



New Mexico Historic Preservation Division  
Department of Cultural Affairs  
[www.nmhistoricpreservation.org](http://www.nmhistoricpreservation.org)

## PRESS RELEASE

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### State Historic Preservation Awards Announced

*Pioneering Historian, Trolley Barn, Hiking Guide, Archaeology, and Neon Sign Book Recognized*

**Santa Fe** — The state Cultural Properties Review Committee will recognize 13 exemplary contributions to preserving New Mexico's cultural heritage by honoring 21 individuals and organizations at its 45<sup>th</sup> annual Heritage Preservation Awards ceremony on May 12, the New Mexico Historic Preservation Division announced today.

The awards are the highlight of Heritage Preservation Month, nationally celebrated during May. Signed by Governor Susana Martinez; Cultural Affairs Secretary Veronica Gonzales, CPRC chairman and State Historian Rick Hendricks, Ph.D.; and Jeff Pappas, Ph.D., HPD director and State Historic Preservation Officer, the awards will be presented during a ceremony at the St. Francis Auditorium of the New Mexico Museum of Art in Santa Fe. New Mexico's cultural diversity is being showcased during Preservation Month.

The top honor, the Lifetime Achievement Award, recognizes the work of historian David Kammer, Ph.D., a pioneer in recognizing cultural landscapes in New Mexico when the National Park Service was just beginning to recognize their importance in the 1980s. Kammer wrote several National Register of Historic Places nominations and co-authored a book that linked Hispanic vernacular architecture to networks of northern New Mexico acequias.

"Dr. Kammer's work profoundly influenced the course of historic preservation in New Mexico for several decades and continues to influence the types of building, landscapes, and structures that we preserve today," said Pappas. "He was the first to document twentieth-century suburban growth in Albuquerque in 2001, which made subsequent nominations recognizing the historic significance of mid-twentieth century architecture, neighborhoods, and culture possible."

Kammer also laid the groundwork for recognizing resources associated with the New Deal, Route 66, the buildings of John Gaw Meem, highway bridges, and historic movie theaters in more than 30 nominations in the State and National Registers. Kammer is a longtime resident of Albuquerque's Monte Vista College View Historic District in Nob Hill. His work has been recognized by other notable organizations, including the Society of Architectural Historians.

Twelve additional awards will be presented in four categories for accomplishments in architectural, archaeological, and cultural preservation, and for heritage publication.

#### Individual Achievement

- Larry Limon of Mesilla is a *maestro yesero*, a traditional plasterer of historic adobe homes and buildings. His work is recognized throughout the state and the Southwest. A third generation plasterer, his award is for continuing a family tradition that is essential to preserving New Mexico's adobe buildings. Limon has taught plastering in multiple venues, including at Phillips Chapel CME, the oldest African American church in New Mexico, which during segregation became a school for black children in Las Cruces.
- Dixie Boyle grew up on a ranch in Mountainair. After teaching for 20 years in Oregon and New Mexico, she has devoted her time to writing books, leading tours, and preserving the cultural heritage of central New Mexico, an area underrepresented in historic preservation. She has published numerous books, including *A History of Highway 60 and the Railroad Towns of the Belen, New Mexico Cut-Off*, and co-manages the Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument education program.
- Leslie Sandoval-Romero founded Grandmas' Trading Post & Museum in Truchas, originally to preserve her family's legacy and the Hispanic vernacular home her grandparents built in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. After restoring it, she opened it as a museum, which piqued community interest, prompting many residents to donate memorabilia for display. The museum is open to the public and attracts people traveling the High Road to Taos.

#### Architectural Heritage

- The Las Vegas Railroad and Power Co. Building in Las Vegas is not only an outstanding example of Romanesque architecture, it was the headquarters of the state's first electric trolley system. New Mexico Highlands University recently rededicated the building as the headquarters of its Media Arts and Technology Department following an outstanding adaptive re-use project that expertly juxtaposes the original architecture with modern Industrial style additions that accommodate and convey the building's role in technology. The department and the university's Facilities and Planning department director Sylvia Baca will receive awards, as will Baker Architecture + Design, of Albuquerque, and Franken Construction, of Las Vegas.

#### Heritage Publication

- The 27<sup>th</sup> Special Operations Wing at Cannon Air Force Base and Versar, Inc., of El Paso, are recognized for documenting early twentieth-century homesteading in eastern New Mexico.

Homesteading's significance to cultural development has been overlooked in historic archaeology. The base and the firm completed a report, *Transition and Early-to-Middle Twentieth Century Social Dynamics on Cannon Air Force Base: Data Recovery Efforts at LA 172689 and LA 173359*, following excavations of homesteading sites Cannon had identified for redevelopment.

- Author Robert Julyan is perhaps best known for his book, *The Place Names of New Mexico*. His most recent, *Hiking to History*, takes a novel approach to presenting some of the state's lesser-known and more familiar history by making historic sites hiking destinations. Julyan, of Albuquerque, presents readers 22 off-road sites to experience history on foot—more in the manner, the author notes, in which it was made. The book was published by the University of New Mexico Press in 2016.
- Ellen Babcock found a treasure trove of original design drawings of Route 66 neon signs, which were lost to redevelopment and the economic realities of advertising with backlight, standard signage. She and Mark C. Childs compiled the drawings in *The Zeon Files*, creating a permanent record of lost signage for Eddie's Inferno Cocktail Lounge, the Paris Shoe Shop, and Albuquerque Terrace Drive-In theater to name a few. Published by UNM Press in 2016, the book provides a history of manufacturer Zeon Signs and how the signage originated in Paris, France. Childs is an associate dean and professor at UNM's School of Architecture and Planning. Babcock as an associate professor of sculpture at the university.
- Kirtland Air Force Base and historian Kristen Reynolds, of Albuquerque, are recognized for documenting the loss of historically significant twentieth-century buildings on the base. Their new book, *Wings of War: An Illustrated History of Kirtland Air Force Base, 1941–1960*, provides a look at a transformative period in the histories of the city and the state with photographs and history pieces. The book is available at Albuquerque's Public Library and other venues.
- Jonathan S. Craig Architect LLC, of Albuquerque and Jean Fulton, of Timesprings, Inc., in Las Cruces, documented and devised a preservation plan for when former State Rep. John Paul Taylor's historic Mesilla home becomes an official state Historic Site and house museum. The *Taylor-Barela-Reynolds-Mesilla Historic Site Historic Structure Report* is an exemplary guide to the site's historic architecture and its notable residents. It also provides insight into Mesilla's beginnings as a melting pot settled after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo of 1848.
- Maurice M. Dixon, Jr., of Santa Fe, spent more than 25 years researching *The Artistic Odyssey of Higinio V. Gonzales: A Tinsmith and Poet in Territorial New Mexico*. He discovered the eclectic artisan while researching his first book about tinsmithing, a craft unique to New Mexico. Published in 2017 by University of Oklahoma Press, the new book lends insight into New Mexico's transformative territorial period before statehood. A scholarly compilation, it is presented in the manner of an art history book.

#### Heritage Organization

- Two Santa Fe area organizations completed outstanding archaeology and public outreach at the Agua Fria School House Site, the second archaeological site recorded by the New Mexico Laboratory of Anthropology. The Rio Grande Foundation for Communities and

Cultural Landscapes, and the Agua Fria Community Water System Association will receive awards for their longstanding partnership and for raising public awareness of the site, a large 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> century pueblo south of Santa Fe that had been damaged by decades of construction and other activities.

- La Sociedad Colonial Español de Santa Fe was formed in 1948 by citizens of Pecos and Santa Fe who wanted to preserve their cultural heritage for future generations. The Society began performing Spanish Colonial dances and music to honor traditions of dance born by early colonists needing a diversion from the toils of settling in a new land. The Society's folkloric dances have been performed at senior and cultural centers, and at major events statewide and in other states. The organization has notably appeared in the Basque region of Spain and Santa Fe's sister city Parral, Chihuahua, Mexico. The Society will perform at the ceremony to celebrate receiving their award.

The awards are one of more than 45 events held statewide to celebrate New Mexico heritage in May. An online *Calendar of Events* lists archaeological hikes, events celebrating cultural diversity, educational sessions, and historic tours at monuments, parks, cities, and towns. The calendar can be downloaded at [nmhistoricpreservation.org](http://nmhistoricpreservation.org) and is available on the Facebook pages of HPD and the New Mexico Heritage Preservation Alliance.

The Cultural Diversity theme is illustrated on a free, 30<sup>th</sup> edition Preservation Month poster available by contacting HPD at 505-827-6320.

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**NOTES:**

- *A high-resolution digital file of the poster suitable for reproduction, or a hard copy, is available upon request.*
- *Media should consider this release an invitation to cover the ceremony, which begins at 2 p.m. at the St. Francis Auditorium , 107 W. Palace Ave., in Santa Fe.*

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