COLUMBIAN QUINCENTENARY
CONFERENCE
OCTOBER 12-13

"Acculturation in the Rio
Grande Borderlands: The
Spanish Era"

On Friday, October 12 (Columbus Day), and Saturday, October 13, the Center for Big Bend Studies and the Alpine Chamber of Commerce will host a conference on the campus of Sul Ross State University to initiate local celebration of the 500th anniversary of Christopher Columbus's first voyage to America (Columbian Quincentenary). The general public is invited to all sessions which will be in the Main Auditorium in the Morelock Building. Presentations begin at 9:00 a.m. on October 12. There is no registration fee.

The meeting is the result of two years planning in the Center focusing on the general theme of "Acculturation Processes in the Rio Grande Borderlands." The emphasis on October 12 and 13 will be on the Spanish Era along the Rio Grande from El Paso to Eagle Pass (on the Texas side) and Juarez to Piedras Negras (on the Mexican side). The public will have the opportunity to hear borderlands' scholars speak on cultural and historical developments relating to the native inhabitants, their relations with the first Europeans (Spaniards) to come to the region, and Spanish institutions that have influenced the region to the present day.

Among the scholars and topics are: Michael S. Foster (Phoenix), "A Review of North American Archeology"; J. Charles Kelley (Southern Illinois University), "Mesoamerican and Rio Grande Connections Influencing Spanish Entradas into the Borderlands"; Robert Mallouf (Texas Historical Commission), "Archeology of the Rio Grande Borderlands"; Miriam Lowrance (Sul Ross State University), "Indian Rock Art in the Big Bend Region of Texas"; Wayne J. Sheehan (Sul Ross State University), "The European Background of Columbus's Discoveries"; and Harry P. Hewitt (Midwestern State University), "Impact of Ranching and Mining on Indians in the Borderlands during the 16th and 17th Centuries."

Also speaking will be Jospeh P. Sanchez (University of New Mexico), "Spanish Explorations in the Borderlands Between El Paso and Eagle Pass During the 16th and 17th Centuries"; Elizabeth A. H. John (Austin), "Spanish-Indian Relations in the Big Bend Region During the 18th and Early 19th Centuries"; Felix D. Almaraz (University of Texas at San Antonio), "Church and State: Missions on the Rio Grande Borderland Frontier"; Oakah L. Jones (Purdue University), "Settlements and Settlers at La Junta de los Rios, 1759-1822"; Robert S. Weddle (Bonham), "San Juan Bautista: Spanish Gateway to Texas"; and W. H. Timmons (University of Texas at El Paso), "El Paso del Norte: Spanish Gateway to New Mexico."

The featured evening presentation on October 12 will be by David Weber (Southern Methodist University) on "The Spanish Legacy in the Borderlands."

A collection of illustrations by Jose Cisneros (El Paso artist) titled "Riders of the Borderlands," will be exhibited during the conference in the Museum of the Big Bend on the SRSU campus.

The conference is funded by Sul Ross State University; the Center for Big Bend Studies; and the Texas Committee for the Humanities, a state program of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

JOURNAL OF BIG BEND STUDIES

Volume 2 of The Journal of Big Bend Studies (January, 1990) is available by subscription for $10. The journal is published annually. It contains topics relating to the history and culture of the American Southwest, with emphasis on the Big Bend region of Texas. Subscription orders should be sent to:

Journal of Big Bend Studies
SRSU Box C-71
Alpine, Texas 79832


Many requests have been received for copies of Volume 1 (January, 1989) which is out of print. Reprinting of a limited number is planned. Interested persons should write or call the CBBS office by September 15 to place an order. The cost will be $12 per copy.

Volume 3 of the Journal will be published in January, 1991. The contents will include an interview by Lawrence Clayton of Eve Ball concentrating on her work with Apaches on the Mescalero reservation in New Mexico; an article on the San Vicente Rain Dance by Elton Miles; a historical and geographical description of Tealingua Haja by Al Tucker; the story of two Eastern Airlines officials’ fascination with the Big Bend country (Eddie Rickenbacker and John Halliburton) by David Halliburton; a biographical sketch of Thomas Verner Skaggs, Big Bend entrepreneur and personality, by Beverly Case; and an account by Frank Daugherty of a train robbery in western Val Verde County in 1891 led by one John Flynt. Subscriptions will continue to be $10.00 to U.S. addresses.

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PEOPLE AND EVENTS

On April 19-21, the Center for Regional Studies at Baylor University launched a series of meetings on “The Natural Regions of Texas” with a conference on “The Texas Blacklands: A Land, Its History, and Its Culture.” Next in the series will be “The Grand Prairies,” scheduled for the Fall 1991, to be followed by “The Edwards-Stockton Plateau” in the Spring 1993 and “The West Texas Basins and Ranges” in the Fall 1994. SRSU and the Center for Big Bend Studies will co-sponsor the latter two. Future newsletters will contain information as the project develops.

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At the annual meeting of the West Texas Historical Association in San Angelo on April 6-7, papers relating to ranching and military actions in the Big Bend and to the cowboy as portrayed in films were presented by SRSU professors Judith Parsons, Al Tucker, and Earl Elam. Professor Wayne Sheehan chaired a session. The annual meeting of the association will be in Lubbock in 1991 and in Alpine in 1992. Novelist Elmer Kelton of San Angelo was elected president for 1990-91.

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The Big Bend Natural History Association has continued its Big Bend Seminars for the current year with a variety of topics relating to archeology, history, and the natural sciences in the Big Bend National Park area. A highlight in February was a “Big Bend Pioneer Seminar” at Panther Junction, featuring “pioneers” Roy Lackey, Beryl Rice, John Prude, Roy “Son” Stillwell, and Hallie Stillwell who talked about personal experiences in the area before the park was established. BBNHA Director Rick LoBello noted afterward that “the event was without a doubt one of the most rewarding interpretive programs ever conducted in the park.” For information on seminars offered in the fall 1990 and a free catalog of 1991 seminars write to the BBNHA, P. O. Box 68, Big Bend National Park, Texas 79834.

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“Women & Texas History: A Conference” will be held in Austin at the Thompson Conference Center on October 4-6, co-sponsored by the Texas State Historical Association, the Barker Texas History Center at UT-Austin, and Texas Woman’s University. Objectives include sharing recent scholarship and information about the history of women in Texas and creating a network of scholars and lay researchers. For information contact TSHA, 512-471-1525.

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Professor J. Tillapaugh of the University of Texas of the Permian Basin presented a slide lecture entitled “A Tour of Fort D. A. Russell, Marfa, Texas” at the Southwest/Texas Popular Culture Association annual convention in Abilene, Texas on February 9. A specialist in historic preservation and head of the West Texas Studies Center at UT-Permian, Dr. Tillapaugh has done extensive research on the fort and the army general for whom it was named.

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The Eagle Pass Columbian Quincentenary and Hispanic Heritage Month Committee will host a celebration in Eagle Pass, Texas, on September 14-15, including a symposium at Fort Duncan dealing with acculturation processes involving Texas ethnic groups. The celebration will include an exhibition of paintings titled “My Country Tis of Thee” by Francisco Barientos, Eagle Pass Artist. The exhibit will be at the Mall De Las Aguilas’ Exposition Center. Also exhibited will be an oil mural by Jose Aguilar, Piedras Negras artist, titled “Tejanos A Legacy,” honoring three Hispanic Texans—Willie Velasquez, Henry G. Gonzalez, and Henry Cisneros. They are portrayed on the back ground of the state surrounded by a collage of Texas scenes. The public is invited to attend all activities.

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The West of the Pecos Museum in Pecos will observe Hispanic Heritage Month on September 9 with its second annual Mexican-American reception in which a pioneer family is honored. Exhibits will include El Dia de los Abuelos and others.

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August 11 was Paul Patterson Day in Crane, honoring a 1935 graduate of Sul Ross State University for his literary and educational contributions. He taught 27 years in Crane schools and is the author of 10 books, including two recent volumes of cowboy poetry titled A Pecos River Pilgrim’s Poems. He also has published numerous articles in Cattlemen and other magazines. Articles in his honor recently appeared in an issue of Southwestern American Literature.

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The President’s office at Sul Ross State University recently announced a reorganization affecting the Archives of the Big Bend and the Museum of the Big Bend. The Archives is housed in the Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library and the Museum is in a separate building. In recent years one director has managed both. In the future there will be separate directors for each facility. Dr. R. Vic Morgan, Acting President, has emphasized the importance of both resources to the University and to the region, saying, “It is imperative that progress in development and expansion be continued.” He said: “To this end,
the reorganization being implemented has as one of its primary goals the expansion of services to the University and the region. The new structure provides additional resources for both the Archives and the Museum and is intended to strengthen both areas.


NEW PUBLICATIONS

Border: The U. S.-Mexico Line, by Leon C. Metz (El Paso: Mangan Books, 1989). $29.95. Metz, well-known El Paso writer, has produced what is advertised as “the definitive story” of the borderlands, covering 150 years of history along the “sometimes calm, sometimes bloody and turbulent, always fascinating” border from Brownsville, Texas to near San Diego, California.

A History of Marathon Texas, by Annejo P. Wedin (Austin: Eakin Press, 1990). $34.95. The author, a resident of Marathon since 1922, has written a history of this small, but important, ranching and railroad town, covering events from the 1870s onward. She was assisted by the staff of the Archives of the Big Bend where a collection of her papers is now housed.


El Paisano, July-September, 1990 (Publication of the Big Bend Natural History Association), has an article on early ranching in the area of the Big Bend National Park titled “Big Bend Rancher’s Daughter, Patricia Ann Wilson Remembers.” Also in this issue by Roland Wauer is “Treasures of the Maderas Del Carmen,” dealing with the site of the proposed new international park that would adjoin the Big Bend National Park in Coahuila, Mexico. For subscriptions to El Paisano write Box 68, Big Bend National Park, TX 79834 ($4.00 annually).

Chihuahuan Desert Discovery (Magazine of the Chihuahuan Desert Research Institute, Summer, 1990) has articles on “Volcanism in the Trans-Pecos,” and “World-Class Geology in the Permian Basin.” Discovery is published semiannually and circulated to CDRI members. For membership categories write CDRI Membership, Box 1334, Alpine, Texas 79831.

People & Dairy Goats is the Newsletter of the Big Bend Dairy Goat Association. The May/June issue contains the constitution of the three year old association whose purpose is to promote dairy goats and cooperation among goat-keepers in the Big Bend area. For information contact George Floro, P. O. Box 1495, Alpine, TX 79831, telephone 915-837-2930.

CENTER FOR BIG BEND STUDIES RESEARCH PROJECTS

Work is in progress on the following projects:

— Big Bend Military History (Activities along the border during the era of the Mexican Revolution, 1910-1920)

— Castolon on the Rio Grande (The operations of the La Harmonia Company, 1919-1961)

— Early Schools of the Big Bend Region

— La Junta de los Ríos (Presidio, Texas-Ojinaga, Chihuahua area)

CENTER FOR BIG BEND STUDIES COLUMBIAN QUINCENTENARY PROJECTS

— Studies of “Acculturation Processes in the Rio Grande Borderlands.”


Co-sponsor of activities in Eagle Pass sponsored by the Eagle Pass Columbian Quincentenary Committee.

*La VISTA DE LA FRONTERA* is the semiannual newsletter of the CENTER FOR BIG BEND STUDIES. Circulation includes members of the ex-students' association of Sul Ross State University, the membership of regional historical associations in West Texas, subscribers to The Journal of Big Bend Studies, the faculty and staff of SRSU, and others in the Trans-Pecos region. Individuals who do not wish to receive future issues or who may wish to have their names added to the mailing list should write or call the Center office, SRSU Box C-71, Alpine, TX 79832, 915-837-8179.

The CENTER FOR BIG BEND STUDIES is a non-profit program of Sul Ross State University that sponsors public programs, research, instruction, and publications relating to the cultural and historical development of the Trans-Pecos, Big Bend region of Texas and adjoining areas in Mexico and New Mexico. The Center is dedicated to objectives which will foster understanding of the rich heritage and multicultural dimensions of the region. On campus, the Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library, the Archives of the Big Bend, and the Museum of the Big Bend house important collections which enhance the fulfillment of these objectives.

The Center receives no state appropriations. Its operations are dependent on grants; cooperative projects with University departments and other institutions; and income from its endowment. Contributions to the endowment may be tax free and may be sent to the Center for Big Bend Studies, SRSU Box C-71, Alpine, TX 79832.

**REMEMBER! PLAN TO ATTEND THE CONFERENCE AT SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY, OCTOBER 12-13, 1990**

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