

HILLSBORO COMMUNITY LIBRARY NEWS

VOLUME 10: NUMBER 10.....OCTOBER 2015

Personal History

Around the time we were moving to Hillsboro, Patty and I worked periodically at Hubbell Trading Post on the Navajo Nation. Our contract included compiling an ecological history of the area around Hubbell. I delved deeply (I thought) into the local history, archeology, and paleontology, and felt we had done a fairly exhaustive job. So I was taken aback, when I picked *Desert Wife* from the new book shelf at our library and discovered a factual account about a critical transitional time on the “Rez” that I had missed.

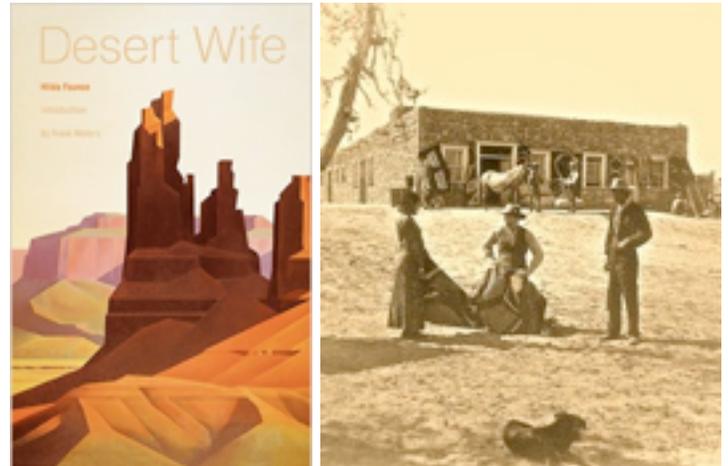
Featured this Month

Desert Wife by Hilda Faunce

Faunce’s story begins in coastal Oregon a few years before World War I. She and Ken, married for five years, are going broke, and Ken, raised in a family of traders in the sunny Navajo country of Arizona, is miserable in the dreary coastal climate. They give up Oregon, load their wagon, hitch up their two horses, and head southward to Ken’s homeland. The book then becomes an epic.

Their trip by wagon through those yet-unsettled western landscapes would have been story enough. Faunce records the land and people when the “Old West” was supposedly ending, but in the remote regions they traversed, this simply wasn’t so. Interestingly, rather than rigors of travel through dry and empty western lands, the congestion of Salt Lake City was probably their most stressful adventure. Suddenly confronted with noisy horseless carriages and inconsiderate drivers, their two horses, heretofore gentle family pets, became unmanageable. Barely holding them long enough to pick up badly-wanted mail, the couple was escorted out of the city by a stern but patient constable.

Once the journey ends, Hilda and Ken settle into



a remote trading post two days by wagon from Ganado. The remainder of the book relates their day-to-day life among a people still emerging from the Anglo-Navajo conflicts. Kit Carson and the Navajo long walk remain fresh in tribal memory. Hilda learns enough Navajo to handle trading chores and is befriended by some of her customers. Nonetheless, through Ken’s stoic guidance, she accepts that they, as whites, will always be “the other.” She finds that in this land of *chinde* and medicine men, unpredictable events and forces, such as a smallpox outbreak, the great flu epidemic, or threatened military conscription can awaken superstitions that place their lives in peril.

I puzzled over Faunce’s decision to use pseudonyms for some of the characters in the book. She fails to note that Ken is a Wetherill—that legendary family that explored and settled Mesa Verde and Chaco Canyon. Even key place names, such as Hubbell Trading Post, were changed or not mentioned. This becomes an annoyance when one is reading the book for its factual value. Nonetheless *Desert Wife* is a vivid first hand, account of life on the Rez during a brief interval just before and lasting through World War I.

Introduction and Review by Harley Shaw

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New at the Library

Fiction

Last Bus to Wisdom by Ivan Doig
Our Souls at Night by Kent Haruf
The Things They Carried by Tim O'Brien
Open Secrets by Alice Munro

Classics

A Pair of Blue Eyes by Thomas Hardy
Two on a Tower by Thomas Hardy
The Unvanquished by William Faulkner

Mystery

Indian Pipes by Cynthia Riggs
Cobwebs by Mary Coley
The Mysterious Mr. Quinn by Agatha Christie
Ant Dens by Mary Coley
The Nature of the Beast by Louise Penny
Smaller and Smaller Circles by F H Batacan
Fearless Fourteen by Janet Evanovich
Lean Mean Thirteen by Janet Evanovich
Ten Big Ones by Janet Evanovich
Twelve Sharp by Janet Evanovich
The Bee Balm Murders by Cynthia Riggs
Deadly Nightshade by Cynthia Riggs
Death and Honesty by Cynthia Riggs
Shooting Star by Cynthia Riggs
The Paperwhite Narcissus by Cynthia Riggs (Lg print)

Music CD's

La Musica de los Viejitos

Non Fiction

Second Annual Hillsboro Heritage Day Heritage Music Festival
The Reader's Digest Illustrated Book of Cats New Mexico 2050 edited by Fred Harris
Personal Narrative of Explorations & Incidents in Texas, New Mexico, California, Sonora & Chihuahua Volume I and II by John Russell Bartlett
Thinking in Pictures- My Life with Autism by Temple Grandin
Pioneer Jews - A New Life in the Far West by Harriet & Fred Rochlin

Audio Books

The Golden Egg by Donna Leon

Poetry

In All the Rooms of the Yellow House by Nancy Mairs

Notes from the Library Board

The Library's membership drive year is changing to run from January 1 through December 31. Members can expect their re-up notices in the new year.

Patrons requesting books or DVD's for purchase should please attach their contact information - name and phone or email - so as to be notified when your material comes in.

Join us for author Michael Farmer's reading from his latest book, **Killer of Witches, The Life and Times of Yellow Boy Mescalero Apache**, a fictional autobiography, November 1, 3:00pm at the HCC.

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

Published by

THE HILLSBORO COMMUNITY LIBRARY
P.O. BOX 205, HILLSBORO NM 88042 (575-895-3349)

Bookmobile Schedule

Wednesday, October 21

Hillsboro: 1:00 - 2:00 pm Kingston: 2:30-3:30 pm

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