



HILLSBORO COMMUNITY LIBRARY NEWS

VOLUME 8: NUMBER 8.....AUGUST, 2013

A Woman of Influence

This 2013 biography attempts to document the life of one of the most remarkable women in New Mexico history.

Featured This Month

In the Shadow of Billy the Kid: Susan McSween and the Lincoln County War by Kathleen P. Chamberlain

Susannah Homer was born in 1845 near Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Her childhood was not easy, especially when a stepmother and many more children came along. Portending the strong will and independence that characterized her life, she left home at 18 at the height of the Civil War and doesn't surface in the historical record for nine years, when she married Alexander McSween in 1873 in Eureka, Kansas.

Tough times in Kansas soon encouraged the McSweens to move west. On the way to New Mexico they met and came under the mentorship of Miguel Otero, who would become governor of New Mexico twenty-five years later. He encouraged them to settle in Lincoln and hired Alex, who had some legal training, to represent his interests in Lincoln County (which at the time stretched east and south to the Texas border). They arrived in Lincoln nearly penniless in 1875, but quickly became comparatively prosperous as Alex did legal work for the county's dominant merchant enterprise to which many of the inhabitants were in perpetual debt.

But they soon aligned themselves with a wealthy Englishman, John Tunstall, who set out to compete economically with the existing powerhouse, not a smart move in such a lawless region. The result was the killing of Tunstall, leading to the Lincoln County War of July, 1878. That battle resulted in the killing of Alex and many others and the burning of the McSween home. The story of the war comprises the bulk of the book and pretty much echoes what has



been told before, for example, in Robert Utley's **High Noon in Lincoln: Violence of the Western Frontier** (also in the Library).

Sue McSween broke out as a major force during the period of violence and emerged afterwards as a powerhouse in her own right. Her livestock stolen, and left with only a ranch property, she wielded vengeance effectively on the people she thought responsible and set to work to shore up her finances and dignity. In 1880 she married George Barber, apparently a marriage of convenience to repair her badly damaged reputation, and divorced him eleven years later.

She acquired a property at Three Rivers and built it into a major ranching operation, eventually running 5,000 head of cattle, and earning her the sobriquet of "Cattle Queen of New Mexico." Ironically, the Three Rivers ranch was bought in 1905 by Alfred Bacon Fall, a man she detested. She detested even more the other attorney in the Fountain murder trial, Thomas B. Catron, who had backed – and ultimately owned the assets of – the opposing faction in the war.

But passion and possessions die with age. Sue Barber died in penury in White Oaks in 1931 at the age of 85.

Review by Garland Bills

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New at the Library

Nonfiction

Hiking New Mexico's Aldo Leopold Wilderness by Bill Cunningham
Scenic Driving- Back Country Byways by Stewart Green
T'ai Chi for Beginners by Paul Crompton
The Annexation of Mexico-*from the Aztecs to the IMF* by John Ross

Fiction

The Secret Warriors by W.E.B. Griffin
Fortune's Rocks by Anita Shreve
The Hard Way by Lee Child
Pirate Latitudes by Michael Crichton
Familiar by J. Robert Lennon
Islands by Anne Rivers Siddons

Mystery

Isolated Incident by Susan Sloan
Trick of Light by Louise Penny
The Hiding Place by David Bell
Deadly Stakes by J A Jance
Whiskey Beach by Nora Roberts
Honeymoon by James Patterson & Howard Roughan
Final Payment by Steven F. Havill
Dangerous Days of Daniel X by James Patterson
Sail by James Patterson
Swimsuit by James Patterson
Double Cross by James Patterson
Hunting Wind by Steve Hamilton
Lethal Secrets by Pete Earley
The Beautiful Mystery by Louise Penny
Without Mercy by Lisa Jackson (*Lg Print*)
Pandora's Daughter by Iris Johansen (*Lg Print*)
What Doesn't Kill You by Iris Johansen (*Lg Print*)
Firestorm by Iris Johansen (*Lg Print*)
You've Been Warned by James Patterson (*Lg Print*)
You Don't Want to Know by Lisa Jackson (*Lg Print*)

Reference

Oxford German-English dictionary
Berlitz Japanese Reference Dictionary

Books on CD

Dead Irish by John Lescroart
Paradise City by Lorenzo Carcaterra
Rain Gods by James Lee Burke
The Summer He Didn't Die by Jime Harrison

Films on DVD

Heat of the Sun: The Sport of Kings, Private Lives, & Hide in Plain Sight
Abyss .. Attack on Pearl Harbor: A Day of Infamy .. Stay Alive
The Texas Chainsaw Massacre: The Beginning

Films on VHS

Romancing the Stone .. Rob Roy ..Walkabout
Good Will Hunting..Where the Rivers Flow North

Notes from the Library Board

The Board would like to thank all our volunteers for the Library's extended hours during the Silver Fire crisis. The community, in particular the displaced Kingston residents, and the FS support personnel were very appreciative.

Library Hours:

Sunday & Monday: closed
Tues. 3:30 - 5:30pm Wed. 1:00 - 4:00pm
Thurs: 3:30 - 5:30pm Fri: 10:00am - 1:00pm
Saturday 10:00am-2:00pm

For a complete listing of Library materials, visit
<http://www.hillsborocommunitylibrary.com>

Bookmobile Schedule

Wednesday, August 21
Hillsboro: 1:00 - 2:00 pm Kingston: 2:30-3:30 pm

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