## SAN JUAN BASIN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Chapter of Colorado Archaeological Society



## FIELD TRIP REPORT

Date: June 22 - 25, 2018 Destination: Santa Fe, Pecos Pueblo, and Ohkay Owingeh Feast Day

Leaders: Rhonda Raffo and Jim Mueller Number of Participants: 7

Trip participants (Barb and Lyle Hancock, Jay Culver, Kristine Johnson, Randy Graham, Rhonda Raffo and Jim Mueller) met at 2:00 p.m. at the **San Miguel Mission in Santa Fe**, the oldest church in the United States. Exactly how old is unknown, but the first documentation with reference to San Miguel is from 1628, with oral history dating it to 1610. Docent Dave gave an inspirational and passionate talk on the Mission, although maybe not quite historically accurate account of the items and history.



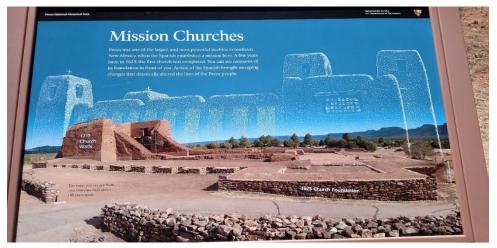
Originally, 250 Spanish and about 700 Native Indians travelled north from old Mexico in 1598 to the Santa Fe area, with the Spanish settling east of the San Juan Pueblo (now called the Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo, where we visited on Sunday for the dance & feast day). The native Indians, a band of Tlaxcalan from central old Mexico that came north with the Spanish, chose to settle in what is now Santa Fe. Eleven years later in 1609, the Spanish moved from the San Juan Pueblo to a site across the river from the Tlaxcalan settlement.

The Tlaxcalan, Roman Catholic by this time, had built a place of worship over an ancient Kiva (+/- 1200 CE, confirmed by survey in 1955). It is believed that when the Spanish moved here in 1609 or shortly thereafter, is when the Spanish had the Tlaxcalan rebuild their modest structure into the San Miguel Mission, hence the 1610 date. The Mission was partially destroyed in 1640 and again in 1680 during the Pueblo Revolt. A major archaeological study and restoration were undertaken in 1955 that restored or exposed artwork from the early 1700's. Excavation revealed the original dirt floor, sanctuary

steps, pottery shards and hundreds of human remains. Glass plates beyond the Communion rail look down into these features.

Next, we visited the 'Oldest House' in Santa Fe and like the San Miguel Mission across the street is believed to be built on the foundation of a 1200 CE pueblo. Built in 1646, it is the oldest residential house in New Mexico, but younger than the Palace of the Governors and San Miguel Mission, both built in 1610.

Saturday was a visit to **The Pecos National Historical Park.** This day was to include a special private tour of petroglyphs up the Pecos river valley and the Glorieta Pass Civil War Battle Field. Unfortunately, both of these were in the Santa Fe



National Forest that was closed due to fire danger. So a private tour of the Forked Lightning Ranch, also in Pecos NHP was booked in their stead.

Pecos Pueblo in ruins today was thought to be one of the largest and strongest Pueblos both before and after the Spanish arrival. Being the eastern most pueblo and adjacent to the Great Plains, it was well situated to be the focal point of trade between the hunter/gatherer tribes of the

plains to the east and the farmers/traders of the pueblos to the west and southwest. Pecos Pueblo was occupied continuously from the 1200's to 1838 and its history well documented since Coronado in 1540. Alfred Kidder, because of this long continuous occupation —resulting in a thick continuous trash pile, and long recorded history chose this pueblo site to do 15 years of research (1915- 1929) and develop his classification system of southwestern archaeology and the Pecos Conference that we still have today.

We started with a ranger led hike up through a quarter mile long open field that was the trading zone in front of the pueblo. We were told how both the Spanish records and Kidder research showed that the plains Apaches would set up their teepees in the open field to trade wares. Between the open field and the South and North Pueblos that made up Pecos Pueblo was a low stone defensive wall that went around the pueblo. The Pecos Pueblo is estimated at over 800 rooms, 4 to 5 stories high, with up to 2,000 people at the time of the Spanish arrival.

A huge Mission was built to serve the large pueblo in 1625 but destroyed in 1680 during the Pueblo revolt. The

remaining foundations stretch 150 feet from the altar to the entrance way and are 22 feet thick in some locations. A new mission was built in 1717 that easily fits into ruins of the old but served a much smaller population. By 1790 the pueblo population was down to 152 people due to smallpox, Comanche raids and migration to other Rio Grande pueblos. In 1838 the last 17 migrated to Jemez Pueblo.

After the ranger-led portion, we wandered around the mile and a quarter self-guided trail to explore the convento attached to the mission and the rest of the Pecos ruins.



After lunch we were driven to the **Forked Lightning Ranch** for a private tour of Tex Austin's Dude ranch. Tex purchased various parcels of land along the Pecos River and Glorieta Creek in 1925. The guest building was designed in the Pueblo Revival style with a courtyard in the center and the rooms opening to both the courtyard and outside. Unfortunately for Tex, who was a well-known international promoter of rodeos, the Great Depression was about to start, and the upscale dude ranch closed in 1933. In 1941 the ranch was purchased by Texas oilman and rancher Elijah Fogelson who later married Hollywood actress Greer Garson. They remodeled the guest rooms into living areas and it became their ranch house. In failing health in the late 1980's Greer Garson was going to sell the ranch to a Florida developer who intended to build a resort community. After local community protests, she reconsidered and sold it to The Conservation Fund who in turn donated it to the federal government to become part of the Pecos NHP. The ranch house is currently decorated in both the Tex Austin period and the Fogelson/Garson period to display its history.

Sunday was on to the **Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo** for their San Juan Feast day dances. I counted 200 dancers from young boys and girls to old men and women. There were more, I just stopped at 200. The costumes were colorful and varied and the collective dancing was quite extraordinary.

On the way home Monday, we stopped at the **Poeh Cultural Center** of the Pojoaque Pueblo. The art work ranged from modern art to historic pottery. It also displayed an exhibition of their 'Nah-Poeh Meng' (The Continuous Path), starting with the Emergence Room through to the modern day. Of future note: the museum is scheduled to receive over a hundred artifacts back from the Smithsonian later this year, to be displayed by early next year.

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- By Jim Mueller