

# Route 66 & Native Americans



**Parametrix**

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# Introduction

The New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are proud to present *Route 66 and Native Americans in New Mexico*. This study is presented as a means of mitigating adverse effects to this historic road that have resulted from a bridge replacement project. The NMDOT, in cooperation with FHWA, completed improvements to Bridge 8, located along NM highway 313 over the Maria Chavez Arroyo in Sandoval County, New Mexico. After an analysis of various alternatives—including rehabilitation of the structure, bypassing the bridge, reducing traffic volumes, and relocating the existing bridge—no feasible alternative was identified. Therefore, Bridge 8 was demolished and a new structure was built in its place.

Bridge 8, a concrete girder span bridge with a concrete thru-rail built in 1927, was indicative of early highway design standardization efforts. It was identified as a contributing element to this stretch of National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)-eligible Route 66. This section of Route 66, spanning the distance between San Felipe and Santa Ana pueblos, has historically been important for local access and the broader transportation needs of these pueblo communities. In recognition of this important role, the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), the National Park

Cover: *Laguna Pueblo, 1928. Courtesy of Ron Fernandez*  
Above: *Black and white photo of Bridge 8, facing Northeast, pre-1958.*  
Below: *Color photo of Bridge 8, facing Southeast, 2008.*





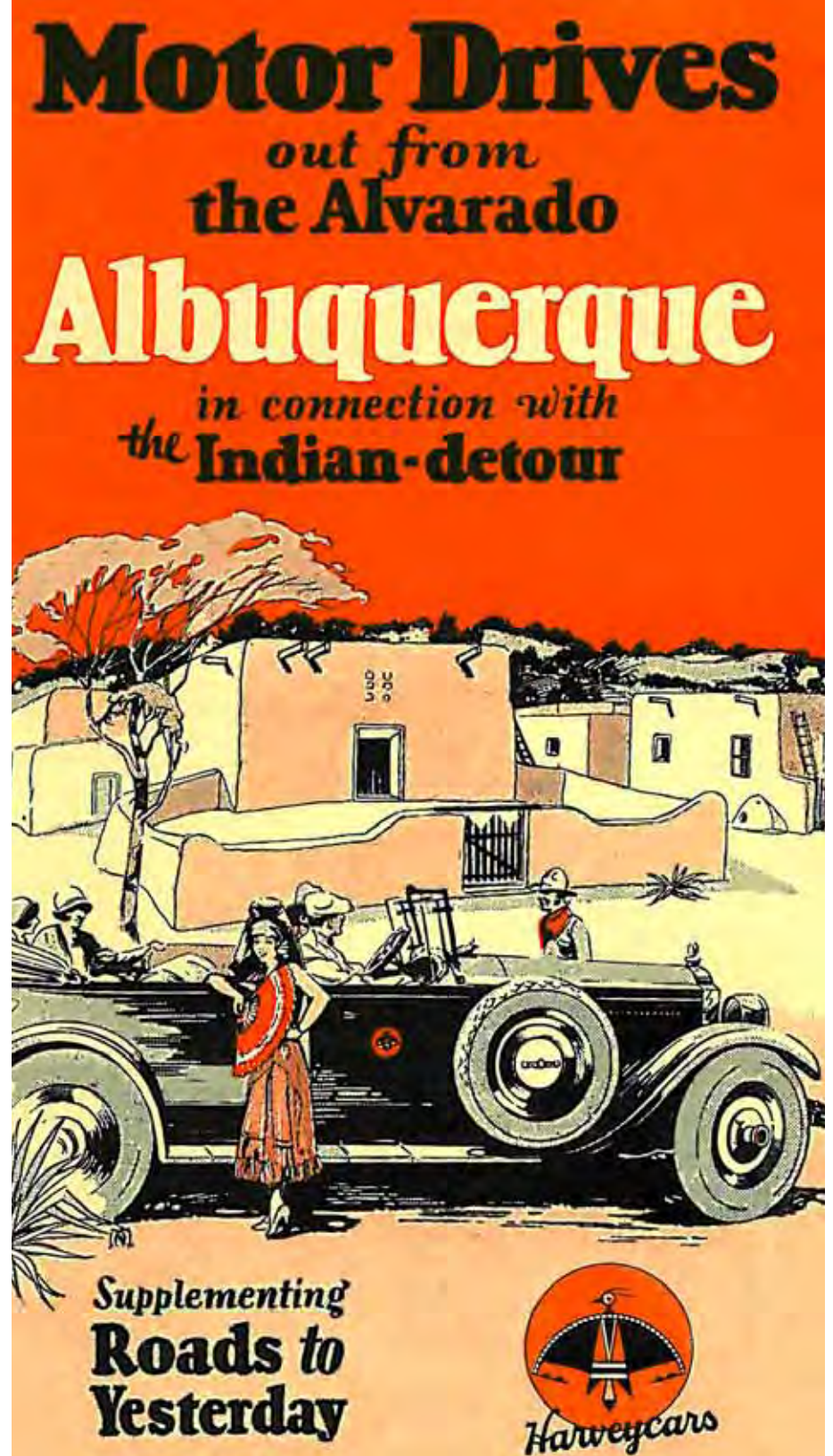
Service (NPS), NMDOT, and FHWA determined that a historic, ethnographic study of the Native American Route 66 experience in New Mexico was an appropriate means of mitigating the adverse effects resulting from the loss of Bridge 8. This mitigation is stipulated in a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with the SHPO and fulfills the NMDOT and FHWA responsibilities under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

The objective of the project is to examine the Route 66 experience for Native American communities and individuals, identifying common experiences across tribal communities as well as experiences unique to particular tribes or individuals. The report is intended to help tribes along Route 66 preserve this aspect of their history for future generations as well as better inform the general public.

Between November 2008 and October 2009 Shawn Kelley, a cultural anthropologist with Parametrix, coordinated with a number of tribes to document the historical relationship between their communities and Route 66. The resulting oral history information is from a number of individuals and groups who made this project possible. Members of Cultural Affairs Committees, Tribal Historic Preservation Offices, Tribal Councils, tribal administrators, elder groups, other tribal bodies and individuals contributed to the gathering of the oral histories used for this project. In particular, tribal representatives and elders from the Pueblos of Acoma, Cochiti, Isleta, Laguna, and Zia were consulted. In addition to direct tribal collaboration, individuals from trading post families near or on tribal lands in New Mexico were also contacted and interviewed. Many participants agreed to have their names published in association with the project. However, some individuals did not want to be identified so their quotes or citations are not attributed to them by name.

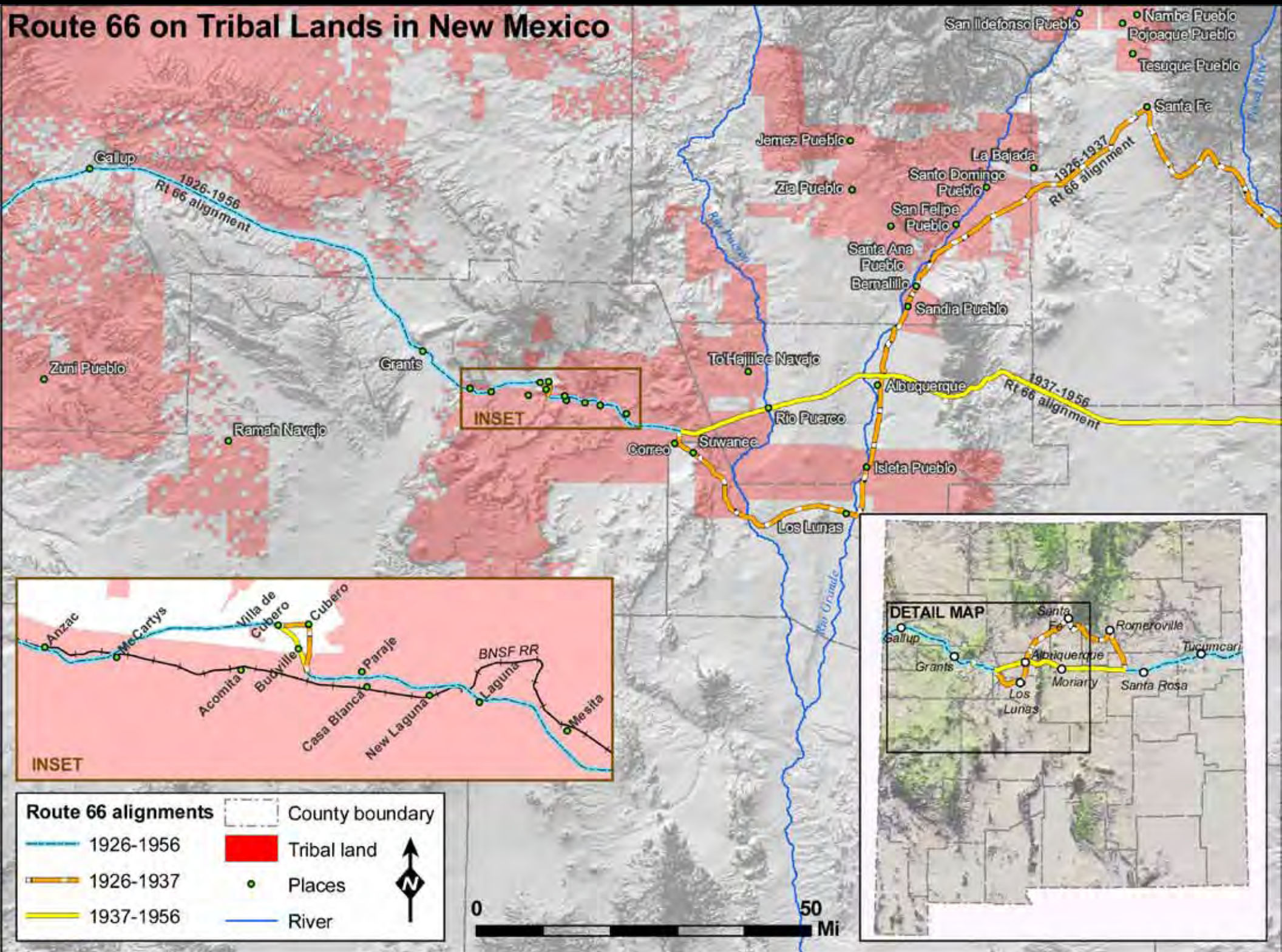
A special thank you to everyone who contributed their time, knowledge, memories and photos. Your combined efforts have made this project a success.

*Detail of Fred Harvey Company brochure, c. 1928. Drives included the Pueblo of Zia as a stop. Courtesy of the Autry Center of the American West, Los Angeles; 95.145.2.*





# Route 66 on Tribal Lands in New Mexico



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*Old Laguna Dynamite Blast, Sta.153. Federal Lands Highway Program 2-A, 1932. Courtesy of New Mexico State Records Center and Archive (NMSRCA), Item 76661.*





# Route 66 & New Mexico

## The History of Route 66 in New Mexico

A patchwork of roads connecting Chicago and Los Angeles, Historic Route 66 is legendary in American history. The establishment of Route 66 coincided with the rising popularity of auto tourism, as moneyed Americans began taking their vacations behind the wheel during the 1920s. Route 66, which inspired nicknames such as “the Mother Road” and “America’s Main Street,” became a symbol of the adventure of the open road and all there was to experience along it. The now-historic route was an important part of the United States’ first national highway system.

Much has been written about the history of Route 66 nationally and in New Mexico. Russ Davidson authored a guide to the Center for Southwest Research source materials titled “Route 66 & New Mexico” (to be published in 2010). Although there are few sources specific to Route 66 and Native Americans, Caroline Waddell’s (2005) draft manuscript “Documenting the American Indian Experiences of Route 66,” provides an excellent bibliography of sources related to tourism and American Indians.

Because this study pertains to the Native American experience

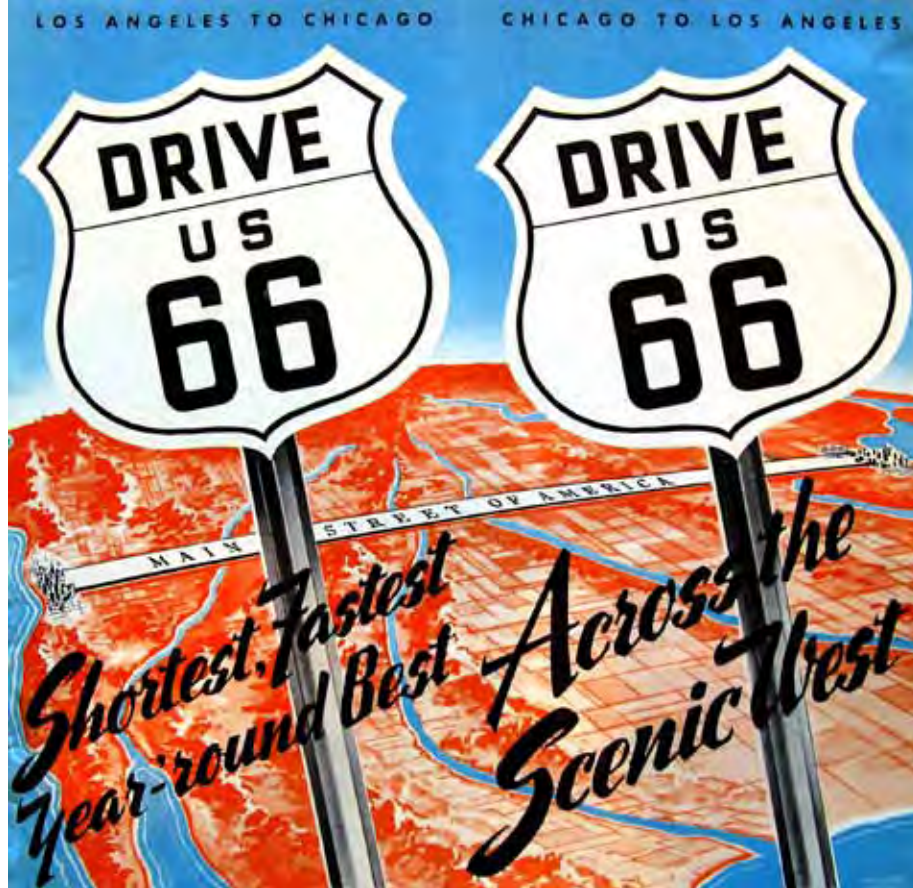
of Route 66, it includes only a brief overview of the route’s establishment and history in New Mexico. The road that became such an icon of American culture followed a well-worn natural transportation corridor roughly aligned with the 35<sup>th</sup> parallel. As historian David Kammer has noted, this same east-west route had been used historically by parties of Native American hunters and traders, as well as Spanish explorers and settlers.

By the mid-1800s, the American military and Gold Rush forty-niners were among those journeying along this corridor (Kammer 1993:E1-2). In 1857, the U.S. military began surveying and constructing a route from Fort Smith, Arkansas to California. Under Lieutenant Edward Fitzgerald Beale, a troop of soldiers carved out a 1,000-mile wagon road from Fort Smith to the Colorado River along the 35<sup>th</sup> parallel, between 1857 and 1859 (Baley 2002; Keane and Bruder 2004:65; Lesley 1929). Their effort was funded by the 1858 Army Appropriations Act which provided \$150,000 for bridge construction and improving stream crossings between Fort Smith and Albuquerque, and road construction west from Albuquerque (Mangum 1990).



*Route 66 at Laguna Pueblo, Rio San Jose bridge, c. 1935. Courtesy of Ron Fernandez.*





Route 66 Association brochure, 1949. Ward Hicks Advertising Collection. Courtesy of the Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

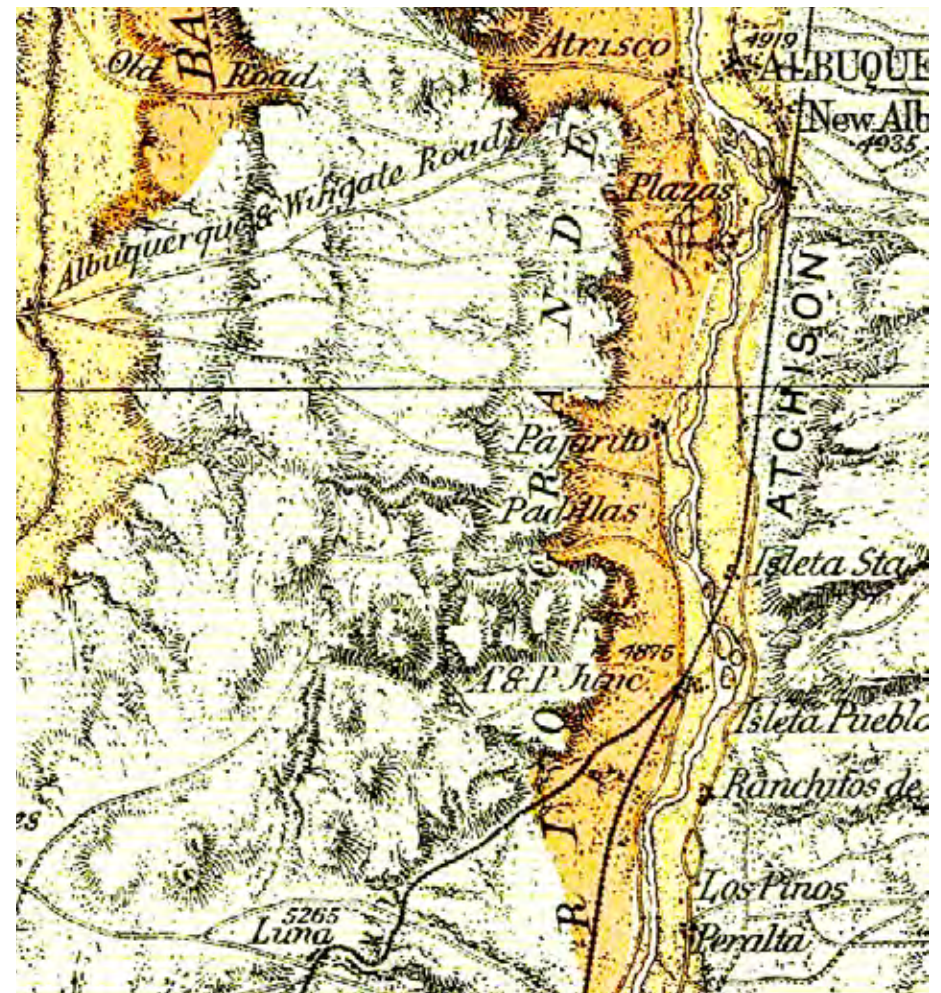
Headquartered at his ranch in California, Beale and his men built and improved the road over the course of several trips (Jonas 2005). The sand hills near Albuquerque were described as “the worst part of the road to California” (Kammer 1993:E7). Instead of crossing the Rio Grande at Albuquerque, the majority of wagon travel headed south to Isleta Pueblo where crossing was more feasible.

During the decades of the 1860s and 1870s, the Beale Wagon Road was a popular immigrant trail (Keane and Bruder 2004:65). Not surprisingly, east-west railroad construction through New Mexico also roughly followed the course of the Beale Wagon Road, as did the National Old Trails Highway, Route 66, and Interstate 40 (I-40) during the twentieth century (Kammer 1993:E31; Keane and Bruder 2004:65). Small settlements sprang up between railroad-

developed towns like Albuquerque and Gallup. Kammer writes, “The wagon roads connecting this line of settlements would later become the basis of the state’s first generation of automobile roads” (Kammer 1993:E12).

By the late nineteenth century, passable roads for travel and transportation came to be a major concern, and led to a nationwide campaign called the Good Roads Movement. American bicyclists were at the heart of the campaign. Bicyclists formed the League of American Wheelmen in 1880, and began advocating at the national level for paved roads on which to ride their bikes. In their

G.M. Wheeler’s 1882 USGS Map of Part of Central New Mexico, Atlas Sheet #77. Showing east-west Albuquerque Wingate Wagon Road, AT&SF Railroad lines and other prominent wagon trails. Courtesy of David Rumsey Map Collection.





effort to build a grassroots movement, the League of American Wheelmen produced more than five million pamphlets. Due in part to the groundswell of support generated by this campaign, the U.S. government established the federal Office of Public Road Inquiry in 1893 (League of American Bicyclists 2009; Van Citters: Historic Preservation, LLC 2003:5).

It was the advent of the automobile, however, that truly forced the issue of road improvements onto the national stage. Henry Ford produced his first Model T in 1909. His utilization of the moving assembly line made the mass production of automobiles possible, and placed auto ownership within the grasp of the masses. The American Automobile Association, the National Association of Rural Letter Carriers, and other similar groups also took up the torch for better roads (Scott and Kelly 1988:6). This led to the 1914 creation of the American Association of State Highway Officials, which joined the Good Roads Movement (Cassity 2004:42).

Two years later, President Woodrow Wilson signed the Federal Aid Road Act of 1916, which promised federal funding for road improvements across the country. The law specified that rural roads used for delivering the mail were eligible for federal monies, provided that states matched the federal government dollar for dollar. Each state desiring to receive such funding was required to have its own official highway department (Scott and Kelly 1988:8, 9). A follow-up 1921 law mandated that states



*"Big Cut" on the Santa Fe Trail, and later Route 66, between Santa Fe and Albuquerque, c. 1910s to 1920s. Postcard courtesy of Johnnie Meier.*

designate a system of local roads to receive federal aid (Scott and Kelly 1988: 8, 9). Together the two laws, which demanded organization and standardization at the state level, paved the way for the creation of a national highway system.

In New Mexico, the State Highway Commission was already four years old by the time President Wilson signed the landmark 1916 act. Even before attaining statehood in 1912, New Mexico had been on board with the Good Roads Movement. Upon statehood, the New Mexico State Highway Commission superseded the 1909 New Mexico Good Roads Commission. The state agency began working with New Mexico counties and communities on new road and bridge construction. In its first year of operation, the New Mexico State Highway Commission drafted a map of newly designated state highways (Wallace 2004:3-4).

At the national level, work began in earnest on a system of interstate highways during the 1920s. In 1925, the Bureau of Public Roads (formerly the Office of Public Road Inquiry) appointed a Joint Board on Interstate Highways to research routes for a new U.S. system of numbered highways. A final Committee of Five was appointed to designate numbers for the new interstate highway system. Route 66 was one of these newly numbered U.S. highways.

Route 66 was unique in the system in that it was diagonally aligned, and did not connect the East and West Coasts (Cassity 2004: 59). Route 66 ran from Chicago, Illinois to Los Angeles, California through Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. When





officially commissioned as a national highway in 1926, Route 66 encompassed more than 2,400 miles. However, only a quarter of it was paved at that time. By some calculations, even that estimate is inflated (Cassity 2004: 61; Waddell 2005:5).

In 1927, the national Highway 66 Association formed to promote both paving of the new roadway and travel along it. Chambers of Commerce from cities along the route sent representatives to the formative meeting (Cassity 2004:87). Among its many efforts, the association paid to advertise Route 66 in the *Saturday Evening Post* as the best way to travel to Los Angeles for the 1932 summer Olympics. The advertisement promoted Route 66's passage through the "historic and romantic west, the land of limitless panorama and the home of ageless antiquity" (Cassity 2004:91).

In New Mexico, Route 66 followed roughly the 35<sup>th</sup> parallel. It entered the state at Glenrio, now a ghost town, on the Texas/New Mexico state line. From there Route 66 headed west through San Jon, Tucumcari, and Santa Rosa. From Santa Rosa, it originally ran northwest up to Romeroville and then on to Pecos and Santa Fe. At Santa Fe, the route headed southwest to La Bajada, Santo

Domingo Pueblo, Bernalillo, Albuquerque, Isleta Pueblo, and Los Lunas. From Los Lunas it angled northwest to Laguna, Grants, and Gallup before hitting the Arizona state line (Wallace 2004:115). According to Kammer, most of the first incarnation of Route 66 followed alignments established earlier by the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway and the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad (Kammer 1992:17). From Los Lunas west the road alignment was built directly on the road bed of the Atlantic and Pacific railroad for a number of miles (Marshall and Marshall 2003).

In this original incarnation, Route 66 encompassed 506 miles in New Mexico. In 1927, only 28 miles of road had concrete surfaces. The rest were either unimproved or had rock or gravel surfacing. A decade later, all segments of Route 66 had been surfaced, although numerous sections consisted of just one inch of bituminous pavement over gravel (Kammer 1992: 45, 81).

Route 66 was reconfigured in 1937 in a more direct east-west alignment (Kammer 1992: 20). In its 1932 annual report the Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce referred to this change as the "Santa Rosa cut-off project." It resulted in the creation of a paved



road between Santa Rosa and Moriarty (Tydeman 1991). In the same era, Albuquerque Mayor Clyde Tingley and other interested parties wanted a route directly west from Albuquerque to Laguna. This section was referred to as the Laguna cut-off (Fredine 2008). The new alignment of Route 66 completely bypassed Santa Fe, as travelers headed west from Santa Rosa to Moriarty, Barton, Albuquerque, and on to Laguna (Wallace 2004: 115). *New Mexico Magazine* boasted that the new alignment saved approximately four hours of drive time across the state (*New Mexico Magazine* 1937: 31).

The pre-1937 Route 66 alignment crossed through or adjacent to nine Pueblos and Tribes in the state of New Mexico. These included Cochiti, Santo Domingo, San Felipe, Santa Ana, Sandia, Isleta, Laguna, Acoma, and various parts of the Navajo Reservation (including To'hajiilee, formerly Cañoncito). The more direct route of the 1937 alignment ran through and adjacent to only Laguna, Acoma, and the Navajo Reservation. Although this realignment bypassed many of the pueblos along Route 66, tribal community members continued to use the highway for travel and trade to economic centers such as Albuquerque and Santa Fe.

Because most railroad towns had commercial districts centered on the depot, early automobile tourists frequented businesses that had traditionally served railroad employees and passengers. Gradually, however, the automobile inspired new commercial strips for businesses including gas stations and garages, auto campgrounds and tourist courts, restaurants, and curio shops. In Albuquerque and Gallup, the commercial strips catering to motor tourists were more than 10 miles long (Kammer 1992:20, 54, 93).

In rural areas, residents often established new stores or trading posts, some with gasoline pumps, on the side of the road to cater to drivers. In Buford (now Moriarty), seven gas stations sprang up after the Santa Rosa cut-off was completed. Other, older stores such as the Santo Domingo Trading Post and the Laguna Trading Post welcomed auto tourists as new additions to a clientele that traditionally included locals and railroad passengers (Kammer 1992:54; Cheromiah 2004:70–72; Fernandez 2009).

During the Great Depression, many people driven out of the Southern Plains by the dust bowl traveled Route 66 in New Mexico. Mom-and-Pop businesses along Route 66 managed to survive by catering not only to these displaced migrants but also to those who



1938 New Mexico State Highway Department Map showing the post 1937 Route 66 Alignment.





*Santo Domingo Trading Post, c. 1950s. Postcard courtesy of Paul and Kathleen Nickens.*

continued to be able to afford vacations. By 1940, motor tourism had become a popular pastime for the middle class, which made up a significant portion of the rising numbers of auto tourists (Zeman 2003:422). Although World War II resulted in great decreases in auto traffic, out-of-state travelers still accounted for more than 50 percent of all traffic in New Mexico (Kammer 1992:63, 84).

Kammer describes the decade following the war as the “Golden Age” of Route 66 in New Mexico (Kammer 1992:86). “The [traffic] jam on Route 66 consisted of all the elements of an American society thankful that the war had ended and anxious to return to doing the things they had decided they loved most while waiting out the war. One such thing was driving their automobiles” (Kammer 1992:87). National production grew from about 65,000 cars in 1945 to 3.9 million cars three years later (National Park Service 1995).

By the early 1950s, 80 to 90 percent of vacation travel in the United States was by automobile (Zierer 1952). This was the era of neon signs advertising the plethora of tourist-related businesses that “seemed to wave their arms, whistle, blow bubbles, sing, dance, flash lights, and make outrageous promises just to get drivers to slow down and pull off the highway” (Scott and Kelly 1988:170). For example, Route



*Detail of Great Divide Station and Navajo Trading Post. Located at Continental Divide, NM. Postcard courtesy of Johnnie Meier.*

66 motorists could lunch in a concrete iceberg in Albuquerque, see live snakes at “cobra gardens” near Grants, and sleep in a wigwam in Holbrook, Arizona (Repp 2002:21, 33, 134).

With skyrocketing use, Route 66 quickly proved inadequate at handling larger automobiles traveling at higher speeds. “It was said that there was ‘only a few inches and a cigarette paper between you and death on Route 66’” (Wallis 1990:146). The prevalence of accidents around the country resulted in the nickname “Bloody 66” (Scott and Kelly 1988:178). In New Mexico, problems included limited visibility, too-narrow driving lanes and bridges, and the impatience and inexperience of the drivers themselves. Beginning in the late 1940s, the New Mexico State Highway



Department started widening and improving segments of the interstate highway in Gallup, Grants, Santa Rosa, and Tucumcari, among other areas (Kammer 1992:88–89).

As Kammer points out, however, “it was the very success that Route 66 was experiencing that would determine its eventual demise” (Kammer 1992:94). The United States realized the need for an improved highway system separated from commercial strips. The 1956 Interstate Highway Act provided 90 percent of the funding for a new interstate highway system (Scott and Kelly 1988:179). In New Mexico, work began on the new system in 1957 and continued to final completion in 1981 (Wallace 2004:19), “and little by little the old highway was turned into a service road for its replacement” (Wallis 1990:25).

Interstate 40 replaced Route 66 and permanently changed the character of interstate travel. Roadside businesses no longer lined the major highway through the state, clustering instead around exit and entrance ramps (Kammer 1992:95). The economies of small Route 66 towns were hit hard. On many bypassed segments of the old highway, businesses simply shut down. Places like The Hitching Post, a curio shop with a snake pit attraction located east of Moriarty, could not survive the changeover. Other businesses

relocated in order to survive. In Albuquerque, the owner of Covered Wagon Souvenirs moved from Route 66 on the eastern edge of town to Old Town, where the business continued into the 1990s (Wallis 1990:12, 18).

Route 66 was officially decommissioned in 1985, following the replacement by I-40 of the last section of original road in Williams, Arizona (National Park Service 1995). In 1999, the U.S. Congress created the National Park Service Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program. The goal of the program is to preserve historic properties along the route between Chicago and Los Angeles. To accomplish this, the National Park Service provides the owners of historic properties—including private or nonprofit owners, and local, state, tribal, or federal governments—with technical and financial support.

Nostalgia for Route 66 continues with many websites devoted to auto tourism along the old road. During the early part of this decade, the New Mexico Route 66 Association began restoring neon signs along the remains of the roadway. Recent projects included the 2008 restoration of the sign for Tucumcari’s Cactus Motor Lodge, which was built in 1941 (New Mexico Route 66 Association 2009).



*Detail of Hill Top Trading Post, west of Albuquerque, c. 1950s.  
Postcard courtesy of Johnnie Meier.*



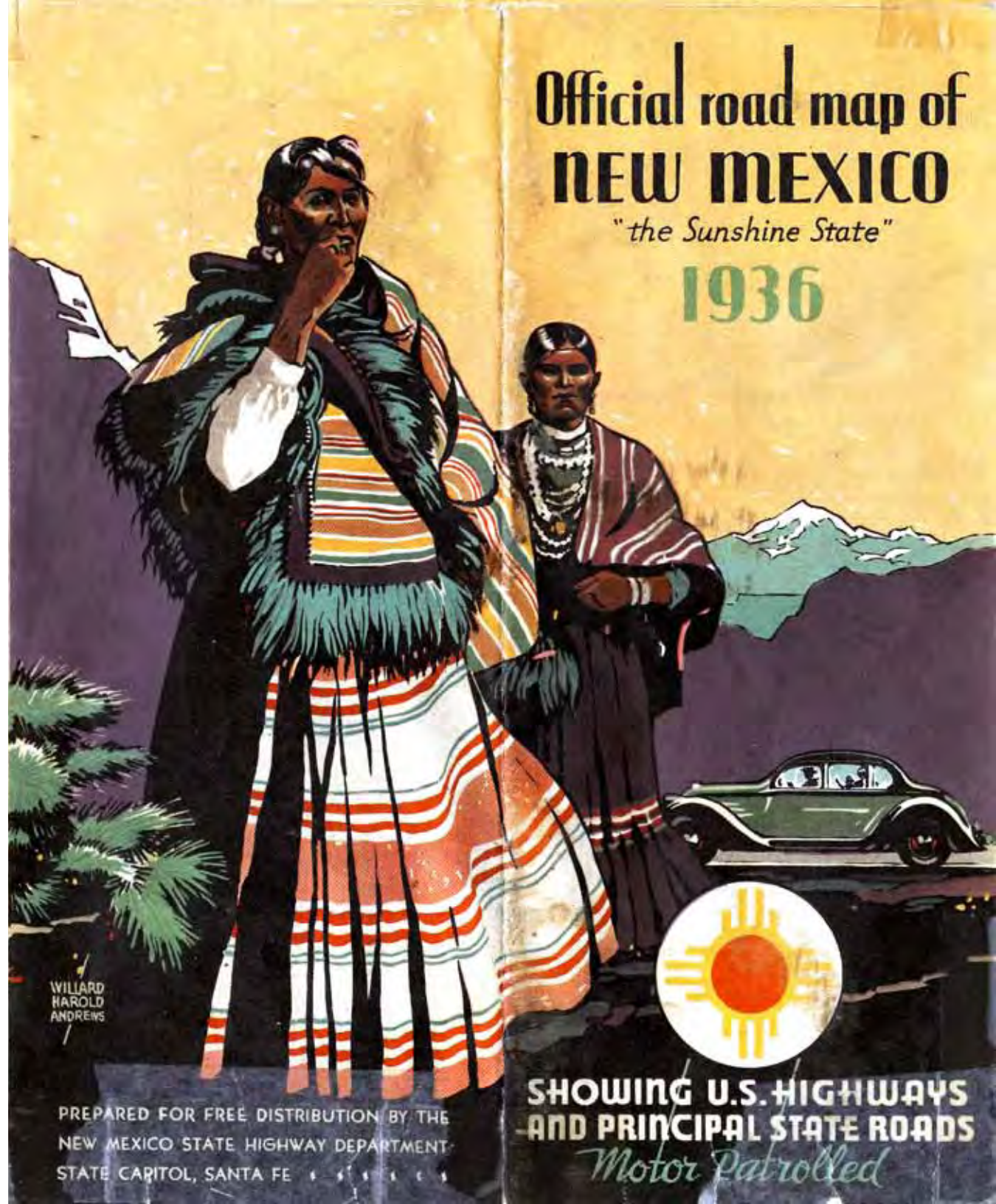
## Promoting the Land of Enchantment: Native American Communities

During the 1920s, New Mexico began actively promoting its highway construction efforts, and was quick to realize the potential economic benefits of motor tourism. State highway engineer Grover Conroy expressed this clearly in a 1936 article in the *New Mexico State Highway Journal*: “Development of the highways goes hand in hand with the general progress of the community. The highway dollar is the greatest creator of business ever expended” (Tydeman 1991:203).

Road building was considered so important that the New Mexico Highway Department assumed a primary role in the state’s “image-making machinery” (Zeman 2003:421). The department began publishing the *New Mexico Highway Journal* in 1923. Early on, it was “little more than a newsletter promoting the good highways and advertising the nascent motor-tourist industry by carrying advertisements for motels, mechanics, and motor oil” (Zeman 2003:419, 421).

This publication became *New Mexico Magazine* in 1931. Subtitled the “State Magazine of National Interest,” *New Mexico Magazine* was just one part of a concerted effort, beginning in the early

Cover of 1936 New Mexico State Highway Department  
Official Road Map. Courtesy of Map and Geographic  
Information Center (MAGIC), University of New Mexico.





1930s, to encourage auto tourism along New Mexico highways (Zeman 2003:434). Tourism-boosting strategies also included free road maps, historical markers, visitor centers, and advertisements in national magazines. All highlighted specific aspects of the “Land of Enchantment,” a slogan that first appeared in a 1935 tourist brochure (Office of the State Historian 2009).

In addition to playing up the state’s majestic scenery and Spanish Colonial history, among other subjects, tourism promotions focused heavily on New Mexico’s Native American community. American Indian peoples figured largely in promotional literature and advertising of the 1920s through the 1950s, which highlighted the Pueblos and Navajo community as “exotic” curiosities. Tourism, according to professor Leah Dilworth, “remakes the world into a spectacle through which the tourist moves freely, as a consumer of goods.” The Indian was “a commodity to be consumed visually” (Dilworth 1996:163). New Mexico tourist propaganda covered everything from native dress to architecture, ceremonial dances, ceramics, and other handicrafts. This material promulgated numerous stereotypes of Native Americans.

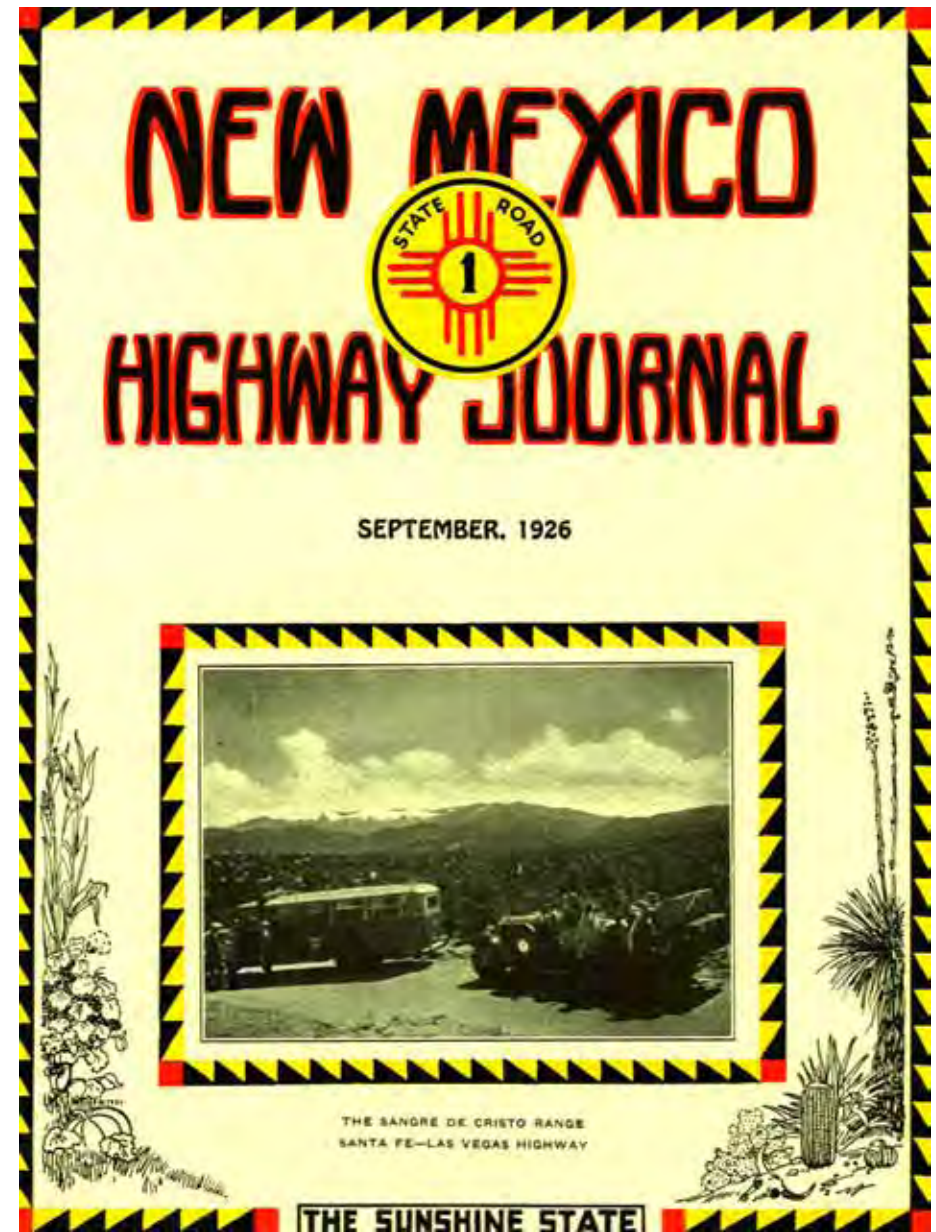
The 1936 Official Road Map of New Mexico, featured on the previous page, is an example of such promotions. The cover features two Native American women in shawls and long skirts against a backdrop of mountains. Behind them in the distance sits a fancy motorcar on a paved road. The simplicity of the women and their dress is juxtaposed with the sparkling, new automobile and modern highway. This kind of dichotomy directly played into one of the archetypal stereotypes of New Mexico’s native peoples.

On the map cover, the native women are meant to represent an ancient, primitive culture untouched by the modern world, a concept that appealed greatly to the tourist of the twentieth century (Zeman 2003:426). The portrayal of Native Americans as somehow frozen in time or, in Dilworth’s words, “vanishing, silent, and blind to modernity,” was one of the most popular themes of tourist literature of the time (Dilworth 1996:165). New Mexico state boosters during the 1930s, however, were not the first to stereotype American Indians for tourism marketing purposes. They

simply appropriated and built upon a strategy created earlier by the railroad industry.

During the late nineteenth century, the American “frontier” had become a thing of the past with the last of the Indian wars, the building of the transcontinental railroads, and the establishment of

*New Mexico Highway Journal, 1926. Courtesy of the Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.*







*Indian Guides on the Santa Fe Super Chief- Conrad Blue Wings, Harry War Bow, and Lowell Sun Rise from Zuni Pueblo of New Mexico. Postcard courtesy of Paul and Kathleen Nickens.*

cities in the West. In *Dream Tracks: The Railroad and the American Indian 1890–1930*, T.C. McLuhan explains that “as the frontier receded historically and geographically, it loomed larger and larger imaginatively” (McLuhan 1985:13).

Native American culture became a popular subject on the national stage. The Smithsonian Institution established the Bureau of American Ethnology in 1879, which began building a collection of Native American objects and sending anthropologists to the American West. Buffalo Bill Cody organized his very successful Wild West circus show several years later. Writer Charles Lummis captivated readers with stories of his sojourns through the Southwest, describing an Acoma “chief” as “a superb Apollo in bronze” (Trennert 1987:131). Americans in general were intrigued by the notion of the “Wild West.” During this time period, as Native American scholar Ted Jojola writes: “New Mexico suddenly became populated with rattlesnakes, howling coyotes, Indian chiefs, and outlaws and the scenery became reminiscent of a large outdoor stage bounded by railroad tracks” (Jojola 1996: 42).

Railroad executives seized the opportunity to romanticize the scenic beauty and the native populations of the West and Southwest. The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway (AT&SF) began a campaign in 1896 focused on the American wilderness and the Indian as a “glamorous, intangible, and ‘ineffable’” figure (Naranjo 1996:193). AT&SF strategies included giving its trains names such as “the Navajo,” “Chief,” and “Super Chief.” Railroad advertisements featured paintings and photographs of American Indians amid spectacular scenery (Dedek 2007:17). In 1903, the Passenger Department of the AT&SF printed 15,000 copies of *Indians of the Southwest*, a 233-page ethnography by anthropologist George A. Dorsey (Weigle 1989:121).

Ubiquitous entrepreneur Fred Harvey furthered this effort by building railroad hotels and restaurants designed to represent a romantic image of the Southwest. In New Mexico, the Harvey hotels combined elements of both Native American and Spanish Colonial architecture. Albuquerque’s Alvarado Hotel was built in the California Mission architectural style with gracefully arched walkways and elaborate towers.

In conjunction with hotels such as the Alvarado, Harvey also established curio shops for Indian arts and crafts. These featured a museum room, a demonstration room where native artisans practiced their crafts, and a salesroom (Weigle 1989:125). The

*Navajo weaver, Elle of Ganado, working in the Indian Building at the Alvarado in Albuquerque, c. 1907-1915. Postcard courtesy of Paul and Kathleen Nickens.*





Indian Arts Building at the Alvarado Hotel was a very popular attraction. Passengers were encouraged to disembark and do some shopping during the half hour that all trains stopped in Albuquerque (Nickens and Nickens 2008:115).

Numerous postcards depicted Anglo tourists mingling with natives outside the Alvarado hotel (as featured on this page). One postcard in particular was so popular that the advertising department simply updated the hairstyle and clothing of the Anglo woman in the forefront to reflect changes in styles over decades (Melzer 2008: 52). However, while the Anglo figure was updated over time, the Native Americans remained unchanged in the postcard.

In addition to the curio shops, native peoples sold their handicrafts on station platforms along the railway. The Native communities

1996:437). Whether buying at a shop or on a station platform, tourists considered Indian curios to be “the quintessence of the Southwest, and nearly everyone bought something to take home, whether a trinket or souvenir, or a major collection that had to be shipped home” (Tisdale 1996:436).

Just as the railroad highlighted the Southwest as an exotic vacation destination, the capitol city of Santa Fe soon recast itself as picturesque and ancient. Following the arrival of the railroad in the territory, Santa Fe architecture was imitative of popular styles of the East, reflecting the city’s effort to identify itself as American. By the 1920s, however, Santa Fe boosters fully realized the allure of what became known as the “Santa Fe style,” combining elements of Spanish Colonial and Pueblo architecture.



*Vendors and tourists in front of the Alvarado Hotel. Postcard courtesy of Johnnie Meier.*



*Detroit Photographic Company image of women at Laguna offering pottery and wares to Santa Fe Railroad passengers and crew, c. 1910. Postcard courtesy of Paul and Kathleen Nickens.*

most affected by the railway and Route 66 include the pueblos of San Felipe, Santa Ana, Santo Domingo, Sandia, Isleta, Acoma, and Laguna as well as the Navajo Nation. Women from these villages waited at the stations to sell handicrafts to passengers (Tisdale

At the same time, interest in Indian art grew nationally, in part through the efforts of members of the Santa Fe and Taos art colonies (Gibson 1981:297–302; Wilson 1997:113).





Above: Indian-Detour Map from Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway Co. Indian-detours brochure, 1930. Courtesy of the Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico. Above right: Detail of Fred Harvey Company Brochure, c. 1928. Courtesy the Autry Center of the American West, Los Angeles; 95.145.2.

Today's immensely popular Santa Fe Indian Market began in 1922 as a component of the annual Santa Fe Fiesta, revived by Museum of New Mexico director Edgar Lee Hewett (Gibson 1981:297; Rothman 1996:534; Southwestern Association for Indian Arts 2009). The Santa Fe Fiesta and Indian Fair were purposely designed to promote tourism.



The year 1931 marked the first time that the annual Indian Fair was held in front of the Palace of the Governors under the portal. It was also the first time the Native American vendors handled their own sales (Southwestern Association for Indian Arts 2009). The New Mexico Association on Indian Affairs took over in 1936, and began holding Saturday markets under the portal during the summers (Laughlin 1999). Like the Alvarado Hotel, the Santa Fe plaza became a magnet for Native American artisans from all over New Mexico looking to sell their arts and crafts. Other locations for Native American vendors included the Coronado State Monument in Bernalillo which opened in 1940.

Not surprisingly, the Fred Harvey Company and the AT&SF chose Santa Fe as the headquarters for an ingenious offshoot industry incorporating motor tourism—the Fred Harvey Indian Detours. These were auto tours conducted in “Harveycars” or Packards, primarily between 1926 and World War II (Thomas 1978:315–324). Indian Detours offered railroad travelers excursions to pueblos including Tesuque, Santa Clara, San Juan, Isleta, Acoma, and Santo Domingo. Such trips were touted as “an unusual outing-by-motor through the Spanish and Indian Southwest, available as a pleasant break in the long all-rail journey” (Weigle 1989:126).

Indian Detours featured female tour guides wearing “concho belts and squash blossoms over their velveteen blouses to stimulate tourist interest in American Indian art” (Repp 2002:5). The male drivers wore Stetson hats, colorful plaid shirts, silk neckerchiefs,

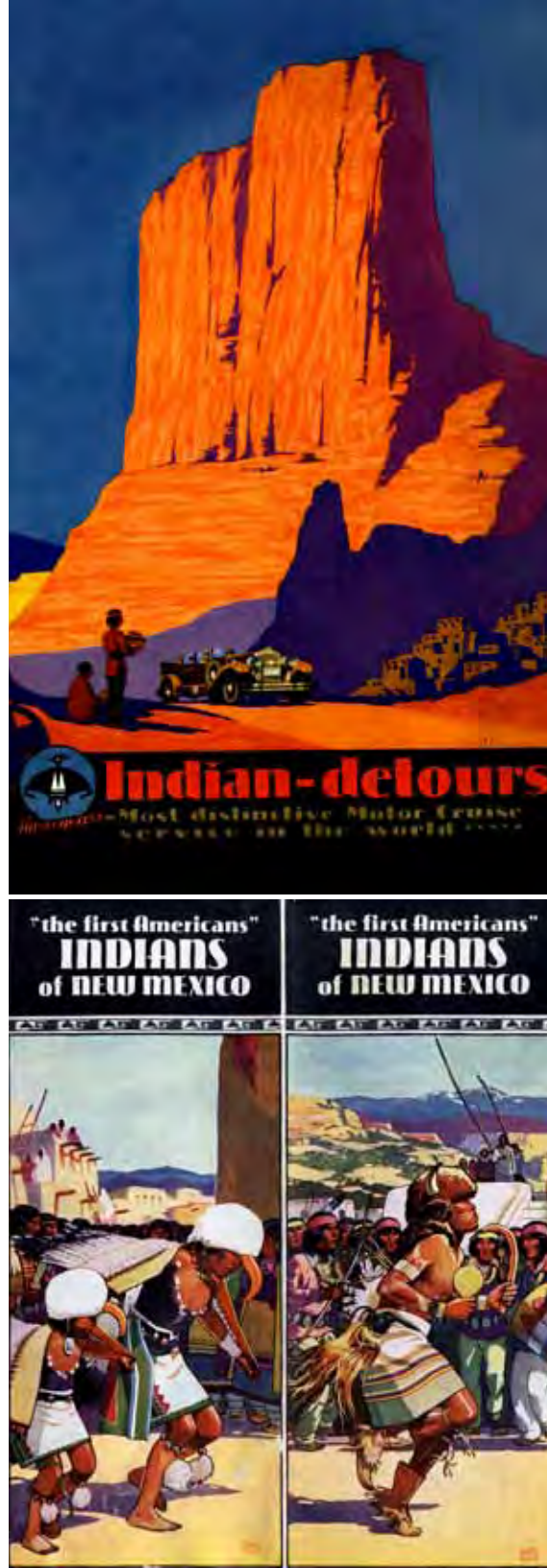


and khaki jodhpurs decorated by silver and turquoise belts. “From the head up, the driver looked like a cowboy; from the neck down, he looked like a Scout Master” (Thomas 1978:95–96).

The cover of the 1930 brochure depicts roadside curio shopping as a highlight of the Indian Detours. On the cover, Taos Pueblo, mountains, and monoliths are rendered in orange, purple, and red tones. In the foreground the requisite Native Americans wait by the roadside bearing ceramics as a fancy motorcar approaches. Inside the brochure, the tourist is invited to New Mexico to visit “age-old Indian pueblos where one may ‘catch archaeology alive’” (Fred Harvey Company 1930).

The success of the Indian Detours did not escape the notice of New Mexico boosters. During the 1920s and early 1930s, New Mexico had no state tourism department. The Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce was the most influential booster organization in the state. Early members of the board included future state highway commissioner Clyde Oden, future governor Clyde Tingley, future senator Clinton P. Anderson, and Ward Hicks of the Ward Hicks Advertising Agency (Tydeman 1991:206–207). Targeting the “vacationist, health seeker, romancer, and thrill seeker,” Ward Hicks created a very successful advertising campaign for New Mexico during the early 1930s (Tydeman 1991:211). Like

*Above:*  
Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway Co. Indian-Detours brochure, 1930. Courtesy of the Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, UNM.



the railroad and highway department, the ad agency heavily emphasized the state’s native community.

Among Ward Hicks’ advertising brochures from the mid-1930s is “Indians of New Mexico, ‘The First Americans.’” Set against a background of pueblo architecture and distant mountains, Hicks Agency illustrator Willard Andrews painted depictions of Pueblo Buffalo and Eagle dances on the cover. Inside are numerous photographs, including one of a large number of Pueblo women balancing water jars or *ollas* on their heads.

These “olla maidens” were another very popular subject of New Mexico tourism advertising. University of Arizona professor Barbara Babcock, who has done considerable work interpreting the popularity of this imagery, has described them as an “icon of southwestern Otherness” for Anglo consumers (Babcock 1994:42). According to Babcock, “A traditionally dressed Pueblo woman shaping or carrying a water jar or *olla* is the representation of the Pueblo.” However, “few Pueblo women dressed like this or walked around with pots on their heads unless they were paid to do so” (Babcock 1994:41).

New Mexico finally established its own Tourist Bureau, as a division of the New Mexico Highway Department, when Clyde Tingley became governor

*Below:*  
New Mexico State brochure promoting Native American communities as a tourist attraction, c. 1935–39. Courtesy of the Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, UNM.



in 1935. The bureau allocated a sum of \$45,000 for a national campaign that ran advertisements in magazines such as the *Saturday Evening Post*, *National Geographic*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *Vanity Fair*. The annual advertising budgets grew each year, reaching a pre-World War II high of \$135,000 in 1940 (Tydeman 1991:213). The bureau also created several portable exhibits of “Indian and Native handicrafts” to be loaned out to transportation companies, travel bureaus, and public libraries among other facilities (Conroy 1938: 109).

One 1935 New Mexico Tourist Bureau advertisement, designed specifically for appearance in national publications, continues the themes of primitivism, pottery, and otherness. Visitors are invited to New Mexico “where time has stood still.” In the illustration, a dark-eyed woman in a manta looks straight into the viewer’s eyes. Beyond her in the distance, a woman dressed in a modern skirt and jacket examines a woven rug. The back of a modern automobile is just visible. To her left is a shorter Indian woman wearing a blanket and headband and looking downward as if at the ground in front of her. She is obviously silent, her pose humble and submissive. At her feet are several ceramic pots for sale.

The growing popularity of motor tourism inspired the New Mexico Tourist Bureau to calculate statistics of the numbers of tourist cars entering the state, and requests for promotional literature. These numbers



*Detail of Pueblo Indian with Olla. Detroit Photographic Co. Courtesy of Paul and Kathleen Nickens.*



*State Tourist Bureau advertisement c. 1934-1936. Featured in 1936 Biennial Report of the State Highway Engineer of New Mexico, page 86.*

were reported in the biennial reports of the state highway engineer. According to the 1937-1938 *Biennial Report of the State Highway Engineer of the State of New Mexico*, the state had benefited that year from the presence of almost one and a half million tourist cars. The report estimated that these auto-driving tourists had spent approximately \$80 million within New Mexico, arriving in a continuous flow throughout the year (Wallace 2004:11, 13).

*New Mexico Magazine* began publishing a continuous series of articles about native culture. Travel to the various pueblos was encouraged whether or not they were located along a major thoroughfare like Route 66. For example, one *New Mexico Magazine* article of 1936 is titled “Roadside Shopping.” In it, the author enthusiastically espouses buying curios from the source. “At the sound of an approaching motor they [Indian women] emerge from their brush or stone shelters, their bright costumes fluttering, their arms waving, that you might stop and see the pottery of their villages located miles off the highway,” writes Kenneth





Frasher Foto Postcard Promoting the 1936 Gallup Intertribal Indian Ceremonial.  
Courtesy of the Frasher Foto Collection, Pomona Public Library.

Chapman. “Reticent sales agents these, yet appreciative of your interest, and if you recognize shapely forms, good firing, and neat brush-strokes they feel, perhaps, that their great labor has been worth the smallness of their wage” (Chapman 1936:20). Several stereotypes are at work in this piece, as the writer emphasizes the primitive quality of the “shelters,” the women’s “reticence” or silence, and their perceived disregard for the monetary value of their work. This depiction of American Indians pervades the literature and promotional materials of the era.

Near the border with Arizona, the Gallup Inter-tribal Indian Ceremonial became “one of the events defining the tourist experience along Route 66 in New Mexico” (Kammer 1992:56). Gallup businessmen, trying to put their town on the map, threw the first ceremonial featuring campfire dancing in 1922. Even at that time, “venturesome motorists were already finding their way to and through the town...Gallup was looking for business from these motorists who had the courage to brave the new highways” (Carroll 1971:54). Ceremonial participants during the early years included members of the Navajo and Hopi communities as well as the pueblos of Acoma, Isleta, Laguna, Jemez, Zuni, and Taos (Carroll 1971:83–

90). In addition to ceremonial dances, the event featured exhibits of handicrafts, foot and horse races, a rodeo, and a parade.

Gallup’s city boosters began advertising their town as “The Heart of Indian Country” (Kammer 1992:56). A 1936 *New Mexico Magazine* advertisement for the ceremonial reads, “Let the Navajo be Your Host at the Fifteenth Annual Inter-tribal Indian Ceremonial at ‘The Indian Capital’ Gallup, New Mexico.” According to this advertisement, “The Indian tribes of the Far Southwest have been least affected by the irresistible march of civilization. Their lives are exceedingly primitive. It is for the purpose of protecting and preserving from oblivion all that is most beautiful and impressive in the spiritual and ethical life of these tribes” (*New Mexico Magazine* 1936:9).

The poster for the 1936 Gallup Inter-tribal Indian Ceremonial contains four stereotypical images of Indian tourism advertising. Continuing the heavy promotion of handicrafts, a Navajo rug weaver and a jewelry maker are depicted in two separate photographs. The third photograph is of an olla maiden. In the fourth, a man dressed in a war bonnet points into the distance. This last image represents another of the dominant Indian stereotypes— that of the “face-painted and war-bonnet and buckskin-clad ‘chief’” (Jojola 1996:42). While war bonnets were common among Plains Indians tribes, these ceremonial headdresses were not traditionally worn by the Navajo





### SILVERSMITHS—INDIAN WEAVERS

South of Gallup is Zuni pueblo, famous for beautiful work of its silversmiths. North stretches the vast Navajo Indian Reservation where this great nomadic tribe roams high mesas and deep canyons which hold cliff ruins still unexplored; builds its strange hogans, weaves beautiful rugs and fashions silver jewelry.



### GALLUP INDIAN CEREMONIAL

Always interesting as "The Indian Capital of the World", Gallup, each year in mid-August, is the site of the world-famous Inter-Tribal Indian Ceremonial. At this time it is the best of all places to see the strange ceremonial dances, the riding, roping and sports of the American Indian.



and Pueblo people of New Mexico. The following year, 1937, marked the introduction of Plains tribes, represented by the Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone, to the Gallup ceremonial (Carroll 1971:150).

America's fascination with the West and its native communities continued after World War II. In a 1952 article titled "Tourism and Recreation in the West," University of California geography professor Clifford Zierer discussed the still-strong tourist draw of Western travel. "Popular literature, songs, and motion pictures have emphasized certain qualities of the West," wrote Zierer. "Deserts and mountains, lonely wind-swept plains, tumbleweeds, cowboys and Indians and adventurers, stagecoaches...Each has had its time and place, and usually the visitor finds enough remaining in reality or in museums to reward his trip" (Zierer 1952:465).

*New Mexico Magazine* continued its coverage of native culture with more articles on ceremonials, ceramics, etc. For example, Laguna Pueblo and its associated villages were featured as the Trip of the Month in June of 1950. "Mesita women make Laguna pottery to sell in the brush ramadas at the highway," wrote Betty Woods. "Pottery selling is fun. Said one Indian school graduate, 'We get such a kick out of the tourists!'" (Woods 1950:6).

By the 1940s, many Native American families sold cultural items such as pottery

*Detail of brochure entitled: "Travel U.S. 66 through the Land of Enchantment" US Highway 66 Association of New Mexico brochure. Ward Hicks Collection. Courtesy of the Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, UNM.*



### ACOMA—THE SKY CITY

Perched high upon a great rock upthrust from the plain 357 feet below, the pueblo of Acoma is probably the strangest human dwelling in America. Every bit of earth, every stick of timber for its houses and the magnificent old Mission, (built in 1629) were carried up this rock on human backs.



### ISLETA INDIAN PUEBLO

Only 12 miles south of U. S. 66 at Albuquerque (and on U. S. 85), Isleta is one of the largest and the most accessible of the Indian pueblos which are one of the strange and different aspects of New Mexico. Here is the old Mission de San Antonio, built in 1621, just one year after the Pilgrims landed on our eastern coast.





or other curios. For some families, selling their handicrafts to tourists and traders was the only way they had access to the cash economy. Although the above *New Mexico* magazine quote gives a voice to the Indian perspective of selling to tourists, the authenticity of the quote and the enthusiasm of the speaker are suspect. The focus of the article is indisputably on the adventure of the trip for the tourist rather than the native community's perspective on such cultural exchanges.

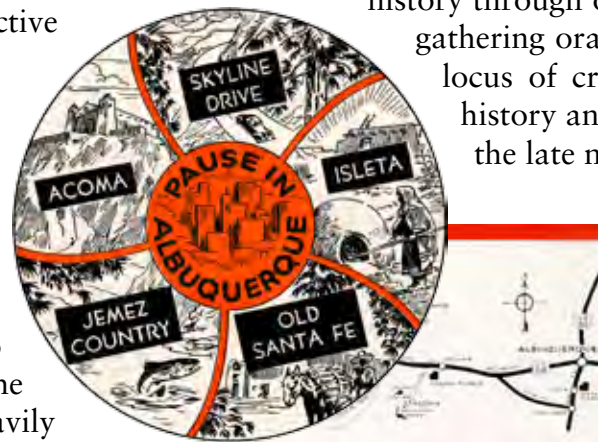
The Ward Hicks Advertising Agency continued its work throughout the 1940s and 1950s. This included numerous brochures for the Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce that highlighted driving routes to tourist attractions. Of course, the New Mexico Pueblos were heavily promoted. In a 1949 advertisement for Route 66, Albuquerque is pinpointed as a stop along the highway. Photographs depict Isleta and Acoma Pueblos and the Gallup Indian Ceremonial as nearby attractions (Ward Hicks Advertising).

A later, similar Hicks agency brochure for Albuquerque proclaims the city to be “In the Heart of the Picturesque Indian Country.” The requisite chieftain figure wearing a Plains-style headdress decorates the cover (right), which beckons the reader to “See Acoma, Laguna..Enchanted Mesa” (Ward Hicks Advertising n.d.). Another

*Details of Pause in Albuquerque brochures (1950 and mid 1950s) put out by the Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce. Ward Hicks Collection. Courtesy of the Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, UNM.*

Hicks brochure, “Pause in Albuquerque” (left), highlights Acoma, Isleta, the Jemez Country, and Old Santa Fe. According to the brochure, life in Isleta Pueblo “goes on today much as it did when Coronado viewed it four centuries ago” (Ward Hicks Advertising 1950). Clearly, the archetypical stereotyping of native cultures was changed little by the passage of decades.

The above is just a small sampling of tourism advertising concerning New Mexico's Native American communities. Indeed, social scientists and history professors have spilled much ink on critiquing the appropriation and exploitation of native culture by tourism-related entities. What is missing from the record, among many stories, is the experience by Native Americans of Route 66. This project seeks to give a Native American perspective to this history through oral histories and detailed information. During the process of gathering oral histories, the trading post quickly emerged as an important locus of cross-cultural interactions. The next section provides a brief history and a few pertinent examples of traders and trading posts from the late nineteenth century to the heyday of Route 66.



### Dates of New Mexico's Indian Dances, Fiestas and Fairs

During every month in the year, Indian religious ceremonies and fiestas are held in various pueblos.

The dates for many of these dances cannot be forecast very far in advance because they depend upon weather conditions, the whims of medicine men and other reasons. This list is an outline and complete as it is possible to give.

January—(1) New Year's dances, and at many pueblos institution of Indian games. (2) No date. Dance of the Spanish-Americans at Taos. (3) San Juan. Dances at Taos. (4) San Sebastian. Dances at Taos. (5) San Sebastian. Dances at Taos.

February—(1) No date. Buffalo, Deer and Antelope dances at various pueblos. (2) San Juan. Dances at Taos. (3) San Juan. Dances at Taos. (4) San Juan. Dances at Taos. (5) San Juan. Dances at Taos.

March—(1) No date. Dances, and at many pueblos institution of Indian games. (2) No date. Dance of the Spanish-Americans at Taos. (3) No date. Dance of the Spanish-Americans at Taos. (4) No date. Dance of the Spanish-Americans at Taos. (5) No date. Dance of the Spanish-Americans at Taos.

April—(1) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (2) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (3) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (4) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (5) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos.

May—(1) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (2) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (3) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (4) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (5) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos.

June—(1) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (2) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (3) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (4) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (5) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos.

July—(1) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (2) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (3) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (4) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (5) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos.

August—(1) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (2) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (3) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (4) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (5) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos.

September—(1) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (2) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (3) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (4) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (5) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos.

October—(1) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (2) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (3) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (4) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (5) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos.

November—(1) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (2) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (3) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (4) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (5) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos.

December—(1) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (2) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (3) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (4) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos. (5) No date. Change Dances at Isleta. Dances, about the fifteenth, at Taos.

## ALBUQUERQUE

HEADQUARTERS FOR MANY

# Fascinating Trips

LAGUNA MISSION

See Acoma  
Laguna..Enchanted Mesa

### ASK US FOR INFORMATION ON ROAD CONDITIONS

The Chamber of Commerce, recently located in the new building, will be glad to give you information and literature about any or all of the scenic and historic attractions of New Mexico, and to advise you on local road conditions in any particular part.

319 N. Fourth St.

THIS FOLDER PRESENTED BY THE

## ALBUQUERQUE

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

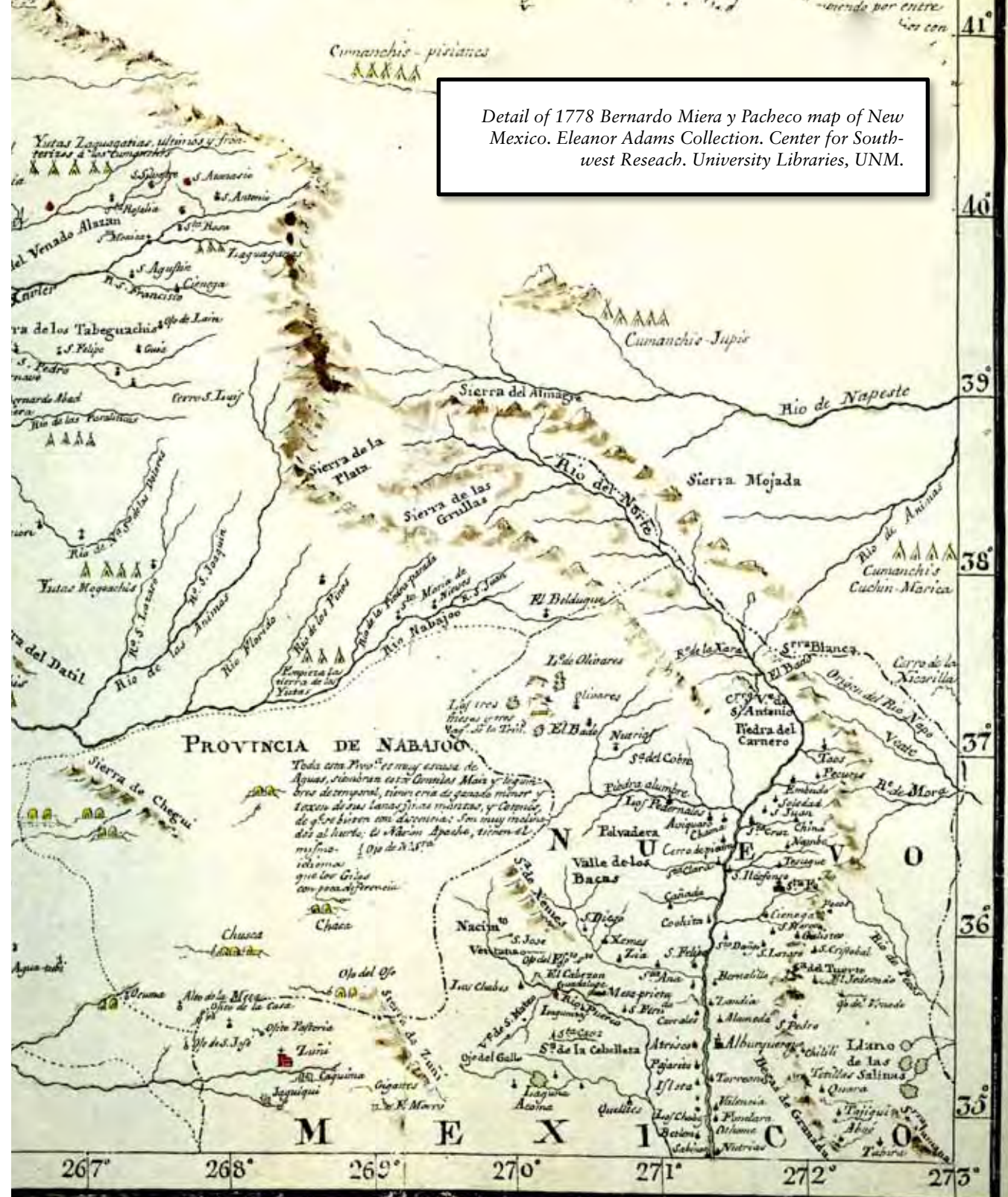
IN THE HEART OF THE PICTURESQUE INDIAN COUNTRY



## Trade and Trading Posts in the Southwest

The early nineteenth century marked the rise of Euroamerican traders in the West. As a medium of exchange, the business of trading ranged from huge efforts like that of John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company to individual trading posts such as Bent's Fort along the Santa Fe Trail in southern Colorado. In the area of New Mexico, trading was not a new experience for the Pueblos and surrounding tribes who had been trading for centuries before the arrival of Europeans. Although the full extent of pre-Columbian trade is not fully understood, it is clear that significant trade networks existed regionally in as well as deep into Mesoamerica and coastal areas of the continent (Woodbury 1979:24-26). In particular, a number of Pueblos have been documented holding their own trade fairs as least as far back as the early 1600s (Bsumek 2008: 53; Simmons 1979:189).

During the eighteenth century, New Mexico Pueblos held fairs in the late summer and fall to trade with surrounding tribes. Trading was so important to these cultures that Pueblo groups and surrounding tribes would initiate truces in order to host or attend annual fairs. For example, Taos Pueblo held a large regional trade fair, attended heavily by Comanche and other groups. The Spanish documented a number of other fairs that Apache, Comanche, Navajo and other tribes attended at various pueblos







*Gunn Brothers Trading Post, c. 1900. Courtesy of Ron Fernandez.*

during the 1700s. Pueblo groups would exchange agricultural and domestic goods for the buffalo hides, meat, buckskins, and other items the Plains tribes brought (Simmons 1979: 189-190).

By the mid nineteenth century, there were at least 150 trading posts located across the Great Plains and the Rocky Mountains. Most exchanges involved products of the fur trade -- buffalo hides and beaver pelts. This trade industry operated on generally accepted rates of exchange. Examples of commodities exchange included one buffalo robe for 1 ½ yards of calico, 30 beaver pelts for one keg of rum, and one riding horse for one gun plus 100 rounds of ammunition (Helbock 2000: 59). Subsequent to the arrival of the railroad in the West, traders suddenly had access to manufactured goods. Items like canned food and milk, sewing machines, and kerosene lamps became desired in Native American communities.

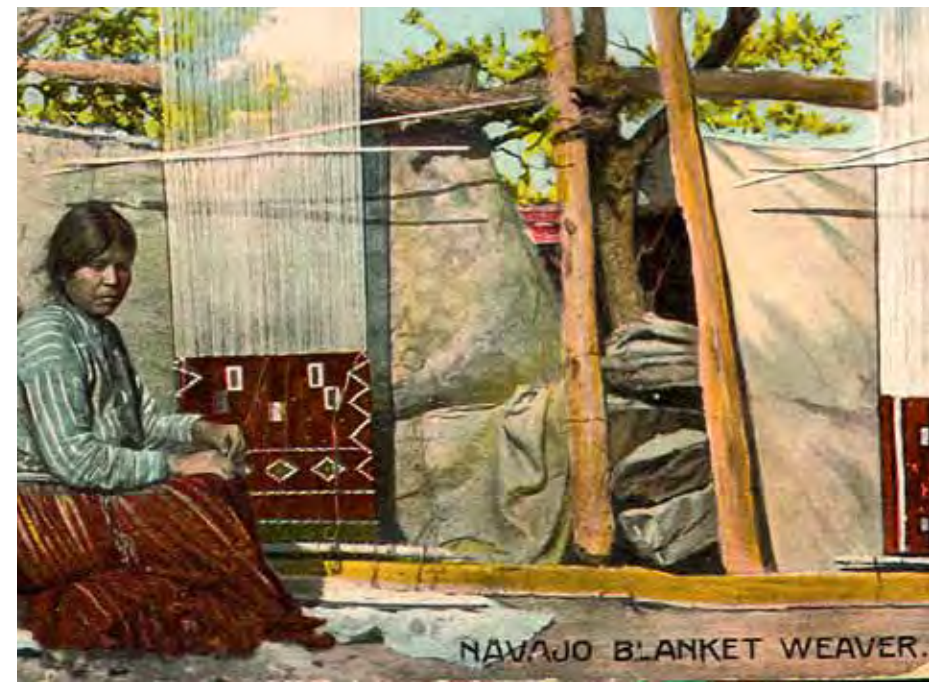
With the buffalo hunted practically to extinction and the enforcement of the reservation system on Native Americans, the trading industry changed somewhat by the late 1800s. During this era, “the term *Indian trader* described a non-Indian (usually a Euro-American or Hispanic) who exchanged manufactured goods with American Indians for raw materials or handmade crafts on an Indian reservation” (Bsumek 2008: 49). For example, raw materials on the Navajo reservation included sheep and their wool, wood, and pine nuts. In exchange for these goods and for items such as

woven blankets, the Navajos received household staples and/or payment in scrip or credit with the trader (Bsumek 2008: 50).

The rise of the Indian handicrafts industry greatly affected trading post economics. In addition to woven blankets, curios included jewelry and ceramics. Established traders added these commodities to their list of desired trade goods. They began buying handicrafts wholesale from their Indian clientele, and selling them retail to other traders or directly to tourists. This continued from the railroad era into the highway era of motor tourism. For the native community, trading posts “were their entrée to the modern industrial economy.” In turn, many traders used the trading post as a “launchpad” from which to create national markets for native crafts (Bsumek 2008: 48).

Some traders continued the traditional method of locating their trading posts in close proximity to American Indian communities. Other trading posts and general mercantiles were established along the 35<sup>th</sup> parallel, drawn by the building of the railroads. Some of these served camps devoted to lumber and coal mining, extractive industries made possible by, and necessary for, railroad transportation. “With the exception of the trading posts located at

*Typical postcard of a Navajo Weaver. Courtesy of Shawn Kelley.*







*Gallup Intertribal Indian Ceremonial parade in front of C.N. Cotton and Grosse Kelly Comapny, 1931. Courtesy of the Frasher Foto Collection, Pomona Public Library.*

a few key railroad stops, however, a traditional barter system limited by a system of credit or scrip prevailed at most trading posts” (Kammer 1993).

John Lorenzo Hubbell and his partner Clinton Neal “C.N.” Cotton serve as good examples of late nineteenth/early twentieth century traders who continued to locate in close proximity to native peoples. Hubbell and Cotton operated a Ganado, Arizona trading post, located within the Navajo reservation. Places like the Hubbell Trading Post (as it came to be known) were nexuses of close-knit cultural exchange. Hubbell “quickly turned [his trading post] into a center of Navajo life in that portion of the reservation” (Helbock 2000: 59).

According to Bill Malone, former manager of the Hubbell Trading Post, John Lorenzo was one of the first traders in the area that became the Navajo reservation. “Most of your traders all float into the country when the Navajos come back from signing their peace treaty,” explained Malone. “They had been acclimated to coffee beans, sugar, flour, yard goods, canned goods, and here came the trader—just like anywhere else” (United Indian Traders Association Oral History Project n.d.; Wilkins 2008: 41-42). In *The Indian Traders*, Frank McNitt described the standard interior of trading posts. “The heavy front door opened upon a smallish area commonly known as the bull-pen,” wrote McNitt. “This for the Indians was a milling-about place, a place to stand, lean, squat, or sit while in the process

of trade, sociability, or reflection” (McNitt 1962: 73).

Both Hubbell and Cotton were well-known in the Gallup area. Hubbell, the son of a Connecticut Yankee and a New Mexico governor’s granddaughter, was born in Pajarito, New Mexico. He may have begun learning the Navajo language as a teenager while working for his father, who hired Navajo men to assist with gathering hay for a Fort Wingate contract (Brugge 1993: 21-22). Hubbell set up his Ganado trading post in the late 1870s, and formed a partnership with Cotton in 1884 (Brugge 1993: 26). An Ohio native, Cotton had traveled west and found work with the railroad in Albuquerque as a telegraph operator during the early 1880s (Fellin 1980: 151). Hubbell was known as *Nák’ee Sinili* (Eyeglasses); Cotton was called *Hastiin Béesh Bewoo’i* (Mr. Metaltooth) for his gold teeth (Brugge 1993: 26).

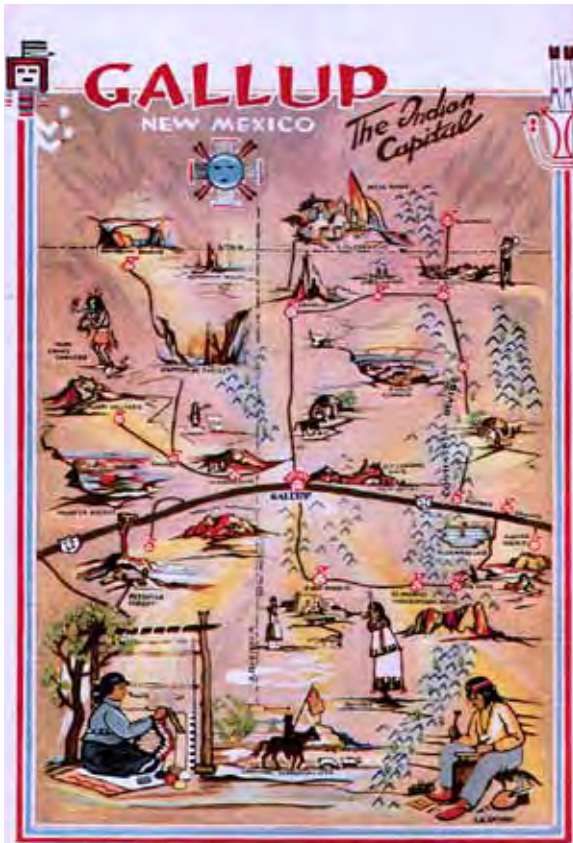
As part of their trading business, Hubbell and Cotton actively sought out and began dealing in Navajo blankets and rugs. They also bought wool from the Navajos, and obtained turquoise and silver for Navajo silversmiths to work with. Cotton bought out Hubbell in 1885, and relocated to Gallup four years later due in part to the difficulty of transporting the wool to the railroad (Fellin 1980: 153; Brugge 1993: 26). Ten years later, Cotton would sell the Ganado post back to Hubbell (Brugge 1993: 31).



Recent scholarly studies have focused more on the mutually beneficial workings of the Navajo-trader relationship. In her book *Indian-Made*, historian Erika Bsumek points out that traders among the Navajo, to be successful, needed to speak the language and be respectful of their clientele. This included often “ordering gifts of coffee, canned goods, tobacco, or candy as a way of acknowledging the Navajos’ culturally ingrained approach to trading” (Bsumek 2008:56).

Hubbell’s oldest son Lorenzo Hubbell Jr. was reportedly fluent in the Navajo

*Gallup Chamber of Commerce postcard promoting the city of Gallup as the Indian Capital.*



*Richardson's Trading Company along historic Route 66 in Gallup, New Mexico, 2009.*

language and respected by the Navajo community. Bsumek relates an anecdote in which a Navajo weaver reminded Lorenzo Hubbell Jr. that she was highly valuable to his business. In 1935 weaver Louisa Alcott, in poor health, asked Hubbell for assistance. After reminding him that she always provided him with quality rugs, Alcott requested flour, coffee, sugar, and baking power. Hubbell Jr., in turn, honored her request in order to keep this trade relationship healthy (Bsumek 2008: 47, 56).

In Gallup, Cotton began specializing in supplying area traders with goods for the Navajos, and in finding new markets for Navajo-produced products. This included the publication of a rug catalogue for national distribution. Cotton’s huge inventory of Navajo rugs has been attributed to his “regional control of two items basic to Navajo trade: Arbuckle’s coffee and Pendleton blankets” (Peake 1991: 269). Cotton also received government contracts to supply feed, oats, and salt to the Navajo, Zuni, and Hopi reservations, as well as commodities to the Indian schools in Albuquerque and Santa Fe (Fellin 1980: 154; Brugge 1993: 28). Cotton’s warehouse was located near the railroad tracks in Gallup. His enterprise has been called “the first large-scale wholesale business in town” (Fellin 1980: 154).

Numerous other families in Gallup operated trading posts. These included the Richardson, Atkinson, and Kirk families (Kammer 1993). Trader John Kirk had followed his sweetheart from West Virginia to New Mexico. After operating a trading post at Chinle, the Kirks moved to Gallup where John worked as a general manager for Cotton before establishing his own place in 1920. John Kirk’s business was “a combination retail and wholesale general mercantile company that sold principally to trading posts” (Kirk 1979). Kirk’s brother Mike, a trader at Manuelito, has been credited with having a significant role in the creation of the



annual Gallup Ceremonial. During the 1920s, Mike Kirk relocated to Gallup where he operated a rug and curio shop (Carroll 1971: 68, 73, 74, 95).

Other traders in urban areas, in somewhat farther proximity from Native American settlements, operated more as curio salesmen to tourists and collectors. In his study of Route 66 in New Mexico, David Kammer noted that the term “trading post” was more utilized “in the western half of the state especially in rural areas near Indian reservations,” but still appeared on urban stores selling curios (Kammer 1993). Two such Albuquerque establishments--Wright's Trading Post and Maisel's Trading Post--were well-recognized in their day.

In 1899 Charles Wright, a young man in his twenties, arrived in the Southwest from Kansas. By 1903, he was working as a salesman at the Alvarado Hotel's Indian Arts Building. Wright spent a lot of time on buying expeditions, during which he made many connections with traders and Native people, up and down the Rio Grande corridor and in Navajo country. Because the Alvarado Hotel was considered the “‘Harvard and Yale’ of prospective Indian curio dealers,” Wright soon rubbed shoulders with everyone from Hubbell and Cotton to famed Navajo weaver Elle Ganado to Fred Harvey Company designer Mary Colter (Peake 1991: 264-266).

After briefly managing the Hopi House at the Grand Canyon and buying his own trading post at Cañoncito, Wright returned to Albuquerque and established his first trading post (Peake 1991: 271). He traveled all over the state buying handicrafts from the native communities for his store. Advertisements for the business highlighted the store's “old adobe fireplace...Indian [women] weaving blankets, Silver Smiths and Pottery makers” (Peake 1991: 273). Items for sale included the requisite Navajo textiles, as well as blankets woven by Hispanic residents of Chimayo. Tourists could also purchase Apache bows and arrows, moccasins, sombreros, and silver filigree. In 1917, Wright built a three-story Pueblo-style store that served as an Albuquerque landmark for more than 40 years (Peak 1991: 279).



*Parade of wagons at the Gallup Intertribal Ceremonial, c. 1940. Photo by Wyatt Davis. Courtesy of the Albuquerque Museum Photoarchives.*



Wright's Trading Post was located at the corner of Fourth Street and Gold Avenue, which was part of Route 66 from 1926 until the 1937 realignment. However, having catered to wealthy train passengers for so many years, Wright was nonplussed when automobile tourists "wanted cheap souvenirs." "He was even rude to them sometimes," remembered his daughter Juanita (Peak 1991: 284). Wright's Trading Post, even after the realignment, was "a tremendous tourist attraction" (Palmer 2006:92).

During the early 1920s, Albuquerque businessman Maurice Maisel became "the competitive thorn in the side of Wright, the traditional Old West Indian trader" (Peake 1991: 282). Maisel specialized in silver jewelry made by Native artisans on-site. Maisel's first store was mechanized during the 1920s; machinery included rolling mills, drop hammers, and punch presses (Batkin 2008:131). Silversmiths from the Isleta and Sandia Pueblos commuted to work at Maisel's during the 1930s. Many other silversmiths lived in Albuquerque where they worked for Maisel's or other local curio shops (Batkin 2008:139).

Maisel's first shop, in operation from the early 1920s to the late 1940s, was located across the street from the Alvarado Hotel. By the early 1940s, he had opened two more stores on Central Avenue--or Route 66--in Albuquerque. Maisel's choice of Central Avenue locations reflected the significance of the rise in popularity of motor tourism over train travel during this period of time (Batkin 2008: 129, 134).

By the late 1920s, motor tourism also provided new clientele for many traditional trading posts in rural areas. For example, establishing a trading post along Route 66 became "an alternative to trading exclusively on the reservations, or as the means to a new livelihood"

*Detail of postcard featuring employees of Maisel's shop.  
Postcard courtesy of Paul and Kathleen Nickens.*



*Native Americans working at Maisel's, 1948. Courtesy  
of the Albuquerque Museum Photoarchives.*

(Kammer 1993). As such, trading posts were among the roadside businesses proliferating along rural Route 66 from the 1920s to the 1950s. According to historian David Kammer, trading posts offered "one of the few places where Indian and tourist would meet, be it purchasing groceries and gas, or buying and selling crafts" (Kammer 1993:F101).

New offerings at trading posts included campgrounds, gas stations, and mechanic garages. Motorists included not only tourists but local clientele including "the growing number of Indians who purchased trucks in the 1930s" (Kammer 1993). Trading posts also began selling groceries and operating local post offices. These expanded businesses operated more as "rural service complexes" (Kammer 1993). Examples include places like the Santo Domino Trading Post, which "served as a trade point in which Pueblo





*Villa de Cubero Trading Post situated along historic Route 66 in Villa de Cubero, New Mexico, 2009.*

crafts were exchanged for supplies and, in turn, sold to tourists” (Kammer 1993:F98-99).

*From left to right. Agnes Gunn Gottlieb, Sidney Gottlieb, and sister Ida Gottlieb. Photo courtesy of Hans Gottlieb.*



The Villa de Cubero Trading Post is a good example of a rural service complex. Sidney Gottlieb, a trader and state senator, was operating a mercantile in Cubero prior to and during the first era of Route 66. One of the largest stores in the area, the Cubero store was “the only place with both electricity and a telephone.” Each season Gottlieb bought and sold approximately 250,000 pounds of wool from the surrounding community (Cheromiah 2004:77).

When Route 66 was realigned in 1937, bypassing Cubero, Gottlieb relocated to a spot along the new highway. A whole wing of the new Villa de Cubero Trading Post was devoted to pottery made by members of the Acoma and Laguna Pueblos, who traded their wares with Gottlieb for groceries. In addition to pottery, the local clientele also exchanged sheep, wool, and cattle for general merchandise. Illustrating the importance of automobile transport, Gottlieb also built and operated four tourist cabins, gas pumps, and a café (Kammer 1993:F99; Cheromiah 2004:76).

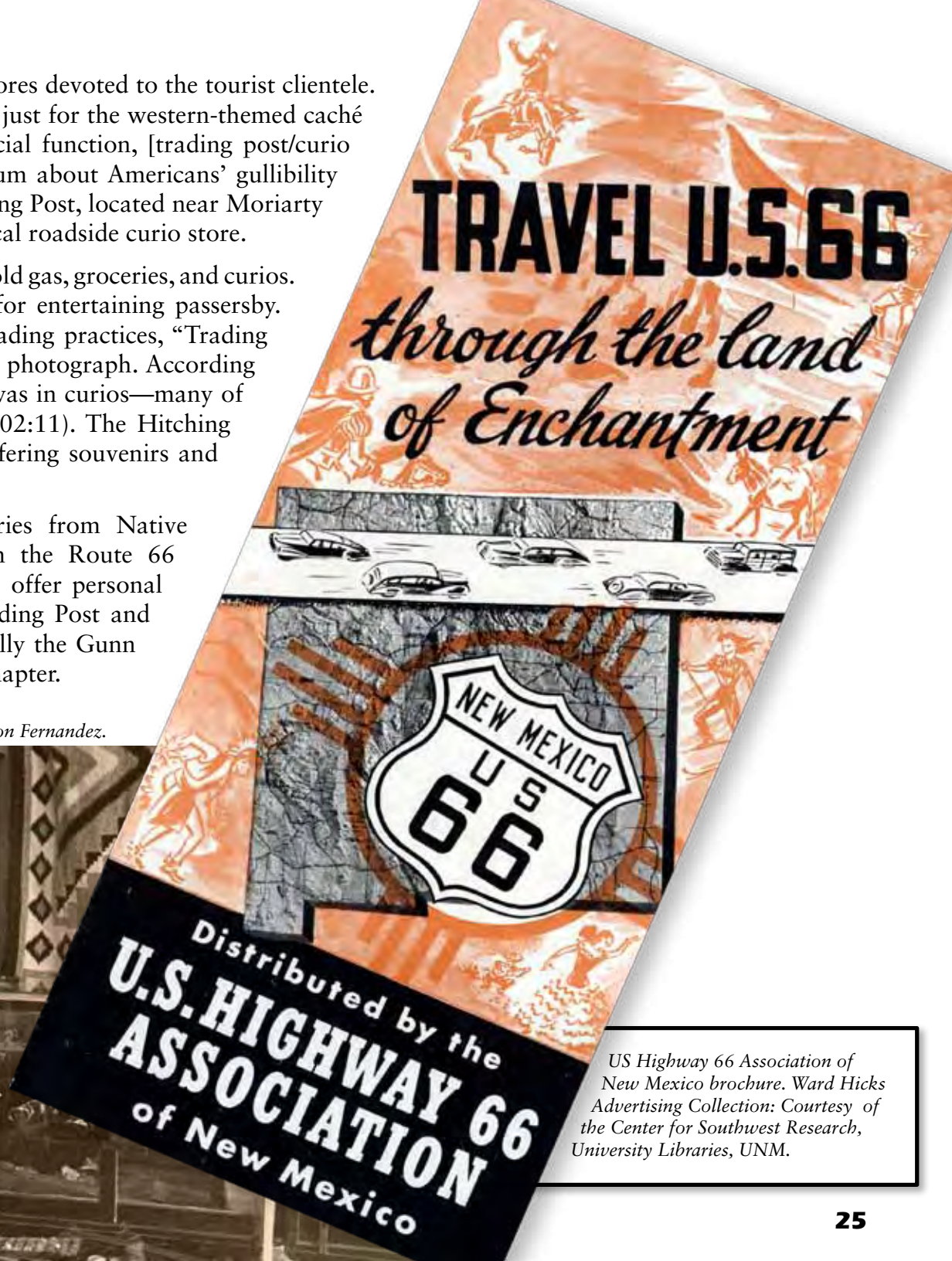


At the other end of the spectrum were Route 66 curio stores devoted to the tourist clientele. Some of these businesses called themselves trading posts just for the western-themed caché of the moniker. Kammer writes, “In their most superficial function, [trading post/curio shops] revealed the degree to which P.T. Barnum’s dictum about Americans’ gullibility applied to the tourist” (Kammer 1993:F101). The Hitching Post, located near Moriarty during the Route 66 heyday, is a good example of a typical roadside curio store.

Established by Ohio-born John Claar, the Hitching Post sold gas, groceries, and curios. It also featured a snake pit teaming with rattlesnakes for entertaining passersby. Though the store had nothing to do with traditional trading practices, “Trading Post” is clearly painted on the façade in a Route 66 era photograph. According to Claar’s son Bob, two-thirds of the summer business was in curios—many of them, however, of the made-in-Japan variety (Repp 2002:11). The Hitching Post was just one of many such Route 66-era stores offering souvenirs and gimmicky attractions.

Upcoming sections of this report include oral histories from Native Americans and several traditional trading posts from the Route 66 era. Interviewees from the Laguna and Cochiti Pueblos offer personal recollections of such places as the Santo Domingo Trading Post and the Villa de Cubero Trading Post. Laguna Mart, originally the Gunn Brothers Trading Post, is also addressed in the Laguna chapter.

*Curio room at the Villa de Cubero Trading Post, c. 1940s. Courtesy of Ron Fernandez.*



*US Highway 66 Association of New Mexico brochure. Ward Hicks Advertising Collection: Courtesy of the Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, UNM.*



# Route 66 & Native Americans

## Native American Memories of Route 66

The Native American perspective of Route 66 varies greatly when evaluated by tribal affiliation, proximity to the road, and generation. There is very little literature focused on American Indians' experiences relating to Route 66. This chapter, *The History of Route 66 and Native Americans*, uses information gathered in oral history interviews and archival research to document the experiences of New Mexican Pueblos and tribes. Information specifically about the Pueblo of Laguna and Pueblo of Isleta is detailed in Chapters 3 and 4, respectively.

American Indian use of the Route 66 corridors (both 1926–1937 and the post-1937 alignments) is best understood through examining the various historical periods of the region. Native American communities relied heavily on foot trails to trade within the region long before European contact. For centuries prior to European contact expansive trade networks thrived and extended

into Mesoamerica from population centers such as the Galisteo Basin, Middle Rio Grande, and the Hopi Mesas (Spicer 1962; John 1996). During the Spanish period, foot trails continued to be vitally important for trade and communication between indigenous groups and facilitated several uprisings, including the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 (Sando and Agoyo 2005). As Spanish and Anglo settlement of the region grew, American Indian trails were expanded for horse and wagon use and many were renamed. Examples include El Camino Real del Tierra Adentro, the Santa Fe Trail, and the Old Spanish Trail.

During the American era, the region witnessed an increase in trails and traffic for trade, settlement and military uses. Throughout the periods of Spanish, Mexican, and American settlement, Native Americans had increasing trade interactions with settlers, as well as continued trade with neighboring tribes.

However, it was the expansion of the railroad which brought about some of the most dramatic economic and rapid societal



*Detail of Star Stage New Mexico, c. 1925. T. Harmon Parkhurst,  
Courtesy of the Palace of the Governors  
Photo Archives (NMHM/DCA), #11715.*



changes for Native Americans. When the railroad arrived in New Mexico in the late 1870s and early 1880s, the routes generally followed portions of the same travel corridors used for foot, horse and wagon traffic (Myrick 1990). The most notable rail line in this region, the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe (AT&SF), ran from the Santa Fe area southwest to Santo Domingo, Albuquerque, and Isleta. From Isleta west it was originally operated as the Atlantic and Pacific but later became part of the AT&SF. This line extended to Laguna, Acoma, and Gallup before entering into Arizona. The close proximity of rail lines impacted Native American communities both socially and economically.

During track construction many American Indians participated in wage labor for the first time while working for the railroad (Peters 1994). The sheer volume of goods and technology transported by the trains increased the trading abilities and economic opportunities of many tribes. Wool and sheep were exported, while commodities such as flour, sugar, and coffee were imported on a large scale. Local Native American economies began to incorporate both barter and wage labor paradigms. The economic and social changes ushered in by the railroad continued with the creation of the national highway system and the construction of Route 66 (Ron Fernandez 2009).

In New Mexico, Route 66 was the highway that most profoundly impacted Native American communities during the first half of the twentieth century. Many American Indian communities were previously isolated by their rural location. Travel to and from the community happened on a small scale and was limited by difficult access on poor roads. Route 66 linked urban and rural population centers, which greatly improved Native Americans' direct access to market centers for employment, as well as the buying and selling goods. Native Americans used Route 66 for intertribal travel as well as to access non-Indian communities. During the early years of Route 66, many American Indians did not own their own automobiles. They travelled on or along the road by horseback, wagon, hitchhiking, or by bus.

Detail of A.W. Whipple 1853-54 railroad survey map  
"From the Rio Grande to the Pacific."  
Courtesy of the David Rumsey Map Collection.





American Indian communities situated near the highway experienced many changes, both positive and negative. The number of outsiders traveling through Native American communities greatly increased. At the same time, Native Americans' access to larger urban economic centers grew. The increased interactions between Native American communities and the broader New Mexican and US population led to significant social and economic changes.

Route 66 greatly increased the availability of manufactured goods and commodities in the community. Local trading posts served as

for staples and manufactured goods from larger urban centers. While waiting for their seasonal income, many families traded on credit. As the trading posts increased economic exchange within the community, the credit system contributed to further shifting the local economy from a barter system towards a market system (Ron Fernandez 2009). This process began in the late 1800s and was accelerated by the railroad. The construction of Route 66 further incorporated communities along its path into the larger regional economic system.

*Seigfried Abraham's gas station along the realigned Route 66 at Laguna, c. 1934. Courtesy of Ron Fernandez.*



economic centers where families bought and sold goods. Many community members farmed and/or raised livestock and sold surplus crops, wool, and animals to the trading post in exchange

The volume of non-Native Americans traveling on Route 66 presented both challenges and opportunities for American Indian communities. In the early years, varying road conditions combined





*Detail of Gallup Inter-tribal Ceremonial Grounds, c. 1930s. Courtesy of the Frasher Foto Collection, Pomona Public Library.*

with rudimentary automobile technology forced drivers to stop frequently for gas and maintenance. Motorists visited local towns for site-seeing, food, and rest breaks. The needs of motorists created many economic opportunities for local community members. Tribal members set up stands to sell produce, pottery, and other locally made goods (Ron Fernandez 2009; Lee Marmon 2009; Isleta Cultural Affairs Committee 2008).

However, the influx of visitors also created challenges for Native American communities. Ceremonies and dances that were private or sensitive events were attended by non-tribal members. Sometimes, these visitors behaved in culturally inappropriate ways by photographing ceremonies or trying to enter sacred spaces (Whiteley 1998). Native American communities adapted to the changes brought about by Route 66 in different ways, which are further explored in the individual chapters of this report.

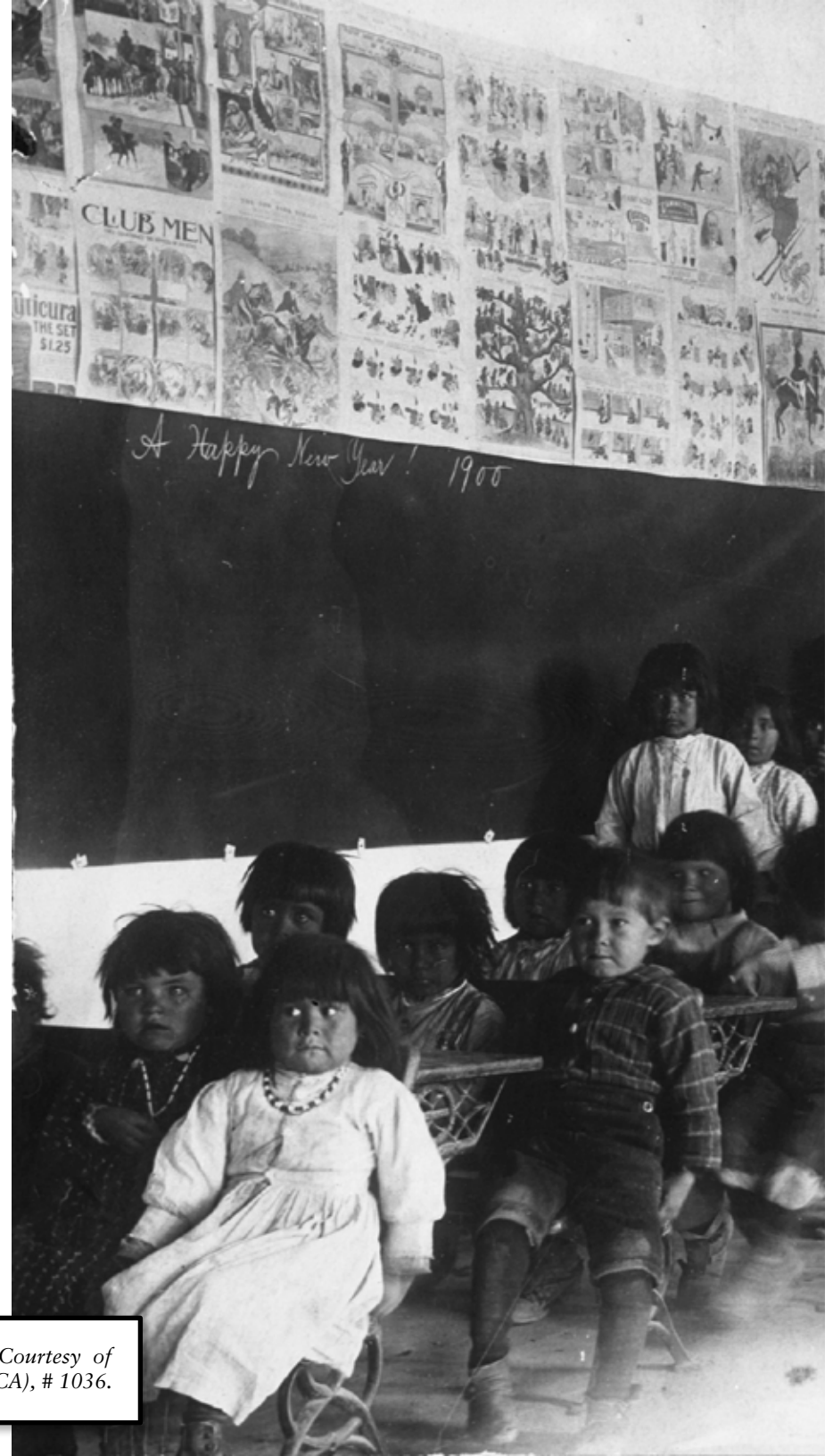




*Tourists watching dances at Tesuque Pueblo, c. 1920s.  
Postcard courtesy of Paul and Kathleen Nickens.*

In addition to the changes wrought by economic forces, Route 66 has powerful memories connected with it. Starting in the late 1800s, New Mexican Native American children attended government-sponsored boarding schools, which were charged with acculturating American Indian youth to mainstream American culture, in addition to their educational mission. Boarding school students were not allowed to speak their native languages or practice their religion openly (Hyer 1990:12–16 , 22–28).

Many interviewees recalled how they traveled by bus to Santa Fe, Bernalillo, or Albuquerque to attend one of the regional Indian boarding schools. These trips normally occurred twice a year at the start of the academic year and the end. Occasionally family members visited the children at school and some children were able to return during Christmas breaks. For many Native Americans, their first memory of Route 66 is being taken from their homes to attend these schools.



*Detail of classroom at the Santa Fe Indian School, 1900. Courtesy of the Palace of the Governors Photo Archives (NMHM/DCA), # 1036.*



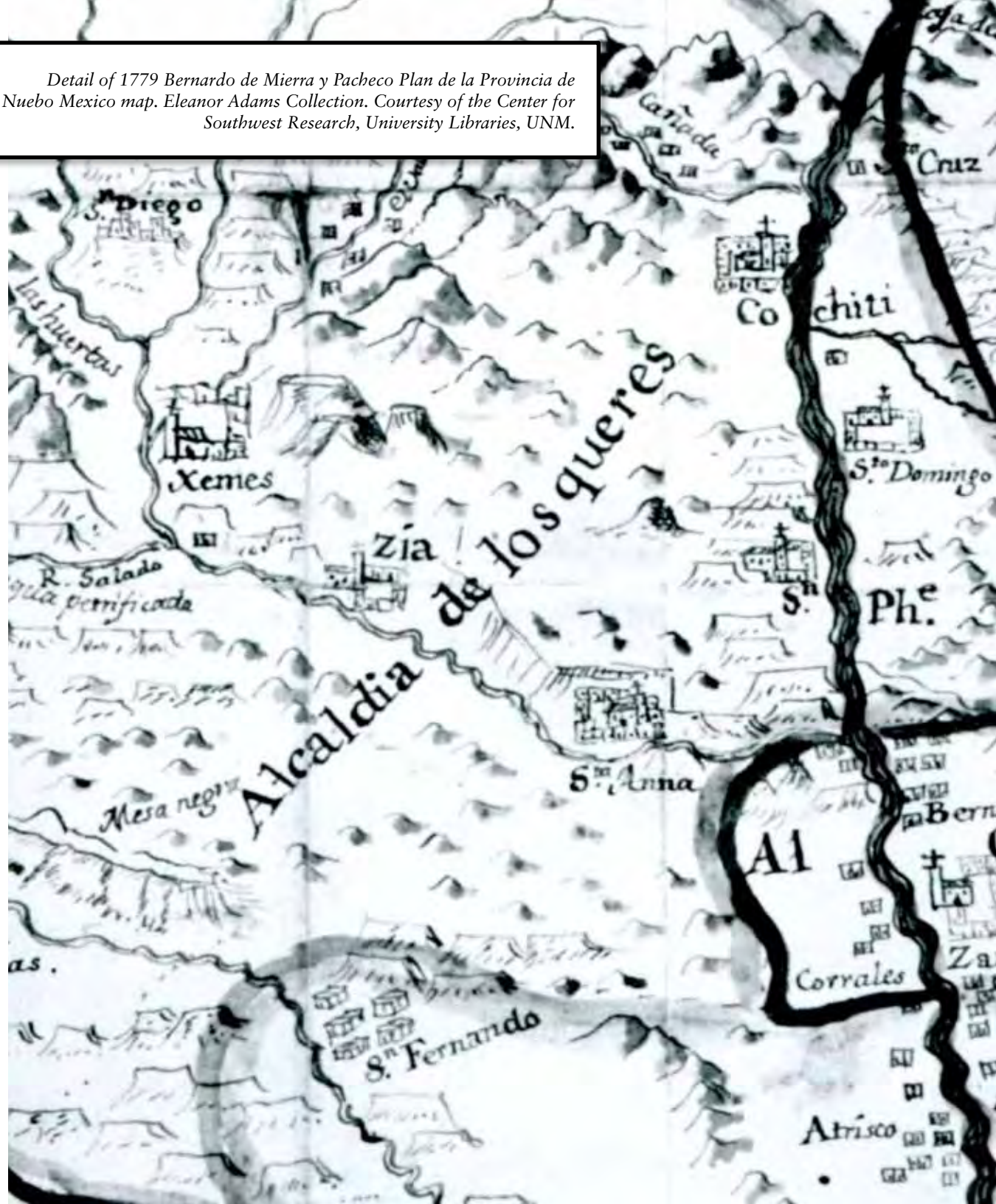
## Zia Pueblo

The Zia Pueblo is located along the Jemez River northwest of Bernalillo atop a small mesa. Zia people are agriculturalists, potters, and weavers. Traditionally men were the farmers and weavers of the community, while women were the potters. Zia potters are well known for their skill as craftswomen, and the pottery is prized for both its beauty and utilitarian function. The Zia have a long history trading their pottery with other Indian communities.

Zia Pueblo's economy was profoundly, and mostly positively, affected by the transportation boom years. According to a Zia interviewee, Zia Pueblo had little water in the late 1800s and shortages impacted the community's survival (2009). This water shortage made even subsistence living a challenge. Many Zia women sought new markets for their pottery to support their families during the water crisis.

After the arrival of the railroad in New Mexico, the growing tourist market became a new source of income for potters. Zia women began to sell pottery to tourists in Bernalillo, Santa Fe and Albuquerque. After the construction of Route 66, State Highway 4 and Highway 44, potters from Zia would either drive, hitchhike, or travel by bus to commercial venues such as El Portal in Santa Fe, the

*Detail of 1779 Bernardo de Mierra y Pacheco Plan de la Provincia de Nuevo Mexico map. Eleanor Adams Collection. Courtesy of the Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, UNM.*







*Zia Crow Dancers, Juan Diego Herrera, Sebastian Shije, Patricio Lucero, George Herrera John Pino c. late 1920s-1930s. Courtesy of Zia Pueblo & the Palace of the Governors Photo Archives (NMHM/DCA) #090901.*

The Zia Crow Dance originated during the 1920s and was created by Zia men working wage jobs near Milan, New Mexico. The men did not have money for return bus tickets and decided to raise the funds by dancing. The dance imitates crows fighting for food, and sometimes incorporates fighting over money. Around 1930, Zia was invited to dance at the Gallup Intertribal Indian Ceremonial and the participants chose to perform the Crow Dance. Zia continues to perform the dance to this day at their Pueblo.

Alvarado Hotel or Old Town in Albuquerque, and Coronado State Monument in Bernalillo to sell their pottery.

Increased regional tourism and the availability of metal cookware changed the nature of Zia pottery. It became less utilitarian and more of a collectible art. As cited in *The Pottery of Zia Pueblo* by Harlow and Lanmon: “The Pueblo Agency reported in 1936 that 30 potters at Sia [sic] produced 3,100 pieces valued at \$1,085, of which \$1,050 worth was sold. Almost all of the pottery made at Sia [sic] during the 1950s, which was rather considerable, was produced for sale and barter” (2003:7).



Zia women often promoted their community to locals and tourists while selling at commercial venues. Through word-of-mouth marketing, Zia pueblo began to receive some visitors and tourists. A Zia interviewee recalled how some of these interactions turned into lasting friendships. He remembered the Pueblo children receiving Christmas presents, as well as donations of clothing and supplies from such friends (2009).

In addition to pottery, certain Pueblo members sold small ceramic goods such as horno- and kiva-shaped ash trays and miniature beaded moccasins. The Zia men wove sashes and other items to sell (2009).

As well as selling at tourist-oriented locations, one interviewee recalled how his mother and other community members travelled

on feast days to the pueblos of Santo Domingo, San Felipe, and Cochiti to sell pottery (2009). He also remembered that other tribes came to trade goods during Zia's feast day celebrations (2009).

Women had an important role in Zia society because their pottery brought in significant income for the family. The women often spent their earnings at the San Ysidro Mercantile on staples such as flour, sugar, potatoes, and coffee. A Zia interviewee described traveling to the mercantile on a tractor drawn wagon that moved so slowly that children could jump off and play, without falling behind (2009). The children typically practiced shooting bottles or cans along the road with their slingshots (2009).

*Below: Native American artisans selling at El Portal on the plaza in Santa Fe. Courtesy of Louise Chewiwi.*

*Left: Zia woman digging for water in the Rio Jemez, c. 1920s. Courtesy of Zia Pueblo & the Palace of the Governors Photo Archives (NMHM/DCA) #090904.*







*Detail of car ascending La Bajada, c. 1910s to 1920s. Postcard courtesy of Johnnie Meier.*

## **Pueblo de Cochiti**

The Pueblo of Cochiti is located along the Rio Grande 10 miles west of Route 66. A major geographical feature near the pueblo is La Bajada, a large, steep mesa that Route 66 passed over on its route between Albuquerque and Santa Fe. La Bajada was famous for causing hardships for travelers because of its steep grade. In 1910 over 100 men from the pueblos of Cochiti and Santo Domingo were part of the work crew that reformed the steep La Bajada Hill grade, from 28 to 7.8 percent (Sullivan 1909–1910:181–183; Usner 2001:37; Wallace 2004:3).





*Men from Cochiti Pueblo providing local labor for La Bajada Hill road construction. (Sullivan 1909-1910: 181).*

Even after these improvements, Cochiti interviewees recalled the challenges of getting over La Bajada by wagon and automobile. A number of Cochiti elders remembered traveling from the pueblo to Santa Fe by wagon during the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s. One elder recalled how his family referred to taking the “stagecoach” when traveling via wagon over to La Bajada (Cochiti Elder’s Interview 2009).

Once regular bus service ran from Albuquerque to Santa Fe, many families traveled by wagon as far as La Bajada. There they would leave their horses tied up with friends who lived in the area and take a bus to either Santa Fe or Albuquerque. After World War II, the number of residents with cars increased, but the majority of community members still did not have access to a vehicle. Wagon use continued into the 1950s (Cochiti Elder’s Interview 2009).



*Detail of photo taken on top of La Bajada hill. Courtesy of Johnnie Meier.*

Even for those traveling by automobile, La Bajada posed its challenges. Older cars such as the Ford Model T were driven up the hill in reverse because they lacked fuel pumps to move the gas to the motor. Other vehicles did not have the power to ascend in forward gears. They too would have to drive up the hill in reverse. Interviewees recalled having to regularly push vehicles to get them over portions of the grade (Cochiti Elder’s Interview 2009).

At Cochiti, both drums and pottery are made. As most Cochiti men were traditionally engaged in farming, the women of the pueblo would take the goods to sell while the men cared for the crops. A number of silversmiths from Cochiti traveled to Santa Fe to pick up supplies from Gans Jewelers. They manufactured the jewelry at home and then returned to Santa Fe for more supplies and to sell the completed work back to Gans Jewelers. People from Cochiti also



took the El Pueblo Bus to Albuquerque to trade or buy materials (Cochiti Elder's Interview 2009).

The trip to Santa Fe was time consuming and expensive. Often, only an individual family member went to reduce the cost of transportation, but sometimes the entire family would go to buy supplies, seek other services or to take and pickup their children who were attending the Santa Fe Indian School. One Cochiti man, who was born before 1920, recalls traveling to Santa Fe in a wagon



*Cart at Cochiti Pueblo, c. 1879-1900. Photograph by Bainbridge Bunting. Courtesy of the Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, UNM, (PICT 000-385).*

before La Bajada was paved. His family took him to school in the fall and picked him up at the beginning of summer (Cochiti Elders Interview 2009).

The elders also talked about their families taking bushels of corn and other produce to the Santo Domingo Trading Post to barter for groceries. Some people in the village also took their pottery, drums, and jewelry to trade. Many of the elders recalled going with



their families to feast days or other celebrations at San Felipe, Santo Domingo, Zia, San Ildefonso, and Tesuque (Cochiti Elder's Interview 2009).

One elder recounted a journey on Route 66 to the Intertribal Indian Ceremonial in Gallup to see his sister and other Cochiti dance. He rode with other community members in the back of a large truck with a canvas covering. Another interviewee recounted traveling west on Route 66 to Flagstaff, Arizona on two different occasions to perform with a group of Cochiti dancers. The trip to Flagstaff was long and he recalled leaving the pueblo around 4:00 in the morning in a large truck with a canvas-covered back. The traveling party took a break at McCarty's rest area and he vividly remembered peering out of the back of the truck and seeing the railroad tracks. Once in Flagstaff, the group danced and performed at an annual Indian event. They camped at a local campsite and then headed home once the event was over (Cochiti Elder's Interview 2009).

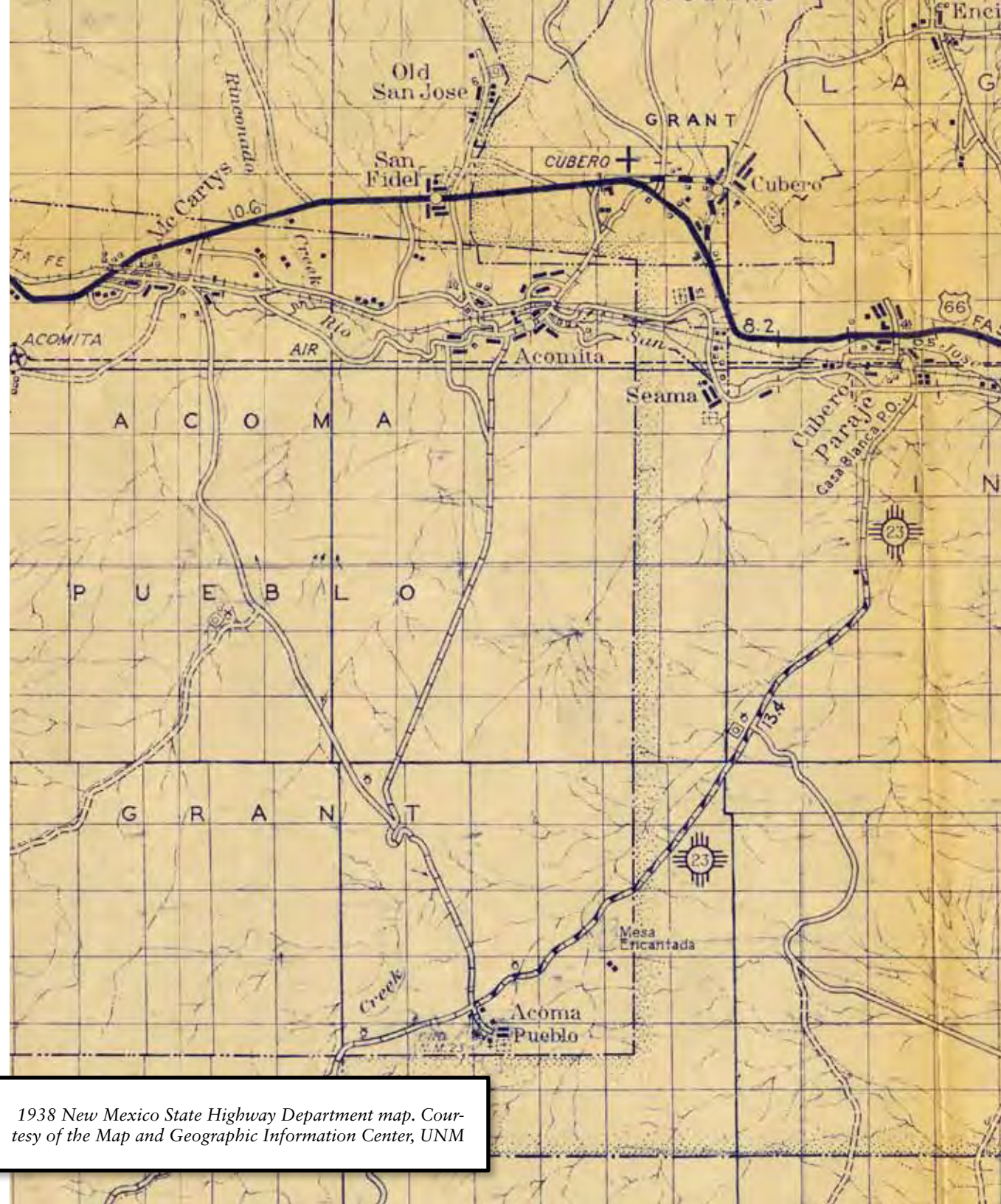
*Details of drum makers at Cochiti Pueblo, c. 1930s. Postcard courtesy of Paul and Kathleen Nickens.*



## Acoma Pueblo

Acoma Pueblo lands are located near the Rio San Jose east of the Malpais lava flows. For centuries, transportation routes crossed through Acoma lands. The Zuni-Acoma trail ran east-west, connecting these two communities located over 60 miles apart. During the American Period additional transportation routes including Beale's Wagon Road, the Albuquerque Fort Wingate Trail, the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad, and Route 66 passed through Acoma land. The main village, one of the longest continually inhabited villages in North America, is located on top of a large mesa 10 miles south of Route 66. The more recent settlements of McCarty's and Anzac were developed in conjunction with the construction and maintenance of the railroad. Later, Route 66 also passed near both of these communities. The pueblo's proximity to both rail lines and roadways affected the community in varying ways.

The arrival of the railroad in the 1880s introduced wage labor and increased access to commodities such as flour, sugar, and coffee. Acoma men were employed to work and maintain the railroad, receiving cash for their labor. The new wage economy functioned alongside the traditional barter/trade system, but it was mostly men who had access to paid employment initially. Women soon began to participate in the cash economy as artisans through the sale of pottery to traders and rail travelers. Interviewees



1938 New Mexico State Highway Department map. Courtesy of the Map and Geographic Information Center, UNM





*Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce brochure (mid 1950s). Ward Hicks Collection.  
Courtesy of the Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, UNM.*

from the Acoma Tribal Historic Preservation Office recalled that this was the first time Acoma women had access to money earned directly through their own work. Interviewees also recalled how pottery production slowly shifted from functional vessels designed for storing seeds, carrying water, and cooking, to the increased production of commercialized designs such as owl and turkey jars, ashtrays, and smaller ceramic pieces for tourists.

Even though Acoma potters still made large utilitarian pots, the production of smaller curio items to sell to motor tourists became a vital source of income for women. These trends began with the railroad and Harvey Car detours, and Route 66 created yet another form of access to tourist markets.

Harvey Car detours brought tourists to the pueblo but women also sold their wares at railway stations. As rail tourism was replaced with Route 66 motor tourism, women responded by building roadside stands along the historic highway, selling to local trading posts, and traveling to nearby communities to sell their pottery.

In addition to providing access to markets, Route 66 served as a way to see other aspects of mainstream American culture. While selling on the roadside, Acoma women saw visitors wearing new clothing styles. Sometimes tourists traded or gave magazines full of fashion pictures and product advertising to community members. Interviewees from the Acoma Tribal Historic Preservation Office described how these cultural exchanges influenced fashion at the pueblo. During the 1940s, Acoma women began to combine modern dresses and traditional jewelry.

They also recalled that Route 66 travelers shared or traded fruit, such as bananas, with Acoma community members. One woman recounted a story passed on from her mother, who as a young girl remembered selling pottery with her sister at a roadside stand. Some tourists passing through on Route 66 offered the girls bananas in exchange for pottery. The girls were curious about the strange food and traded some of their ceramics for the fruit. When they returned home, their family was not pleased with the deal and the girls never traded ceramics for food again. The local trading posts in San Fidel, Villa de Cubero, and Cubero catered to these

*Acoma Pottery Display, c. 1900-1910. Courtesy of the Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, UNM, (PICT 995-055).*







*"Carrot Patch" along Route 66 west of Acoma at Bluewater where many people from Acoma and Laguna would work. Courtesy of New Mexico Magazine v. 29, November, 1951, page 31.*

changes by carrying modern fashions and consumer goods. These items were also available in Grants and Albuquerque, but community members rarely went to these urban centers because of the distance and cost involved.

Sheep herding began to decline in the 1960s and 1970s because of a drop in the price of wool, but some families continued to raise sheep. Many people traded at the Cubero store and the trading post in San Fidel owned by the Winton Family. As late as the 1960s, traveling to towns such as Grants or Albuquerque was a luxury and only occurred when family members needed to visit family, attend school, go to the hospital, or other such important reasons.

The Route 66 era also witnessed a change in how and where people were able to travel. At Acoma, most families did not have access to motorized vehicles until after World War II. Travel before the 1920s was primarily by foot, horseback, wagon, and train. With the development of Route 66, bus travel increased and some people hitchhiked between communities. A

few Acoma families owned automobiles, but the majority did not. Most people traveled by foot, horseback or wagon on preexisting roads connecting the villages south of Route 66, including Acoma and Acomita. There were also roads to the trading posts in San Fidel, Cubero, and Grants. Some of this traffic was along or adjacent to Route 66.

In the 1950s, more people travelled via automobiles, which changed perceptions of distance. Traveling to Albuquerque from Acoma was no longer a multiple-day trip by wagon, but rather a couple of hours by automobile. One interviewee recalled an Acoma family who had recently acquired their first automobile and wanted to take a trip. They drove off east to Albuquerque and stopped to camp at the Rio Puerco because they did not realize how close they were to the city.

Another change brought about by Route 66 was expanded access to employment opportunities outside of the community. Route 66 allowed community members to travel greater distances for jobs. Interviewees recalled how a number of people began to work at large farming operations such as the "Carrot Patch" in Milan. This farm was a consistent source of seasonal labor for many people.



## Changes in Native American Uses of Route 66

By the 1950s several factors had converged that dramatically shifted Native Americans' use of Route 66 (Ron Fernandez 2009; Lee Marmon 2009; Waddel 2005). In the post-World War II economy, cars became more affordable. Uranium mining created many new jobs in the area and significantly increased family incomes at Laguna, Acoma, and some Navajo communities (Ron Fernandez 2009). Owning a vehicle became more common in American Indian communities. American Indians began to use Route 66 as a path to wage jobs outside their home communities in urban centers such as Albuquerque, Grants, and Gallup. As participation in the wage economy increased, agricultural production decreased. Local commercial exchange shifted away from trading posts as families accessed urban markets directly by transporting goods along Route 66 in their own personal vehicles.

Route 66 was an important transportation link in New Mexico, until it was replaced during the 1960s by the interstate highway system. Vehicle traffic quickly shifted onto Interstate 40 and later Interstate 25, effectively bypassing many communities located on Route 66. Improvements in automobile technology made it possible for motorists to travel longer distances

without stopping. These changes dramatically affected local Native American economies and caused many roadside businesses to close. Native American artisans and entrepreneurs had to shift to a new model for selling their goods as motorists did not frequent their communities as regularly or as often after the construction of the interstate highways.

Although the era of interstate travel and decommissioning of Route 66 had several negative impacts on Native American towns, it did not change the complex role the route played in local economies and communities during its heyday.

*Evaristo Abeita selling his melons at Isleta Pueblo, 1972. Courtesy of Stella Jojola.*





# Route 66 & Isleta Pueblo

## A History of Highways and Travel at Isleta

For centuries, Isleta Pueblo has been prominently situated on a key trade and travel corridor in the Rio Grande Valley. After the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, Isleta became the southernmost surviving Tiwa pueblo in New Mexico as well as the southernmost pueblo of the Middle Rio Grande region (Jojola 2005:64–67). During the Spanish and Mexican periods, the majority of travel in the region was along *El Camino Real del Tierra Adentro* (El Camino Real)—the Royal Road of the Interior—which passed through Isleta Pueblo on its route from *El Paso del Norte* (present-day El Paso, Texas) to Santa Fe and San Juan Pueblo (Loeffler 2007). With his 1598 expedition to colonize the region, Don Juan de Oñate established the Camino Real. For centuries, El Camino Real provided a passage for settlers, wagons, and mule trains between Mexico City and the northern reaches of New Spain (Loeffler 2007). Throughout the Spanish and Mexican periods, as well as the American period, the trail remained

an important trade and travel route. The route, following a natural path minimizing topographic challenges, ran primarily along the Rio Grande. The railroad followed a similar route through Isleta Pueblo along existing wagon roads and sections of El Camino Real (Myrick 1990:17 and Riskin 2005:12).

In 1881, the AT&SF and Atlantic and Pacific railroad lines through Isleta Pueblo were completed, bringing increased traffic as well as greater availability of manufactured and processed goods to the pueblo (Bryant 1974:86–87 and Dewitt 1978: 62). According to oral history accounts, the tribal government made a deal with the railroad, allowing it to run through Isleta lands provided pueblo members could ride the train for free. Many interviewees mentioned that pueblo members used the train to trade, buy, and sell goods in Albuquerque—as well as to harvest firewood west of the Rio Puerco. The railroad introduced affordable, rapid, long-distance transportation. The railroad era also ushered in the early



*El Pueblo Store, 1938. Courtesy of the Frasher Foto Collection, Pomona Public Library.*





*Pueblo women selling pottery in the early 1900s.  
Courtesy of the Albuquerque Museum Photoarchives.*

years of Southwest tourism. Charles Francis Saunders described these events in his book *The Indians of Terraced Houses*, which documented his travels in the region during the early twentieth century:

*To Isleta the railway pays the especial compliment of there stopping even its transcontinental limited trains, and travellers (sic) are thus afforded a leisurely look at the pueblo and an opportunity to buy pottery and fruit from the picturesque Isleta girls, who, at train time, flock about the station platform with their commodities. The Isleteños are enterprising traffickers and, in a small way, commercial travellers (sic). Not depending on the buyers that come to them, they quite regularly make up bundles of the small pottery knickknackery which tourists love, and boarding the train, travel up to Albuquerque where the chances of sale are more numerous than at Isleta (1912:46).*

Although railroad travel was popular, wagon and horse travel continued up and down the Rio Grande, but was restricted by the necessity to ford the river at low-water crossings. A ferry was maintained on the east bank of the Rio Grande across from the village at Isleta located near the present day bridge. The ferry was a barge made of logs tied together and could transport both people and supplies across the river. The fee for crossing the river varied and was usually negotiated through a trade. The *barceros* (boatmen) might receive a portion of the goods they were transporting across the river (Isleta Cultural Affairs Committee 2008).

In mid-1912, the state constructed a bridge across the Rio Grande just east of Isleta Pueblo capable of supporting automobiles and wagons. They used Indian Office funds to construct the bridge, giving local people better access to their fields east of the Rio Grande. Additionally, many herders moved livestock across the bridge to reach leased public land. The pueblo charged a two cent fee for crossing and grazing livestock on their land (Marshall, personal communication 2010). The pueblo witnessed a great increase in vehicle traffic after the bridge was built as it was one of the few places for wagons and motor vehicles to cross the river in the middle Rio Grande Valley.

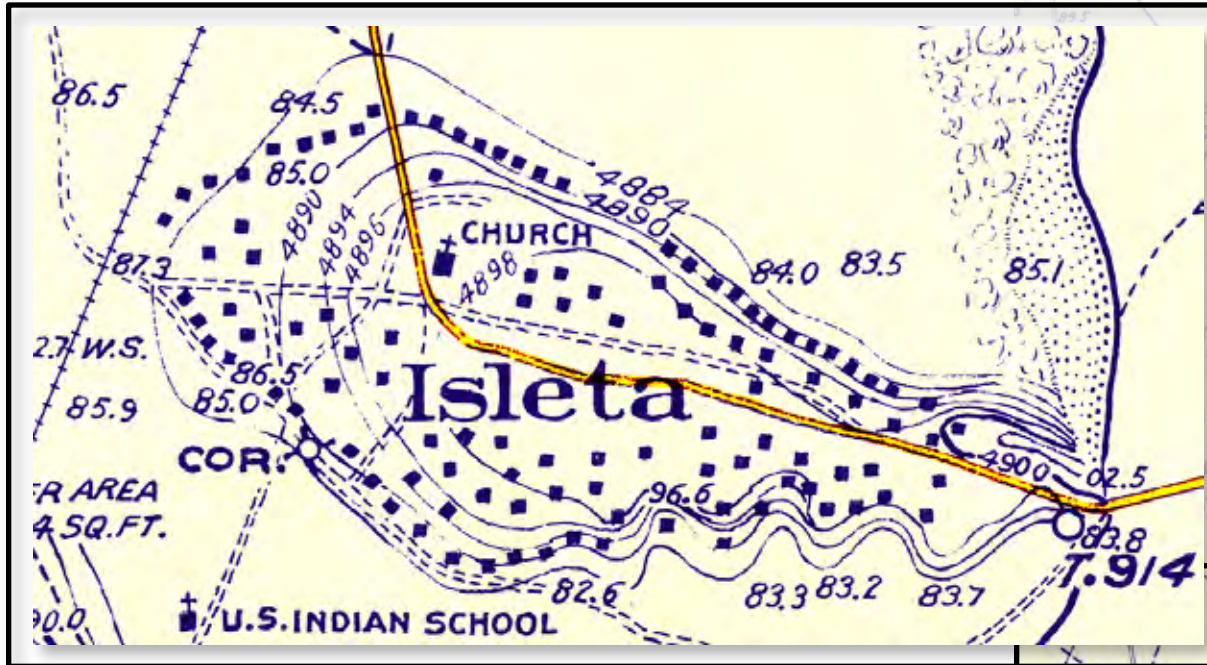
The new bridge and the increased traffic impacted the Isleta community in several ways. At first, the early highway leading

*Metal Isleta bridge constructed circa 1931 to replace original wooden bridge.  
Courtesy of Louise Chewiwi.*





to the bridge actually passed through the main plaza. Although the reason for this alignment is unknown, it was likely due to a combination of factors. Many of the existing roads in the pueblo already traveled near the plaza and it is also a possibility that influential community members may have vied to have the road take such a course to capitalize on commerce and trade (Isleta Cultural Affairs Committee 2008). The traffic through the plaza increased and proved to be disruptive to ceremonies and daily life.



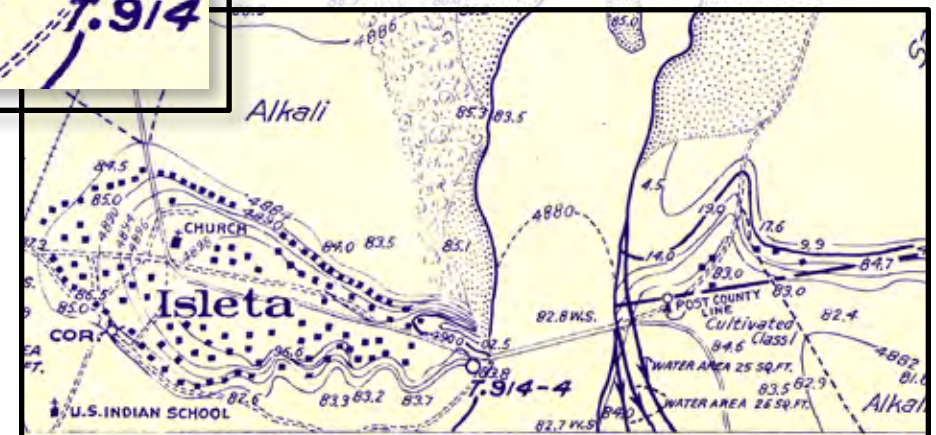
Automobiles traveling through the village endangered both people and property. Elders in the community remember that motorists hit people, animals, and wagons and some of the collisions resulted in fatalities. In a 1919 letter George Vaut, chairman of the board of Indian Commissioners, stated: “The road through the plaza is a great disadvantage and very dangerous owing to the rapid speed at which motors are frequently driven.” Because of these problems the original alignment predating Route 66 was moved north of the plaza by 1923, angling southeast to cross the railroad tracks to the north of the village, and continuing east over the Rio Grande (Marshall, personal communication 2010).

## Memories of Life Along Route 66

Route 66 facilitated trade between Isleta Pueblo and other American Indian groups as well as with neighboring Euro American communities. Oral history accounts from Isleta indicate that at the turn of the twentieth century tribal members traveled long distances by wagon, such as 250 miles northwest to the pueblo of Hopi in Arizona to trade for specialty goods such as *mantas* (ceremonial shawls), needed for weddings (M. G. Lucero 2009). Over time, improved highway conditions and increased access to buses and automobiles expanded Native people’s ability to travel long distances for trade, work, and other reasons. Eulalia Zuni remembered that in 1929, the year she was married, some people in the community started to purchase cars (2009).

## Traveling to Albuquerque

Isleta Pueblo is located just 13 miles south of Albuquerque, but it has not always been a quick 20-minute drive away. Joe Lucero recounted



Detail of 1922 Middle Rio Grande Survey map show building and highway details at Isleta Pueblo pre-realignment. Notice the road traveling through the plaza south of the church. Courtesy of Map and Geographic Information Center (MAGIC), UNM.

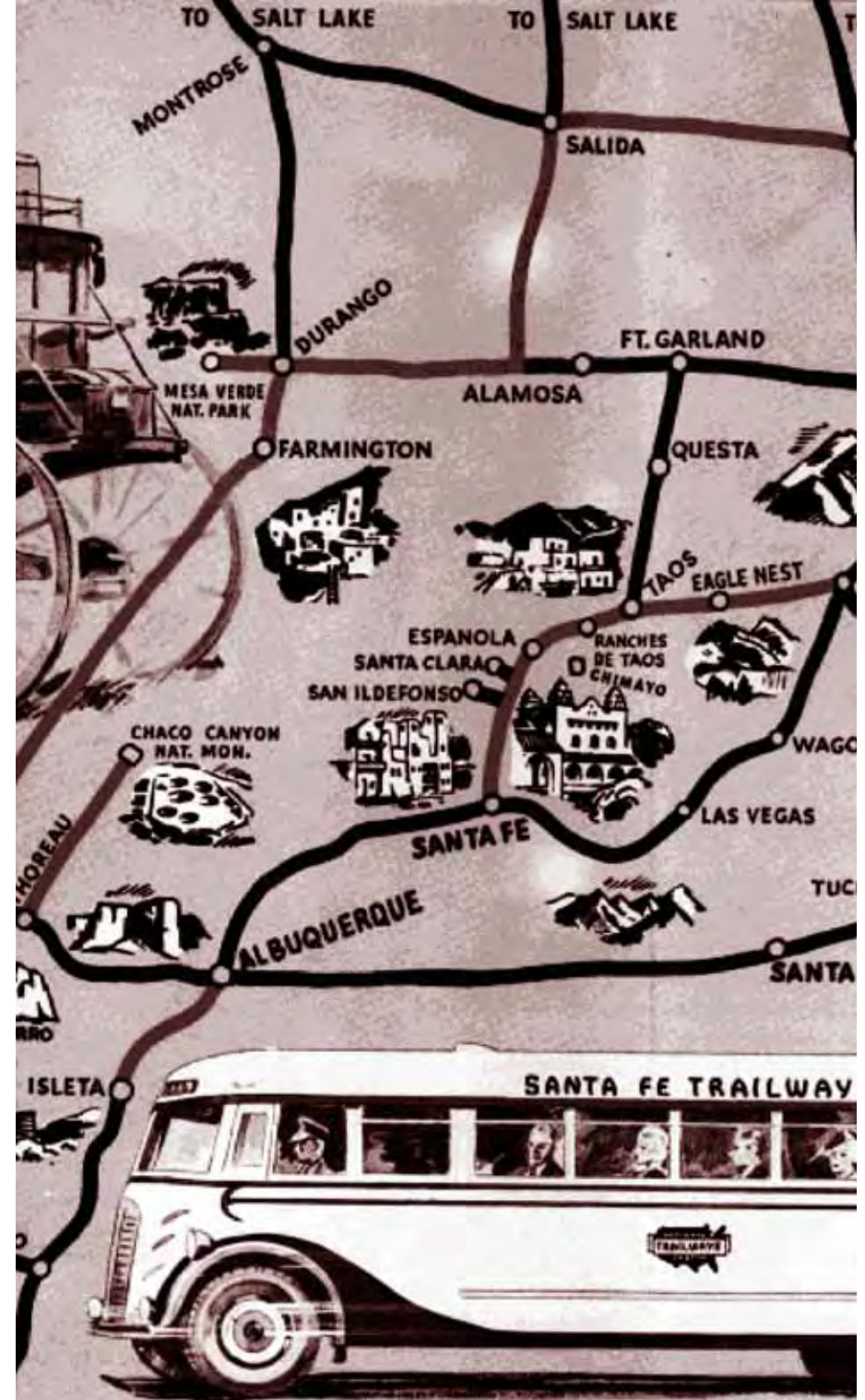




*Wagon at Isleta Pueblo. Courtesy of Louise Chewiwi.*

how his grandfather J.B. Lucero traveled by horse-and-buggy from Isleta to Albuquerque in the 1920s. Every month J.B. Lucero made supply runs to the city, leaving Isleta around 4:00 a.m., in order to make the round trip in a day. Usually, he took one of his grandchildren along, starting with the oldest in rotation. He traveled north on old Route 66, now NM 85, and then up 2nd or 1st Street to the stores near Central Avenue. At that time a number of stores still had hitching posts out front to tie up horses and wagons. The family traded or bought groceries, and sold alfalfa for \$10 a ton to operations such as Bowers Dairy (2008). Other interviewees mentioned how they traveled to the South Valley or downtown Albuquerque to sell buckets of chiles or baked goods door-to-door. Some recalled that they knew they were close to home when the pavement stopped and the road continued unpaved south into the Pueblo. To this day the roads into the Pueblo center remain unpaved.

With the dawn of the automobile era, fewer people traveled to Albuquerque via horse and wagon. Many people relied on bus lines. The Yellow Way, Santa Fe Trailways, and later Greyhound buses provided service between Isleta and Albuquerque, and beyond. Rosenda Lucero, the postmaster at Isleta for many years, remembers a Greyhound bus regularly dropping off mail shipped in encyclopedia boxes (2009).



EL PASO

*From Grand Canyon and the Indian Empire; Indian Detour and the Grand Canyon brochure. Reprinted with permission.*



## Intertribal Trade

Many interviewees discussed the influence of Route 66 on intertribal trade. Joe Lucero recounted how he accompanied his father, Francisco Lucero, via wagon to Laguna Pueblo and Acoma Pueblo to sell and trade goods. They took melons, chiles, apples, peaches, and other seasonal fruits and vegetables to trade for sheep, lamb meat, or jewelry. The pair would leave early in the morning on Old Route 66 (now NM 6), heading south to Los Lunas and then west to Laguna. They first stopped at Suwanee, which had a trading post where a number of Pueblo Indians who worked for the railroad lived.

The father and son usually camped overnight around Mesa Redonda, and on the second day would go on to Mesita, Old Laguna, and other Laguna villages. Francisco Lucero had friends in Laguna and they usually spent the night there. A network of friends

and acquaintances often provided crucial help and hospitality, which made the long journey possible. On one occasion a friend let Francisco borrow a horse to continue on his trading journey as his horse's hoof was injured. Typically, on the third day of the trip they would travel to the villages of Seama, Acoma, Acomita, McCarty's, and Cubero. At Cubero, they typically ran out of items to trade or sell and began their journey home.

Joe and Francisco Lucero made such wagon trips on a regular basis for business and ceremonies such as the Laguna Feast Day, held annually on September 19. Many at Isleta Pueblo remember that in some years a truck took people and their trade goods from Isleta to Laguna for the feast day celebrations, which lasted several days. (M. G. Lucero 2009; R. Lucero 2009).

*Isleta Pueblo c. 1890. Cobbs Photo Studio. William A. Keleher Collection. Courtesy of the Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, UNM, (PICT 000-742).*







In 1933, Francisco Lucero bought a used Ford Model T and he extended his trading trips with his son along Route 66, typically to places as far away as Gallup (Lucero and Lucero 2008). Another interviewee recounted that after her family purchased their first car, they began traveling to Sandia, San Felipe, and Santo Domingo pueblos to trade (Zuni, Jiron, and Lucero 2009).

Many of those interviewed at Isleta remember travelling Route 66 to the Gallup Inter-tribal Indian Ceremonial. This event, which continues to today, has been held annually since 1922

and draws Native Americans from many places to enjoy the events as well as to trade. Cecelia Lucero recounted: “I was born in 1930. Our parents took us to the Gallup ceremonies; there they would trade their melons, chile, corn, and bread. There was an old site by the train depot where everyone camped” (2009). Another interviewee, Lupita Jiron remembered “Back then bread was 25 cents a loaf; we’d trade mutton and jewelry with the Navajos, pottery with the Acomas and even the Plain’s Indians would come. They would have a parade, rodeo, and a pow-wow at night” (2009).





*Isleta Plaza during St. Augustine's Feast Day celebration in the late 1930s. Courtesy of Stella Jojola.*

## Isleta Feast Day

The Isleta feast days on August 28 and September 4 have historically drawn outsiders to the pueblo to trade their goods for Isleta produce. The Isleta community was known for its corn, tobacco, chiles, wheat, fruits, and wine. People from Laguna Pueblo and the Cañoncito Navajo reservation (To'hajiilee) brought their sheep and traded mutton or shared with the families they visited. One interviewee recollected how a particular Navajo family used to bring a sheep every year for her mother to prepare during the feast. The Isleta feast, like many pueblo feast-day celebrations, is open to the public and Spanish and Anglo families from all of the neighboring towns attend.



*Detail of photo by Mrs. H. U. Silleck, Isleta Pueblo, c.1936-38. Courtesy of the National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution, (P26385).*

## Tourism

Railroad promoters, and other entrepreneurs, encouraged tourism in New Mexico since the late 1800s. Isleta's close proximity to Albuquerque, picturesque setting, and location along both the railroad and highways such as Route 66 made it a destination frequented by tourists. Motor tourists visited the community via Route 66 as early as the 1920s.





*Harvey Indian Detour car at Isleta Pueblo, c. 1928. Edward Kemp. Courtesy of the Palace of the Governors Photo Archives (NMHM/DCA), 046926.*

In the early 1930s, the Fred Harvey Indian Detours began bringing visitors to Isleta Pueblo (Thomas 1978:292–293). M. Guadalupe Lucero remembered that for a about 10 years—throughout the 1930s—tourists would arrive in buses to tour the pueblo and then board trains at the Isleta Depot for their return trip. Visitors had time to see the plaza and buy wares from local vendors. As a youth she remembers selling to these tourists (2009).

*Harvey Car Indian Detour c. 1931. Courtesy the Autry Center of the American West, Los Angeles; 95.144.1. Inside the brochure reads: “Isleta, one of the largest of those century-old inhabited Indian Pueblos that dot the Rio Grande Valley, is not passed until 3.18 p.m. In this interval—between arrival of the train at Albuquerque and its departure from Isleta—the Isleta Detour will give you an agreeable break in the journey.” The brochure continues: “The ensuing 25-minute drive slips out of the city, across the Rio Grande, down the irrigated valley and ends 13 miles away in the ‘dobe-lined heart of Isleta, with its 1,100 Indians. Here there is a quarter-hour stroll about—around the brown plaza that Coronado’s men first saw nearly 400 years ago, into the quaint old mission church, among the picture-puzzle streets and time-forgetting Indian homes.*

Many interviewees recall selling wares to tourists on the plaza, which was situated directly on the early highway alignment for a number of years. In addition, some people converted spaces in front of, or inside, their homes, into stores. Marie Chiwiwi, one

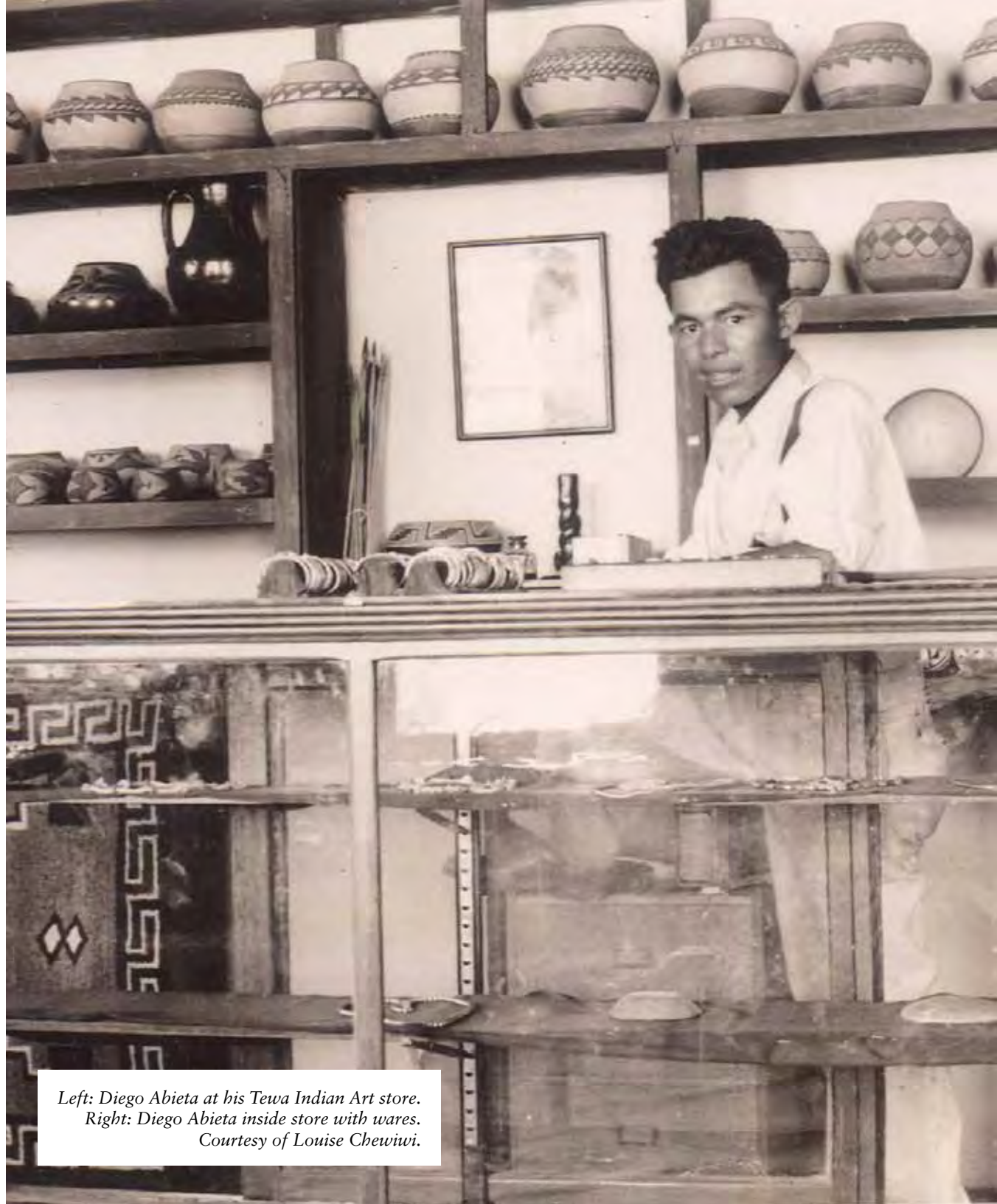
of Isleta’s most famous potters of the twentieth century, ran a store in front of her house at the south end of the plaza for many years. Some stores carried goods needed by the local population, as well as items catering to the tourist trade (Isleta Cultural Affairs Committee 2008).



## Commerce

Some of the first formal businesses at Isleta were general merchandise stores that served as centers of commerce and exchange. Oral history interviews with Isleta elders date the first stores to at least the late 1800s.

Tewa (Tiwa) Indian Art owned by Diego Abeita, pictured here inside and outside of his store, sold many locally produced as well as regionally traded Native American wares. Abeita also partnered with August Sais, Sr. to open Tewa (Tiwa) Weavers in the 1930s. It was located just north of the AT&SF railroad crossing on Route 66, to the north of the village. Tewa Weavers made numerous products including black-and-white *mantas*, moccasins, and neckties, which were sold to community members and tourists. They also made Pueblo Indian dolls as well as dolls that were dressed in Plains Indian-style buckskins. Many interviewees commented that the dolls accurately portrayed the cultures they were representing.



*Left: Diego Abeita at his Tewa Indian Art store.  
Right: Diego Abeita inside store with wares.  
Courtesy of Louise Chewiwi.*

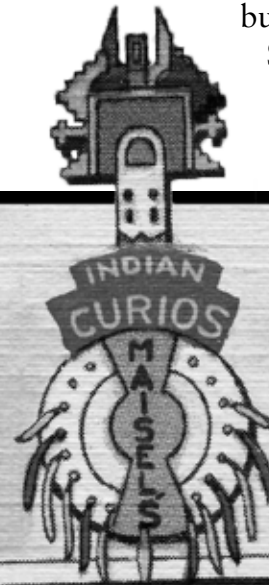


Abeita's store grew to employ more than 20 people from the local area as weavers, embroiderers, and sales clerks. Large-scale weaving production on stand-up floor harness looms was on display to visitors at the store. Other jobs in the company were related to the



*Tewa Weavers shop employees. Courtesy of Loiose Chewiwi.*

Tewa Weaver's successful line of embroidered neckties featuring Isleta designs. M. Guadalupe Lucero recalled how she started working with Tewa Weavers in the late 1930s at the age of 16, ironing ties for a dollar per day. Tewa Weavers also hired many community members to complete piecework, such as the popular embroidered neckties. This successful business eventually relocated to South Fourth Street in Albuquerque where it operated until the 1970s.



*Maisel's Trading Post in Albuquerque employed a number of Native Americans, including Isletans, as jewelers and other artisans, many who would demonstrate their skills. Postcard courtesy of Paul and Kathleen Nickens.*





## The Patricio Olguin Store

In the late 1920s Patricio Olguin built a new store north of the village along the historic Route 66 just south of the railroad crossing. The store and the train depot were two of the stops used by commercial bus lines at the pueblo. There was a large sign above the store that read: "Hand Made Indian Jewelry and Curios P. R. Olguin." The store featured Patricio's handmade jewelry, as well as ceramics, weavings and other curios from Isleta and other tribes. The store also featured a glass globe gas pump. Patricio also sold

fresh seasonal produce like chile, corn, melons, tomatoes, orchard fruit and honey sold in tins for a dime harvested from bees he kept.

Patricio Olguin also owned the only mill in the village and most people from Isleta went there to have their corn and wheat ground. The mill used an old truck engine with a crank assist to power the grind stone.

*Above: Patricio and Isabel Olguin in front of their store c. mid-1930s.  
Courtesy of the family. Below: The building in 2009.*





## Changes in Street Vending over the Years

As recounted by M. Guadalupe Lujan Lucero.

M. Guadalupe (Lupita) Lujan Lucero was born in 1923. She first remembered going to Albuquerque with her mother, Rufina, to sell their ceramics and curios in front of the Alvarado Hotel at the age of seven. Her father would take them in his wagon. Once they reached Albuquerque they would stay with her grandmother, Dominica, for up to a week. Lupita recalled making pottery, bread and beaded figures to sell at the Alvarado Hotel. During World War II she sold items to soldiers being transported across county by train.

Lupita's grandmother, Dominica, lived in a little cottage near the train depot. A number of other Native Americans also lived in the same neighborhood. Lupita remembered one of her grandmother's neighbors, a man from Sandia, who sold bow and arrows sets and small pottery pieces.

After many years of employment at Tewa Weavers, Chief Weavers, Maisel's Trading Post and the Isleta Head Start Program, Lupita began selling goods in Albuquerque during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Lupita and her daughter Stephanie sold fresh bread door to door. Soon they started vending in Old Town in front of La Hacienda and the Rattlesnake Museum. At first, they had good luck in Old Town but soon too many people were selling similar products. The city of Albuquerque decided to issue permits to vendors in the plaza. When it became too crowded city officials ran a daily lottery for a select number of places on the square. In the late 1980's Lupita and her sister moved to the Amtrak station, near where the Alvarado once stood and she continued to sell to tourists as she had as a child on Historic Route 66.

*M. Guadalupe Lucero as a child, top-right, Rufina Lucero Lujan with daughter Judy to far left. Courtesy of M. Guadalupe Lucero.*





# Route 66 & Laguna Pueblo

## The History of Route 66 and the Pueblo of Laguna

Laguna Pueblo, is situated along the Rio San Jose. Over time the community has grown into six official villages: Laguna, Pagate, Encinal, Mesita, Seama, and Paraje (Cheromiah 2004; Nickens and Nickens 2008). Laguna Pueblo's location near major trails and natural travel corridors has impacted the community over its entire history. For centuries, the Rio San Jose and Rio Puerco drainages were traditional pathways between the Rio Grande Pueblos and the Western Pueblos of Acoma, Zuni, and Hopi (Marshall and Marshall 2003). During the American period, Beale's Wagon Road and the Albuquerque-Wingate Wagon Road also ran through Laguna lands.

In 1880, railroad entrepreneurs were eager to expand rail lines through Laguna lands because of its ideal topography. The Laguna tribe negotiated an agreement with the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad Company, allowing tracks to be built through Laguna lands provided tribal members were hired for railroad jobs. The arrangement was known locally as "Watering the Flower of Friendship" (Peters 1994). The railroad tracks were constructed along the west side of the Rio San Jose near the village of Laguna. The railroad brought many economic changes to the community including access to new goods and wage labor. As the community's interaction with the railroad deepened, the local subsistence and barter systems began incorporating a cash economy (Peters 1994, 1998).

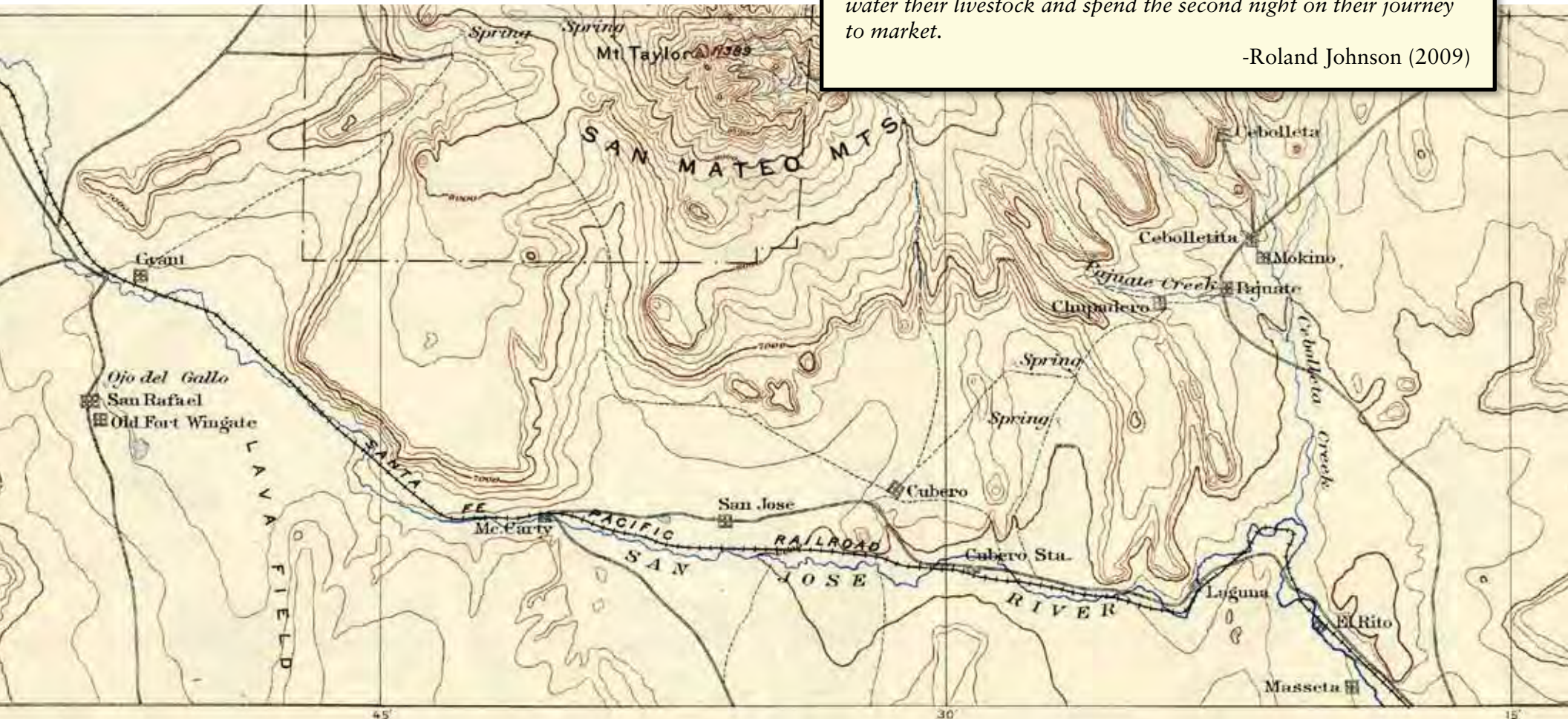
*Street scene along Old U.S. Highway 66  
at Laguna Pueblo, c. 1930.  
Courtesy of Ron Fernandez.*





As the relationship between the pueblo and the railroad matured, a number of satellite Laguna communities were established along the Santa Fe rail lines. These communities, known as “Laguna colonies,” were founded in Winslow, Arizona; Gallup, New Mexico; as well as Barstow and Richmond, California. The tribal government sanctioned these settlements as satellite villages (Peters 1994, 1998). According to interviewees, many families had relatives employed by the railroad and living in the colonies. They traveled via the Santa Fe lines to and from the various communities to visit family and participate in ceremonies (Johnson 2009; Mooney 2009). In later years people utilized buses and personal vehicles on Route 66 for the same purposes.

*Detail of 1883 USGS Map showing trails and the railroad at Laguna and Acoma.  
Courtesy of Maps and Geographic Information Center (MAGIC), UNM.*



*It's interesting that the alignment of Route 66 and subsequently Interstate Highway 40 really follows the route that was taken by our forefathers, who of course raised livestock, sheep and cattle, primarily. Oftentimes when they would bring their livestock to market, the place where they would bring their livestock would be to the stockyards in Albuquerque. And there were a couple of stopping points along the way. The first night's stopping point or resting area was at a spring located to the north of what was known as the Red Top Service Station. It's an old building or structure that still stands to this day... My grandfather was good friends with the owners of the property, so whenever we came to Albuquerque, we always stopped there to gas up and buy snacks and what have you... The second night's rest stop was at Rio Puerco. After crossing the Rio Puerco Wash, there's a black mesa just to the east of there. Right at the base of that mesa, there was another spring or seepage of water, and that's where they would water their livestock and spend the second night on their journey to market.*

-Roland Johnson (2009)



## Route 66 at Laguna

The Pueblo of Laguna's setting along busy transportation routes necessitated that the community leadership react and adjust quickly to outside influences. The Pueblo of Laguna found ways to take advantage of the changes brought by the railroad, such as the "Watering the Flower of Friendship" agreement. However, sometimes change was forced on the tribe. During the early 1900s the US government passed a law permitting the condemnation of Pueblo lands for public purposes, such as rights-of-way, which undermined tribal sovereignty (Johnson 2009; Mooney 2009). This law gave federal and state governments authority to improve or construct roads through Laguna lands without tribal consent. Roland Johnson recounted, "Back in those days, the state highway department had the habit of just basically coming onto tribal lands without notifying the tribal government, and doing surveying and what have you. And before you knew it, they were asking to come meet with the council to seek and obtain a grant of right-of-way" (2009). Through the concerted effort of the Pueblos, the law as repealed in 1975 (Johnson 2010).

The first Route 66 alignment (1926) used part of the original railroad bed near the village of Laguna. The road increased traffic near the village, endangered community members, disturbed ceremonies, and increased dust and noise. The Pueblo leadership successfully petitioned to have







the road be moved away from the village because of the negative impacts on community life (Mooney 2009; Pino 2009). The road was realigned north of the village in the 1920s. Although tribal authorities had no control over the development of highways through their lands, they did influence some roadway alignments.

In addition to roads and highways built on Laguna lands, a number of bridges were constructed over the Rio San Jose to facilitate Route 66 traffic. Wood was a common construction material for these early bridges. Interviewees discussed how auto accidents sometimes caused the bridges to catch fire. Bridge fires obstructed Route 66 traffic and caused delays. Eventually, concrete structures replaced the wooden bridges (Fernandez 2009).

Over the years, a number of accidents occurred on the Rio San Jose bridge near the village of Laguna.

*In the early 1950s... We heard a dull "boom-boom" so I stopped and opened the back door and looked out, and I heard something real strange, and then I saw fire.... A big truck had wrecked, hit the bridge and set it on fire. You know, we had a wooden bridge, and the bridge burned down, and of course that stopped all the east-west traffic for, I think it was stopped maybe for 24 to 30 hours... That was quite a night, because traffic was heavy in the '50s, but nothing like it is today. I mean, today it would be a total disaster, they'd be backed up from here to Gallup. They'd have a hundred-mile backup.*

-Lee Marmon (2009)



Above: Lee Marmon's photo of a fire on the Route 66 Rio San Jose bridge near the village of Laguna, c. 1950s. Courtesy of the Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, UNM.  
Left Photos: Rio San Jose bridge construction, c. 1930s. Courtesy of Ron Fernandez.





*Detail of Hill Top Trading Post, west of Albuquerque, c. 1950s. Postcard courtesy of Johnnie Meier.*

## Memories along Route 66

*My earliest recollection of traveling Route 66 was as a very young child... I have vivid memories of seeing Albuquerque off in the distance as we would approach the crest of Nine-Mile Hill.*

-Roland Johnson (2009)

Discussing the history of Route 66 evokes many unique memories for people at Laguna. Some recollections extend back to the famous highway's initial development, including memories of daily life, special events, and historic national changes. One interviewee recalled attending the parish school in the neighboring town of San Fidel. Each day, traffic guards stopped motorists so the school children could safely cross the highway to attend church services. The interviewee also recalled a number of restaurants lining both sides of the highway, but for safety reasons the students could only go to the ones on the same side of the road as the school.

Traveling to other communities was also a memorable part of the Route 66 experience. Interviewees recalled traveling by horseback, wagon, bus and, in later years, by car to other tribal communities and larger urban centers such as Gallup and Albuquerque, especially after the completion of the Laguna Cutoff in 1937. One interviewee remembered a specific

trip to Albuquerque because he had his picture taken wearing a cowboy hat near Nine Mile Hill.

Although the road facilitated travel, residents took trips only when necessary. Various interviewees remembered traveling with their families to Santo Domingo, Sandia, Santa Ana, San Felipe, Zia, Jemez, and Isleta to trade. Each Pueblo had its specialties in both art and agriculture. People from Laguna brought out their pottery and mutton. They also sold or traded squash and pumpkins for alfalfa, wheat, straw, corn, chiles, and fruit. Tribes also traded eagle, hawk, turkey, and other feathers for use in dances and ceremonies (Mooney 2009; Pino 2009).



*I can remember the guys running, because they had white shorts, and they had a number on their back, and they were running across, and there were some people out here selling lemonade at stands and many people were around here waiting for them to run through.*

-Lee Marmon (2009)



*C.C. Pyle Race at Laguna Pueblo, 1928. Courtesy of Ron Fernandez.*

In addition to memories from daily life, participants discussed special events involving Route 66. One event in particular was the C.C. Pyle Marathon, which began in Los Angeles and ended in New York. On March 26, 1928 the marathon arrived at Laguna Pueblo where the racers spent the night. The next day the runners continued east another 48 miles to Los Lunas (Williams 2007).

The cross-country race was a unique sports promotion that lured in participants with a cash prize of \$50,000. Andrew Payne, a young Cherokee man from Oklahoma, won the race.

Shortly after the Pyle Marathon, the nation plunged into the Great Depression. Route 66 became one of the main arteries used by the many farm families displaced from the Dust bowl as they headed for California looking for a better life. For Native American

communities along Route 66, the period marked a time of increased traffic by outsiders traveling the highway, many of whom were short on luck.

Native American communities in New Mexico experienced the Great Depression differently than migrants for two distinct reasons. First, conditions of extreme poverty existed in many Native American communities before the depression began, so the

*Old Laguna Pouring Span Overpass Sta., 33.33. Federal Lands Highway Program 2-A, 1932. Courtesy of NMSRCA, Item 76662 (top photo), Item 76654 (bottom photo).*





economic situation did not change greatly. Secondly, many community members were able to continue providing for their families because they had land for farming and raising livestock. In addition to traditional agriculture, some local people were able to work on government-funded projects. In particular, community members worked on highway projects improving and constructing new sections of Route 66.

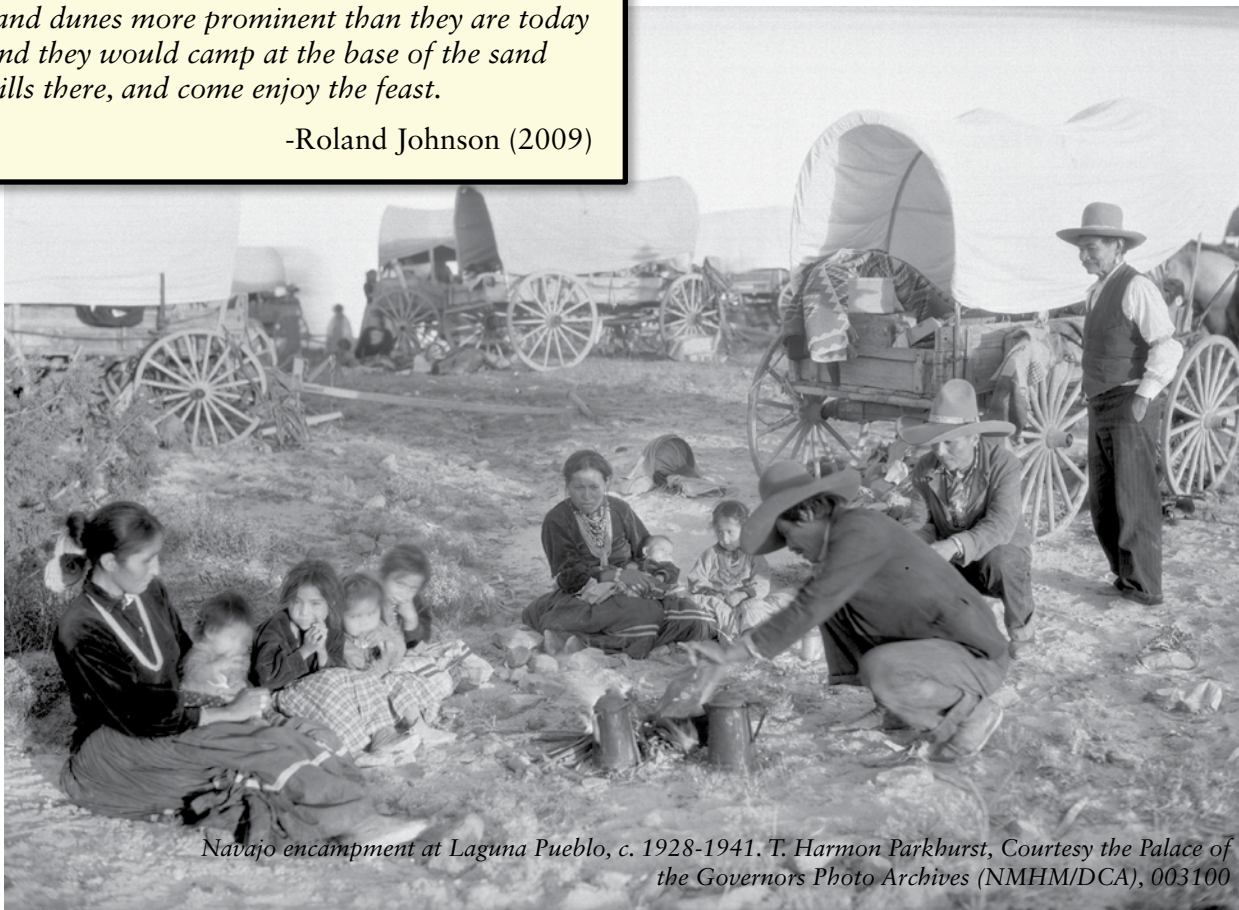
Although the Great Depression lasted over a decade, important tribal events continued without interruption, especially the Laguna Feast Day. The Laguna Feast Day is held every September 19 and is one of the largest in the state. In particular, many interviewees recalled that during the Route 66 era visitors from other communities arrived a few days before the feast day to trade, sell and socialize. Many Native American families traveled by wagon and set up camp outside the village of Laguna. The camps grew as more and more people poured in for the

*Back as a child, the primary mode of travel for most of the Indian visitors to the feast was in wagons, particularly the Navajos. They would arrive by wagon trains several days in advance of the feast and camp to the south and east of Old Laguna, along the sand hills. There were sand dunes more prominent than they are today and they would camp at the base of the sand hills there, and come enjoy the feast.*

-Roland Johnson (2009)

*During the Dust Bowl times and the Depression, we had a campground out here. There were cabins. The regular cabins used to rent for \$1.25 a night, and the deluxe was \$1.50 a night. We had a lot of the people from Texas and Oklahoma and back east, Kansas, that were headed west to California, because of the drought.. And if you've ever seen that movie, "The Grapes of Wrath," it was exactly like that. And they'd stop here, and some would be completely out of food and money, and they'd have three, four, or five kids, and the dog and the grandma and the grandpa. So what local people would do, they would give 'em enough money to get from here to Grants. When they got to Grants, people in Grants would help 'em, they'd get to Gallup, and on the way 'til they got to California. Things were in pretty bad shape. So we saw a lot of people headed west during the Depression era.*

-Lee Marmon (2009)



*Navajo encampment at Laguna Pueblo, c. 1928-1941. T. Harmon Parkhurst, Courtesy the Palace of the Governors Photo Archives (NMHM/DCA), 003100*

celebration. One interviewee reported that it was common for a few hundred wagons to be camped in the area.

Navajos came from Alamo, Canonicito (To'Hajiilee) and points west such as Prewitt, Crownpoint, and even Arizona. They brought mutton, Navajo weavings, and jewelry. Many Pueblo families came with fresh crops, pottery, jewelry, and other handmade wares. The event offered the opportunity to trade various goods with other Indians, and to sell to the local trading posts.



## Trade and Tourism Along Route 66

*[Route 66] helped a great deal. The guys from Isleta could take a little pickup load of produce and come up here and trade for sheep, or vice versa, or things like that. It opened up a lot of traffic for trading.*

-Lee Marmon 2009

The mechanisms for trade at Laguna shifted and changed with the times. Intertribal trade was common before the Spanish period, and goods were exchanged across hundreds of miles. During the Spanish period trade continued between tribes, and extended into Spanish settlements and missions. During the American period, exchange was facilitated by trading posts (Cheromiah 2004; Mooney 2009).

Trading posts were a place of both economic and social exchange between Native American communities and mainstream America. Technology, merchandise and even ideas were found at the trading post (Kammer 1993). The Pueblo of Laguna has a long history of trading posts and nearby military forts, where goods were exchanged and purchased. An outpost existed at Cubero since at least the mid-1800s (Cheromiah 2004).

During the 1870s, the Marmon brothers (Walter and Robert), the Gunn brothers (John and Kenneth), and George H. Pratt settled at Laguna. They established



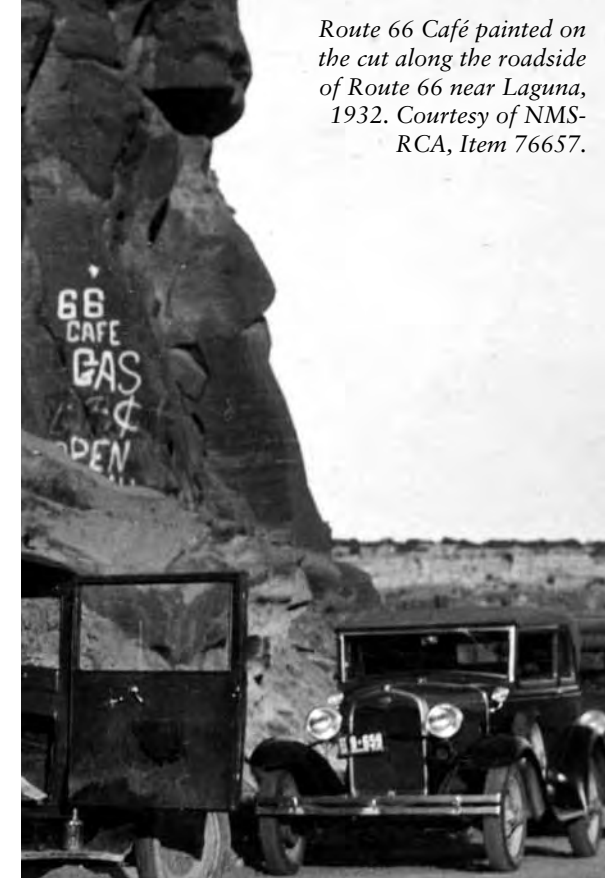
*Inside Laguna Trading Post, c. 1920s.  
Courtesy of Ron Fernandez.*



*"Pueblo Indians" selling pottery near McCartys, 1941. New Mexico Dept. of Tourism photograph collection 1987-066. Courtesy of NMSRCA, Item 007361.*



*Route 66 Café painted on the cut along the roadside of Route 66 near Laguna, 1932. Courtesy of NMSRCA, Item 76657.*

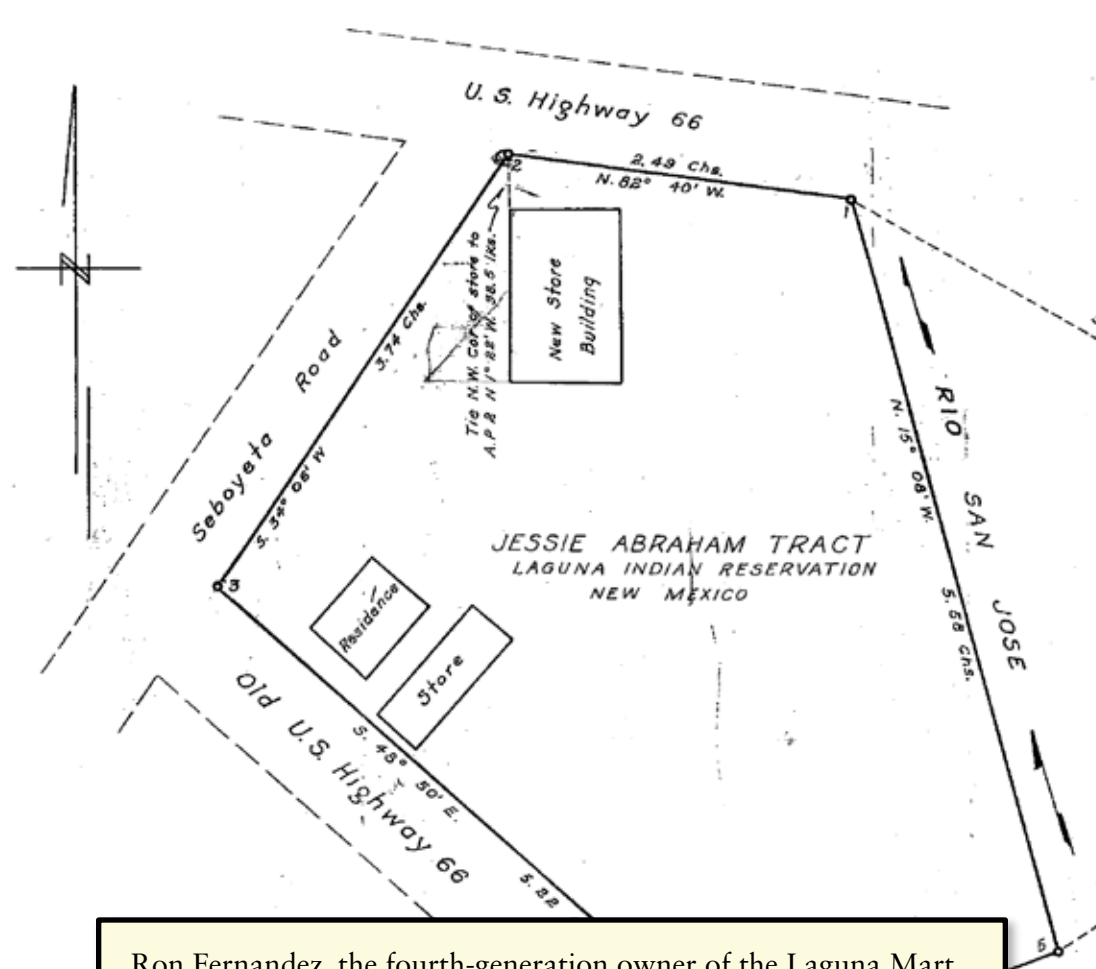


trading and milling operations which lasted for decades. Some of these traders married Laguna women and became active members of the community. Descendants of the Gunn and Marmon families continued to be involved in trading during the Route 66 era.

Laguna has one of the longest continuous corridors of Route 66 on Native American lands. The establishment of Route 66 increased trade and tourism, and shifted some of the economic activity away from the trading posts. The road runs west from the Rio Puerco and passes by the settlements of Mesita, Laguna, New Laguna, Paraje, and Casa Blanca. This lengthy corridor of Route 66 allowed for many travel-related business opportunities. Route 66 increased the volume of economic exchange in the community and further promoted the integration of a cash-based market within the local economy. As traffic along the road increased, Laguna community members began to sell or trade items at roadside stands through Laguna lands and onto adjoining lands to the east and west.

Community members built shade structures and sold their pottery, beaded work, and other curios to tourists. They also supplied bread, pies, tamales, and seasonal produce such as fruit, cucumbers, chiles, corn and squash. Lee Marmon described roadside selling: "The women put up these little wikiups and would sell pottery... And then they'd try to sell them bread or corn or things of that sort" (2009). Cash was not the only way of doing business; barter also occurred. Local people traded tourists for items uncommon in tribal communities such as non-native jewelry (Mooney 2009).





Ron Fernandez, the fourth-generation owner of the Laguna Mart, operated the business until the 1990s.

*My mother and father had the family-owned grocery store—at that time it was known as Laguna Trading Post on Route 66. The house was right behind the store property that my great-great-grandfather had acquired from the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad in the nineteenth century. My mom and dad were third-generation owner-operators of the family mercantile business that was started by Kenneth Gunn in the 18[00]s... So when my father and my mother took over Laguna Trading Post, my dad was very motivated to depart from the old type of behind-the-counter operation. He moved a lot of the merchandise out on the floor, where people could help themselves. He was very progressive, not necessarily for his time, but for Indian trading.*

-Ron Fernandez (2009)



From top to bottom:  
Gunn Brothers (Laguna) Trading Post, c. 1890s.  
Laguna Trading Post, c. 1920s.  
Laguna Mart, c. 1950s.

Left: Map showing approximate locations of Laguna Trading Post and Laguna Mart.

All images courtesy of Ron Fernandez.





*Ben Pacheco, long-time employee at Laguna Mart, 1961.  
Courtesy of Ron Fernandez.*

In addition to trading posts and roadside commerce, gas stations, garages, convenience stores, and motels emerged as permanent businesses which were owned by both tribal members and non-tribal members. “One of my uncles... had a little store and service station right at the top of the hill at Old Laguna, on the north end of Old Laguna. He operated a little place of business there, and that’s how he supported his family” (Johnson 2009). Another Laguna family owned and operated a mechanic shop that serviced vehicles that broke down along Route 66. Laguna Mart, a trading post turned convenience store, offered long-term employment for residents (Fernandez 2009). These businesses provided important income to many families.

## Post World War II and Change Along Route 66

*When the railroad and the highway first came through, our people were farmers, but also raised livestock, sheep, and cattle. And so that’s how people supported themselves. With the coming of the railroad and the highway, then they began to see that there was another way to support families, and that was by earning a wage, and so a lot of our people went to work for the railroad company and some went to work for the highway department. Others established small businesses.*

-Roland Johnson (2009)



*Laguna Mart, in the last decade of its operation, bought tons of wool from local communities. The wool is shown being loaded onto Semi-trailers in 1984 (bottom) and 1991 (top). Photos courtesy of Ron Fernandez.*



Laguna, like many pueblos, had a strong and self-supporting agricultural system well into the twentieth century. However, after World War II farming and sheep herding started to decline, although some families continue agricultural traditions today. Route 66 and Interstate 40 complicated farming and livestock production. One interviewee recounts that his family, in the 1950s, crossed Route 66 twice a year to take the sheep to and from summer pastures in the foothills of Mt. Taylor (Pino 2009). In later years when traffic was heavier, especially after construction of Interstate 40, they had to use the few available underpasses. Farmers also encountered similar problems. Interstate 40 divided their fields and limited access to traditional farming areas. Agricultural practices were also impacted by the post-World War II increase in local wage labor jobs, because community members with full-time positions had less time to tend to their fields and livestock.

*After Highway 66 was enlarged in 1954, the trucking lines really became effective. That was the start of seeing a change in transportation. The transition occurred almost overnight, with the trucks coming. You started getting delivery by Coca-Cola. You started seeing the route men show up...I would say after the widening of Route 66, transportation increased drastically. Freight transportation—converted from train to trucking.*

-Ron Fernandez (2009)

In particular, mining operations had the largest impact on socio-economic on life at Laguna. The Jack Pile Uranium mine, about 10 miles north of historic Route 66, was once the largest open pit uranium mine in North America. The mine employed hundreds of workers, many from Laguna, Acoma, and neighboring communities. The influx of consistent wage jobs gave community members enough income to purchase automobiles and vehicle ownership became commonplace in the community (Fernandez 2009; Mooney 2009).

With more automobiles available, the Laguna people moved farther from their local communities to seek employment. They found jobs in Albuquerque, Grants, and Gallup and at mines throughout the region. In addition, community members worked seasonally at the large farms in the area including the “Carrot Patch” in the Milan area that grew carrots, lettuce, peas and other cool- and warm-season crops (Mooney 2009).



Left: Route 66 crossing Rio San Jose Bridge, c. mid-1930s. Courtesy of Ron Fernandez.  
Right: Historic Route 66 today as a divided highway similar to the post-1954 lane road.



## The End of an Era

The opening of the Interstate increased traffic through Laguna lands but fewer travelers stopped at the Pueblo. Along the bypassed Route 66, many of the shops and gas stations closed. Especially hard hit were the small, locally owned businesses and the roadside vendors (Fernandez 2009; Johnson 2009; Mooney 2009; Pino 2009). The design and construction of the new Interstate through Laguna lands increased tension between the Pueblo and the New Mexico State Highway Department.

Initially, Interstate 40 negatively impacted the small businesses along Route 66. New Mexico tribes, however, responded by creating new businesses, such as convenience centers and casino complexes, that addressed the changing needs of motorists. Today Laguna Pueblo owns two casinos and multiple service stations along Interstate 40. Drawing on the historic highway's popular cultural importance, the Pueblo named its flagship enterprise, *Route 66 Casino*.

In presenting the history of Route 66 and American Indians in New Mexico, one theme clearly emerges. Native American people in the state have a remarkable ability to adapt to changes to ensure their cultural survival and the well-being of their communities.



*Budville Trading Company, Budville, NM, 2009.*

1962 New Mexico State Highway Map showing Route 66 as a divided highway. Courtesy of Maps and Geographic Information Center (MAGIC), UNM.



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Courtesy of Ron Fernandez.*