the shell of the existing Church (fortress) were constructed in the 1770s.
1716	The Diego Lucero de Godoy Landgrant was granted to Antonio Martinez and became the Martinez Grant.		
Early 1700s	Self-sufficient agrarian ranchitos and villages sprouted up in the Northern Rio Grande Valley and in Taos County. They were united by the Catholic Church, the Compadrazco, and the extended families. The landgrant system and asequias systems were developed. The mission work of the Catholic Church continued. Isolation led to self-governance and the spirit of parochialism and independence. This was a new era of better treatment of the Indians. Taos Fairs began.	1796-97	New Mexico Governor, Fernando Chacon conceded the Fernando de Taos Landgrant which placed 63 new Spanish families in Taos.
1724	Don Diego Romero "El Coyote" received title to Serna Landgrant in Ranchos de Taos. Visitado, Paes Hurtado validated the transfer after Romero purchased the land from two of Serna's four children for consideration of an Apache Squaw and a bull.	1802	Don Severino Martinez Family including Padre Jose Antonio Martinez moved to Taos and Martinez Hacienda was built in 1804 also in fortress style architecture.
1734	There was a partition of the Serna Landgrant after the death of Romero's first wife to his children Francisco, Andres, and Ana Maria.	Early 1800s	There was an increasing number of American and French Traders and Trappers that began to arrive in Taos. This was especially true after the 1803 Louisiana Purchase.
1739	Early trickle of French Traders begins when Paul and Pierre Mallet arrive in Taos.	1821	Mexican Independence from Spain was hardly noticed in Taos but the trickle of newcomers from the East became a floodtide after the opening of the Santa Fe Trail.
1742	Don Diego Romero dies and there is another partition of Serna land to his second wife, Barbara, who then married an Armijo.	1821-1841	Taos became the base operations for French and American Trappers and Traders in the area. The Taos Fairs became even more popular as nomadic and sedentary Indians, trappers and traders, and locals declared a temporary truce in order to trade, feast, and celebrate.
1744	After 1744, the population in the Ranchos de Taos area grew at a steady rate. In Taos Valley the increase of the "Spanish" population was from 70 to 779. Land in the Serna Landgrant was used by the people as lands in common or communal lands.	1826	Padre Antonio Jose Martinez returned to Taos after going to Mexico to study for the priesthood. He began the first co-educational school in New Mexico. Kit Carson also first arrived in Taos in 1826.
1760	The Comanches massacred the Villpando family of Taos.	1834-1835	The first printing press west of the Mississippi River was brought to Taos by Padre Martinez who then published the first newspaper "El Crepusculo" which is the predecessor to The Taos News. The first book published in New Mexico was published for the School.
1770s	The Apaches, Utes, and Comanches raided swiftly, brutally, and unceasingly in Taos Valley. The "Spanish" Settlers temporarily vacated their farms and moved into the Taos Pueblo.	1837	A Revolt (Chimayo Rebellion) by Indians and Mestizos against the Mexican Government took place, but the revolt was
1776	In 1776, the time of Americas Declaration of Independence according to the census taken by Father Dominguez, the Taos Valley area contained 67 families with 306 Spaniards. From this time until about the middle of the Twentieth Century, there was a larger population in the Ranchos de Taos area than the Taos proper area.		

unsuccessful and Jose Gonzales, a Genizaro from Ranchos de Taos who had temporarily been appointed as Governor was executed for his role in the affair.

- 1844 Kit Carson who had arrive in Taos in 1826 settled more permanently in Taos. He was one of the most noted scouts and mountain men and along with Charles Bent and Ceran St. Vrain helped pave the way and helped provide a welcome nucleus or fifth column for American occupation.
- 1846 Col. Stephen W. Kearney with his "Army of the West" occupied New Mexico for the U.S. and Charles Bent of Taos was appointed as the first American Governor of N.M.
- 1847 Taos Pueblo Indians and firebrand Hispano nationalists revolted against U.S. occupation and Landgrant land losses. Governor Bent was murdered and Captain Burguin died in final assault on the Pueblo Church where the resistors took refuge. After a Kangaroo Court several vanquished rebels or patriots convicted of treason against the U.S. were then sentenced and hung at the Taos Plaza.
- 1848 The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed ending the Mexican/American War and ceding Taos and the Southwest to the U.S. and making all non-Indian inhabitants who did not leave within one year citizens of the U.S.
- 1850 New Mexico became a Territory under Compromise of 1850.
- 1862 The American flag did not fly temporarily in Taos when it was torn down by "southern sympathizers" until Kit Carson and others who served in the regiment of New Mexico Volunteers helped defend New Mexico and restored the flag. The flag now is allowed to fly 24 hours a day.
- 1879 The railroad came to New Mexico but not to Taos and so Taos remained relatively isolated.
- 1898 The first American artists, Ernest Blumenschien and Bert Phillips arrived in Taos and would later establish an Artist Colony.
- 1912 New Mexico became a state.
- 1934 Town of Taos was incorporated.
- 1956 Taos Ski Valley (TSV) was started
- 1965 Taos Gorge Bridge was completed.
- Late 1960s Hippie invasion of Taos occurred.

Early Life in Questa

by Frank V. Garcia

I can still see grandmother sitting in her chair at the fireplace, her wrinkled face shining in its fitful light, as she told me stories of her early life. I settled myself more comfortably on my warm sheepskin and she proceeded.

"Questa was settled by five pioneers in 1830. The most prominent of the group was Don Benito, who at that time had thirty Indian servants. The Indian slaves seemed to enjoy the hard work under their master, performing their daily tasks as faithfully as they could and hoping someday to be highly rewarded by their master.

This valley at that time was covered by a dense forest, so clearing the land was an important occupation for the Indian slaves."

"After enough land was cleared the planting of crops was begun. The plowing was done by means of a sharp pointed piece of iron inserted in a piece of wood to which were attached rude handles. The plow was drawn by oxen."

"By the end of 1856 more than fifty settlers, besides their Indian servants, had settled in Questa. As each new settler arrived, he was assigned a section of land to clear and till. Farms were started, roads built, irrigation ditches dug. Even now the community was not safe from Indian attack. A working man in the fields had his gun and powder handy, for no one knew when the bad Indians would come. Occasionally a watch was put over the field so that the *peones* could work in peace."

"In 1836 Don Benito called a meeting of all the inhabitants to discuss plans for building a church. It was agreed that Saturday of each week all men should work on the new building, which was to have a double wall. Each wall was to be eighteen inches in thickness. Between the walls was a space a foot wide, to be filled with brush and cedar posts. Consequently, the completed walls would be four feet thick, and about fourteen feet high."

"The heavy beams which you enjoy looking at so much when you should be praying are about eighteen inches through and not less than twenty-five feet long. They were lifted in place with only thick strips of hide to aid the men in their work."

"The building was, I think, completed in 1840. It was decided to dedicate it to the holy name of San Antonio, patron of all farmers. A messenger was sent to Taos to bring Padre Martinez to direct the ceremony of the Mass."

"The thirteenth day of June was to be the great day for the *fiesta*. On that day all the men mounted their horses and wheeled them into two lines. The last eight men in each file carried guns in case of Indian surprise. Four women carried the image of San Antonio which had been donated by Dona Maria, Don Benito's wife; all the other women and the children followed. The women sang the hymn *Misterios de San Antonio* and all the men joined in the chorus. The procession went to the four corners of the valley so that San Antonio might see the conditions of the crops."

"During the month of Mary - or May, as we call it - all the men, women and children attended the ceremony of the *Rosario* dedicated to Mary took place every afternoon at four o'clock.

Lectures, Field Trips & Special Events (Tentative Schedule)

May 1 - Noon (Sagebrush Inn)
HONOREE LUNCHEON

June 4 - 2 PM
"Agricultural Practices in Taos"
Miguel Santistevan

July 9 - Field Trip
Fort Garland, Colorado

September 3 - 2 PM
"Old Spanish Trail"
Celinda Reynolds Kaelin

October 1 - 2 PM
"Witchcraft In New Mexico"
Rob Martinez (HSNM)

TCHS Lectures
First Saturday of the month at 2:00 PM
Kit Carson Coop Meeting Room
118 Cruz Alta Road - Taos

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We invite your participation and support through an annual membership, which includes subscriptions to "*Ayer Y Hoy*" and our periodic newsletters. Other activities include recordings of oral histories, maintaining archive materials and participating in community events.

Membership categories:

Individual	\$30
Family	\$50
Sustaining	\$100
Business	\$60

To become a member sign up on our website:
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TAOS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 2447 - TAOS, NM 87571

For more information call (575) 770-0681
or e-mail: cordova@taosnet.com



Taos County Historical Society
PO Box 2447 i Taos, NM 87571

The Taos County Historical Society was formed in 1952 for the purpose of "...preserving the history of the Taos area." This part of New Mexico has a fascinating history, full of people, events, stories and places. If you are interested, we invite your participation in our field trips or lecture programs, or by supporting the Society by becoming a member.