

SAN JUAN BASIN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Chapter of Colorado Archaeological Society



FIELD TRIP REPORT

Date: **November 17, 2012**

Destination: **Upper Largo Canyon – Historic Homesteads**

Leader: **Rhonda Raffo and Jim Mueller**

Number of Participants: **17**

On November 17, 2012, under the expert guidance of Jim Copeland, Farmington BLM archaeologist, who has spoken to SJBAS, 17 SJBAS members, with field leaders Rhonda and Jim Mueller, toured three early homesteads and an old trading post in upper Largo Canyon.

The **Martin Apodaca Homestead**, at the head of a small canyon once known as Pollito (Little Chicken) Canyon, includes three buildings and a corral built between 1907-1918. This land was later acquired by the Berry Cattle Company. The historical record suggests the homestead was abandoned sometime prior to 1930. One of the buildings was used as a church, known as Nuestra Señora de la Buena Pastora (Our Lady of the Good Shepherd), which was served by the parish in Farmington and visited "every couple of months" by Padre Alberto.

The **Nester Martin Homestead**, one of the oldest in Upper Largo Canyon, is one of the few shown on the 1882 General Land Office survey map of the area. It is shown on the current USGS topographic map of the area as the "Old Rock Ranch," just NE of the mouth of Rockhouse Canyon. Although located along the main thoroughfare through Largo Canyon, very little is known about the site.

The **Margarita Martinez Homestead**, constructed between 1908 and 1922, consists of a four-room sandstone house, with original plaster still showing, a large corral, and an irrigation canal in Tafoya Canyon. Margarita Martinez was originally from the Corrales area where she lived with her husband. After his death, and then a flood destroyed her house, she moved to Largo Canyon in 1904 with her children. She passed away in 1919 following a wagon accident. Management of the homestead passed to other family members. A child born at the homestead, in his 80s, provided significant information to Jim about Upper Largo Canyon early homesteads. Although patents were filed on the homestead in 1935, the home remained on public lands due to an error in the patent's legal description. Historians and archaeologists are conducting historical and archaeological surveys in Upper Largo Canyon to better document the remains and history of the area. Once these studies are complete, the BLM will nominate several of the homesteads for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The group then visited the remains of Haynes Trading Post. A great trip!

- By Janice Sheftel

Participants: Jim Mueller, Rhonda Raffo, Bob Powell, Jay Culver, Kristine Johnson, Sandra Eisemann, Richard Robinson, Bev Moore, John Moore, Ernie Cotton, Margo Cotton, Linda Robinson, Janice Sheftel, John Viner, Eliane Viner, Gail Schulz, Marlo Schulz, Jim Shadell, Kathleen Shadell