

Cultural Properties Review Committee

2024 Heritage Preservation Awards

- **Individual Achievement Award**

The Singleton Family and the San Cristobal Ranch

Sponsor: The Friends of Archaeology represented by Mr. Jerry Cooke, Board Chair

Recipient: Ms. Christine Singleton Mednick and family

The 80,000-acre San Cristobal Ranch, located in the Galisteo Basin south of Santa Fe, has long been and continues to be a model example of integrating the operation of a cattle ranch with the preservation and sensitive respect for New Mexico's archaeological heritage.

The natural beauty of the Ranch heightens the setting of a wealth of archaeological sites and historic events highlighting Native American, Spanish, Mexican, and Anglo land use and their stories through the millennia. These archaeological resources have long been a source of research and inspiration beginning with Nels Nelson's pioneering 1912 studies at San Cristobal, Pueblo Largo, Pueblo Colorado, and Pueblo Shé, which subsequently led to the discovery of the archaeological principle of stratigraphy. Nelson was also one of the first to document the spectacular rock art at the Ranch.

The protection and preservation of the archaeological resources on the Ranch are exemplary. This treasured heritage has been made available by the Singleton Family to the visiting public for many years. The Ranch has also played host to a range of site visits by various institutions, researchers, and interested groups.

The continued respectful preservation of these sites, within the ranching operation, is further exemplified by the sites' inclusion within the preservation and research framework of the Galisteo Initiative. The Singleton Ranch has provided the largest financial and educational benefits ever gleaned by the Friends of Archaeology. For that and so much more this award is presented to the Singleton Family for their outstanding stewardship and dedication to keeping New Mexico's archaeological treasures safe and secure for future generations.

- **Heritage Organization Award**

The Wheels Museum

Sponsor: The Wheels Museum represented by Ms. Leba Freed, President

Recipient: The staff of the museum and the Board of Directors

The Wheels Museum at the Albuquerque Railyards is a non-profit organization that works to preserve the history of transportation and travel in New Mexico and the West. The Museum is located in the historic Railyard storehouse, a long, narrow building constructed in 1914. The Museum, which opened to the public in 1994, is now celebrating its 30th anniversary.

The Wheels Museum is a lively, dynamic place where visitors can explore 10,000 museum objects that include full-size trucks, tractors, cars, carriages, and small aircraft. The museum exhibits model

trains in dioramas of New Mexico landscapes, historic advertising signs, posters, photos, a Fred Harvey collection, and all manner of objects related to the history of transportation.

The museum is geographically and historically connected to the Railyards, which operated through the 1960s. Museum President Leba Freed understands the struggles of “the Railyard workers who,” she says, “were the heart and soul of the operation.” In its photography exhibit, she says, “There are a few photos “where workers have coal all over their faces and women came in at midnight to clean the locomotives.”

Ms. Freed understands the museum’s sense of place: “The workers repaired all the locomotives here. This is where it all happened. It was the center. Travel was determined on how fast locomotives were repaired here. There’s so much history.” The Wheels Museum is honored with the Heritage Organization Award because, for 30 years and counting, it tells the story of transportation in one of the most important transportation hubs in New Mexico and the Southwest.

- **Individual Achievement Award**
Candie and Lee Borduin, Mesa Prieta Petroglyph Project

Sponsor: Dr. Matthew Martinez, Executive Director, Mesa Prieta Petroglyph Project

Recipient: Candie and Lee Borduin

This year the Mesa Prieta Petroglyph Project is celebrating its 25th anniversary as a nonprofit organization dedicated to site stewardship, protection, and education of cultural sites. Mesa Prieta relies heavily on recorders to support the project’s mission.

Lee and Candie Borduin have demonstrated their passion and dedication toward this end over the last twenty years. The project is better informed about the archaeological features and histories on the mesa due to Candie and Lee’s steadfast devotion to the protection and preservation of Mesa Prieta.

Candie and Lee were trained by Jerry and Jean Brody and Helen and Jay Crotty who initially recorded the 188-acre Wells Petroglyph Preserve in the early 90s who documented more than 6,500 images. Since then, Candie and Lee have been dedicated to mentoring and organizing recording teams. Thanks to their meticulous work, we now estimate 80,000 petroglyphs and archaeological features have been recorded.

Although Lee retired from working in the field, he continues to collaborate with Candie on recording methods, data processing and by financially supporting a portion of the project’s database. Candie has served for many years on the Board of Directors as well as the Recording Coordinator for the project and has dedicated thousands of volunteer hours in the field, training recording teams as well as database processing. This body of work continues to be shared with the New Mexico Archaeological Records Management Section (ARMS) for the use of researchers and communities. There is no doubt that these recording and preservation efforts will continue to serve as a critical resource for archaeologists and educators which reflects the rich histories of New Mexico.

- **Heritage Organization Award**
International Women’s Forum – New Mexico

Sponsor: Matt Saionz, Historian, Historic Preservation Division

Recipient: Betty Downes and members of the Women’s Forum

Since the inception of the New Mexico Historic Women Marker Initiative in 2006, the International Women’s Forum-New Mexico (IWF-NM), through their New Mexico Historic Women Marker Program, has worked with the Cultural Properties Review Committee and Historic Preservation Division to erect approximately 100 historic markers and recognize the significant contributions of women to the state’s history.

Thanks to the organization’s efforts, what was once a glaring absence among the state’s historic markers is now an obvious strength, with women’s markers accounting for a significant percentage of total markers approved and installed in recent years via the Official Scenic Historic Marker Program. Helmed by a passionate steering committee, the organization figures to continue as the CPRC’s most energetic partner in the creation of historic markers.

The IWF-NM works in several other areas to advance women’s history, perhaps most notably developing, in compliance with the standards of the New Mexico Public Education Department, a complete K-12 history curriculum for teachers to easily integrate into their classrooms. The curriculum is designed to not only get students thinking about the importance of women’s history, but also community organization, civics, and the linkages between society, culture, and history.

The organization has also established productive partnerships with state research institutions for the archiving of documentation related to women’s histories as well as the state library and museums of the Department of Cultural Affairs for the incorporation of women’s history into exhibits. Taken together, the initiatives of the IWF-NM to promote the history of New Mexico’s women amount to an invaluable public service to the state.

- **Heritage Organization Award**
Cornerstones Community Partnerships and Plaza Del Cerro, Chimayo, NM

Sponsor: Kateri Lopez, Cornerstones Community Partnerships

Recipient: Cornerstones Community Partnerships and Plaza Del Cerro

In 2019, the National Park Service designated a tiny, 2-room adobe ‘ruin’ as an American Treasure. This structure, recognized as the Desiderio y Pablita Ortega Casita, is an 18th century historic residence on the National Register of Historic Places, Plaza del Cerro, in Chimayó, New Mexico. The casita has sustained nearly 60 years of weathering and deterioration, making it unsafe, unstable, and unlivable. In the Fall of 2019, Cornerstones Community Partnerships was awarded the Save America’s Treasures Grant to restore and adapt the ruin, which is a tremendous step towards bringing the Plaza back to life. The highly anticipated completion of this capstone preservation project will be concluded with a ribbon cutting ceremony in June 2024.

The purpose of this project was threefold. The restoration of the Casita has been identified as a case study for bringing a community back to life, one house at a time. Its restoration is meant to demonstrate the achievable possibility of preserving many of Plaza del Cerro’s existing structures, some of which are in various states of deterioration, as well as highlighting the process, materials and methods needed to do so. Casita Desiderio y Pablita Ortega has now been transformed into a livable

structure. This process is meant to encourage the community to preserve the Plaza's landscape and other structures. In addition to acting as an example of preservation possibilities for the community, the structure's historic materials were preserved as well. During deconstruction, much of the original fabric (adobe and earthen mortar) were carefully removed and reused in the wall's reconstruction. Wall sections were saved as were wooden components associated with doors and windows.

- **Tribal Heritage Preservation Award**

- **Santo Domingo Pueblo**

Sponsor: Elizabeth Suina, Cultural Properties Review Committee

Recipient: Santo Domingo Pueblo

In early 2020, Santo Domingo Pueblo adopted the New Mexico Earthen Building Code (EBC). This code establishes the standards for the renovations in the Historic Plaza area. The Pueblo required permanent foundations as well as demolition and rebuilding of portions of the home that were not adobe construction.

The goal of the Santo Domingo Pueblo Historic Renovation Project is to renovate existing homes in the historic plaza area of Santo Domingo Pueblo to meet the EBC and other Pueblo requirements. The work in Santo Domingo Pueblo centers on the traditions, culture, and history of the community at every phase. The design and floor plans of each home are drawn to preserve the integrity of the ancestral and traditional design concepts of the original homes. This means that every wall, fireplace, and corridor are rebuilt as they were designed by the generations of community architects and designers before us. Many of the adobes from existing homes were salvaged from demolition and re-purposed into mortar for the new construction, connecting both the practice and the physical material of the ancestors' work in Santo Domingo Pueblo.

Indigenous populations have been building with earthen materials in New Mexico for thousands of years, for this reason, Pueblo-style architecture is a quintessential part of New Mexico's architectural identity and New Mexico is the center of earthen building in the United States. Part of this project was to set up an adobe-making operation in Santo Domingo Pueblo so that the project could be done sustainably and traditionally. An adobe-making operation is now providing most of the adobes used in the new construction.

- **Lifetime Achievement Award**

- **Larry Baker, Executive Director, Salmon Ruins Museum**

Sponsor: Meredith Matthews

Recipient: Larry Baker, Executive Director, Salmon Ruins Museum

Larry L. Baker (MA) has served as the Executive Director of the San Juan County Museum Association/Salmon Ruins Museum since 1993. During his tenure at Salmon Ruins, he has maintained the San Juan County Archaeological Research Center and Library at Salmon Ruins, keeping the museum open for public visitation and preserving the Salmon Ruins, a multistoried Chacoan outlier, as a National Register of Historic Places property.

The management and operation of the nonprofit organization has provided a framework for preservation and research initiatives, both at Salmon Ruins and around the Four Corners Region. There are several internal subdivisions that are components of the Association and serve to

operationalize objectives of the organization “to conserve the historic and prehistoric resources, landmarks, remains, and records of the Four Corners Area.”

One subdivision is the Division of Conservation Archaeology (DCA), operating as an archaeological consulting firm since 1978. Baker has served as the Principal Investigator of DCA during his tenure as Executive Director. He has supported and participated in cultural resource management, keeping the primary revenue mechanism of the Association a viable contracting office for assisting energy resource development in the Four Corners area. He also expanded DCA’s services to include ruins stabilization of prehistoric and historic structures, based on his expertise in structural repairs of stone masonry and adobe structures.

Baker worked in the 1970’s with Dr. Cynthia Irwin-Williams on both the Salmon Ruins Project and the Rio Puerco Valley Project. His work at Salmon Ruins involved not only excavation, but also as the Director of Stabilization. He trained with the National Park Service Ruins Stabilization Unit and brought that knowledge to the structural stabilization of the 300 room, multistoried site, conducting on going masonry preservation at Salmon Ruins from 1974 to the present. He trained a crew of local Native Americans to undertake repairs of classic Chacoan architecture, and with his team conducted work at other Chacoan sites such as Lowery Pueblo, Escalante Ruin, Chimney Rock Pueblo, and Guadalupe Ruin.

Through DCA, he also used his expertise and team to stabilize Navajo defensive sites (pueblitos) under the jurisdiction of the BLM, New Mexico State Land Office, and the Archaeological Conservancy in areas of northwestern New Mexico. These projects continued up through 2023. This work has included 11 Navajo defensive sites, as well as 4 historic homesteads located along the Armijo Route of the Old Spanish Trail.

In cooperation with the New Mexico State Land Office and the State and Farmington District offices of the BLM, Baker revitalized the Northwest New Mexico Site Stewards Program to patrol and monitor remote archaeological sites as a mechanism to deter looting and vandalism. The program was reinstated in 1998 and currently operates with 41 volunteer site stewards monitoring 152 archaeological sites. This not only supports an important preservation initiative for protecting cultural resources, but also engages and educates the public in the need for long term preservation of our national heritage sites. In his role as Executive Director of Salmon Ruins, he has been instrumental in promoting the curation of Salmon’s 1.5 million artifacts.

A major achievement of dealing with the collections from both excavations at Salmon Ruins and DCA data recovery/discoveries has been the completion of the museum’s obligations under NAGPRA. Working with affiliated tribes to complete the repatriation/reburial of all these sensitive materials as defined under the law was a major endeavor for the museum. As administrator at Salmon Ruins, Baker has been able to promote the museum and the Salmon Ruins in terms of heritage tourism. He extended interest in the Chaco phenomenon and the Navajo ancestral homeland through development of tour programs led by Salmon staff, which has served to bring the public from all over the world closer to the importance of the prehistory and history of the region. This interface between the professional archaeologist and the greater public has served not only to promote the world class archaeology of the Four Corners but promote economic development as well.