

La Sociedad de la Entrada

After Action Report for Oñate Event 6/21-22/07

Event

The event was “Spain Meets First Nations” at Rancho de las Golondrinas Living History Museum (<http://www.golondrinas.org/>). This is an annual event for the museum with a theme centered on the exchange of cultures in the meeting of Spain and Native Americans in New Mexico. Visitor attendance was low this weekend. We set up a Spanish encampment under the cottonwoods, which we now call the “Paraje,” as our base of operations. We set up two tents and dug a fire pit but didn’t light the wood.

Muster

On Saturday we had five people: Tony Campisi, David and Angelina Poulin, and Two young recruits, Pierce Peck and Julian Cross. On Sunday we had six with the addition of Roberto Valdez.



L-R: recruits Pierce and Julian. They were staying with Pierce’s aunt who is a curator at the museum and lives on the grounds.

Saturday

It was a hot and muggy day. The humidity was very unusual for New Mexico. There had been some rain the night before so the campsite was damp near the fire pit. But that didn't dampen the enthusiasm of the new recruits. Tony took them in hand and ran them through some pike and sword drills.



The usual smorgasbord. Swedish pike helmet anyone? Swiss Baselard?

In Camp



Many thanks to Tony who helped Dave and Angelina set up the new round tent. What a learning experience! The instructions for the tent called for a 13' center pole which Dave provided but we found out the hard way that the tent really requires a 12' pole+-. Having brought no saw to cut it with, Tony spent some time digging and redigging a hole until the pole was set at the right height. Meanwhile Dave and Angelina had to continually adjust the stakes and ropes. We were using wooden stakes without adjustment slides as an experiment in authenticity, since metal stakes and slides were not normally used back then. We were very tired when we finished. We found out later when we began to set up the second tent that there was a saw in the bottom of the box from the last event (Dave had been wondering where that saw was). Tony was a good sport about it. We were probably all ready to go home about that time and just sat down in the shade.



We found out the square tent leaks a lot and the mildew was worse. We may have to retire it.

Comida

As expected it was too hot to cook. Angelina provided sandwich fixings, chips, fruit, and lots of cold drinks. We missed Barbara's beautiful table display and knowledge of Spanish foods. Fielding questions about Spanish colonial cuisine was touch and go a couple of times.

Saturday Afternoon

The Museum had scheduled some special presentations:

12:00-1:00 "Hispano/Native Cultural Exchange in New Mexican Folk Music" by Robert Martinez of Albuquerque.

1:00-2:00 "The Way of the Drum" by Arnold Herrera - with his dance group from Cochiti Pueblo from 2:00-3:00.

11:00-3:00 "Straw Appliqué Demonstration/Sales" by Carlton Gallegos.

11:-3:00 "Baking Bread in the Adobe Horno" in the hacienda placita.

Saturday Night

Saturday evening we had a gully washer with a strong wind and dusk found Angelina and Dave re-standing the square tent. The area around the fire pit was under water. During the night the wind and rain were even worse. The stream that runs through the museum was blocked with debris at the walking bridge and a bulldozer was required to sweep out the mess. Since most of the gravel was lost by water and dozer, the road approaching the bridge was a mess and walking was difficult (which may have accounted for the lighter attendance on the far side of the stream). Surprisingly both tents still stood firm in the morning.

Sunday

Sunday was cooler and more comfortable than Saturday. Pierce and Justin were back for another day of soldiering. Roberto led us in a march to the top of the hill where we broke for lunch at the casita de los voluntarios.



The three caballeros, L-R: Roberto, Dave, and Tony.



Relaxing in the shade. Dave and Tony jabber while Roberto repairs a padded leather jerkin.

Sunday Afternoon

The Museum scheduled more special exhibits and presentations:

12:00-1:00 “Contact, Struggle, and Change” by Robret Torrez, retired New Mexico State historian in the Paloheimo Education Center.

1:00-2:00 “Diné Folklore in Cultural Context” by Sunney Dooley, a Navajo scholar from Window rock, Arizona in the Paloheimo Education Center.

10:30-3:30 “Learn How to Make an Adobe Horno” with Francisco Uviña.

Both days had:

“Native American Flute Music” Paul and Grace Jones from Taos Pueblo. Paul makes and plays native flutes of many different tribal traditions. Very beautiful music.

“Hide Tanning Demonstrations” at the Talleres de Cuero.

“Spinning and Weaving” at the Talleres de Tejer.

Children’s games.

Conclusion

This event was kind of light weight but it was good to relax in the shade under the cottonwoods and shake off the dust of Albuquerque.

Dave

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