

FALL/WINTER 2023

The Correspondent

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE KIT CARSON HOUSE NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK



Carson House circa 1920 by Edith Evelyn Cheetham (1870-1955)

Collection of Kit Carson House

Edith Cheetham moved to Taos in 1911 with her husband Frank Cheetham. Frank Cheetham, a lawyer and a Mason, was instrumental in helping Bent Lodge #42 with the purchase and reconstruction of the house during the years 1911-1917. After the reconstruction, the Cheethams rented the house from the Lodge from 1917-1928. During that time Edith became known for her paintings which Mabel Dodge Luhan called "small intimate scenes of this neighborhood." The decorative parapet, not seen in early pictures of the Carson House, was added to the facade of the house during its reconstruction years.

National Park Service Team Provides Consultation

Architects from the National Park Service (NPS) Heritage Partnerships Regional Office visited the Kit Carson House (KCH) in August. The Heritage Partnerships Program provides technical support to designated historic sites such as National Historic Landmarks (KCH was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1963). The NPS Team confirmed the urgency of the project as documented in the Condition Assessment and Preservation Plan (CAPP) Report, submitted by Conron & Woods Architects in 2022. The NPS Architects emphasized drainage and water infiltration issues which have helped create the current situation, as well as challenges due to proximity of the structure to the property lines. The NPS is preparing a full written report. Participating in the site visit were Roy Woods and Laura Chancellor of Conron & Woods Architects, Karla McWilliams, Historian and Grants Coordinator with the NM Historic Preservation Department, also Bob Romero, Taos County Commissioner and representatives of Kit Carson House, Inc. KCH expects to work closely with NPS as we proceed with the vital work of restoration.



From left to right: Karla McWilliams, John Olson & Evan Oskierko-Jezmacki, Bob Romero & Roy Woods inspect the KCH courtyard.

President's Message

Season's Greetings and welcome to our Fall/Winter newsletter. We have had a very busy and productive period since our last newsletter and would like to share our progress with you.

The transfer of ownership of the Kit Carson House (KCH) historic site to the non-profit is proceeding. The process has required a new appraisal and survey. Legal work continues to ensure a clear title to the property with the upcoming transfer of title.



Martin Jagers

Board Member Justin Lenhart has been working with Cam and Julia of Leighton Moon Revitalization Specialists to develop a new logo and they are beginning a redesign of the website. Please be on the lookout for our new website.

Architects from the Heritage Partnerships Program of the National Park Service

visited the site in August and confirmed the dire condition of the adobe structures. They provided guidance and will supply a formal written report soon.

Appraisal of the collection is also underway with Julia McTague Appraisers. This appraisal is necessary for insurance and tax purposes upon transfer of the property.

KCH is happy to welcome Madisyn Rostro, UNM Museum Studies grad student, who will continue work on documenting the collection and support the appraisal effort.

KCH was awarded an Impact Grant for Core Operational Support this summer by the Taos Community Foundation in the amount of \$2K. This helps the cause!

In October we participated in the Harwood event *Envisioning the Future of Taos' Museums*. It was a privilege to be included on the museum panel discussion. We are grateful to the Harwood and look forward to many more Taos museum collaborations.

We have recruited two new board members to be installed when the property transfer is completed. Taos County Commissioner Bob Romero and Philanthropist Stephanie Bennett Smith have already begun working with us and will be sworn in as board members when the transfer of ownership is complete.

We hope you will join us on Saturday Dec 16th from 3:00-6:30 for the annual Kit Carson Road Holiday Celebration. Museums and galleries will be open and free to the public. Barbara Schultz will be on site to sign *Josefa* the book she wrote for KCH about Carson's wife. Please stop by for cookies and warm cider.

We continue to seek donations to preserve our beloved National Historic Landmark - please be generous!

Best Wishes for a happy and healthy Holiday Season!

MJ

Fall 2023

Intern Madisyn Rostro

This fall we welcomed our new intern, Madisyn Rostro to KCH. As an undergraduate, Madisyn attended Iowa State University where she obtained a bachelor's degree in history and anthropology. Currently she is attending UNM where she is pursuing an MA in museum studies. During her schooling she worked as a graduate assistant with the Hibben Fellow @ Maxwell Museum of Anthropology and as a research assistant at Chaco Cultural National Historical Park where she gained experience with museum collections and records. She continues that work here at KCH helping to create a central catalogue system for our collection. She plans to remain in New Mexico after graduation in the spring and hopes to find employment in New Mexico as a museum custodian of collections.



Madisyn Rostro discussing museum protocols with KCH board member Justin Lenhart

HELP the HOUSE



Graphic projection for the future look of the KCH courtyard by Conron & Woods

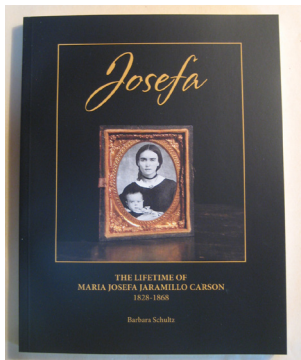
The rehabilitation of KCH will begin in the courtyard where architects have stressed that drainage is crucial. The courtyard will be graded away from the adobe structures so that moisture is directed toward a drainage system. Because moisture is the enemy of adobe, this is an important first step in protecting and preserving the buildings. As parts of the property are disturbed, there will be an archaeological review of any artifacts uncovered.

Dear Friends of the Kit Carson House: When Edith Cheetham painted the little picture of KCH, which is on our front page, the house had just undergone a restoration and change of ownership. Now, 100 years later, the house will, once again, undergo a restoration and change of ownership, and we need your help to ensure this national treasure lasts another 100 years. Please help us preserve the Kit Carson House National Historic Landmark which is one of the most popular sites for visitors to Taos each year. The adobe building gives the visitor a window into 19th Century life in Northern New Mexico and offers an intimate connection with a significant figure in American history. Please remember KCH in your seasonal gifting. Every contribution, in any amount, provides crucial funding and helps us move forward. Thank You.

The Kit Carson House Shop

Shopping at a local museum store, helps with holiday purchases and also supports the museum. The Kit Carson House shop is open 11:00-4:00 daily during the same hours as the museum. It has many options which allow a buyer to select unique gifts and still stay in budget. Shoppers can choose from hand-made jewelry and crafts, cards, KCH souvenirs, and a wide selection of books dedicated to Carson and Southwest history. The all-time best selling book at the Carson shop is *Blood and Thunder* by Hampton

Sides. Museum Manager, Dave Cordova always has it stock. Another note-worthy book one might consider is *Josefa* by local writer, Barbara Schultz. Schultz wrote *Josefa* about Carson's third wife especially for KCH. Did I say tax-free? KCH is a non-profit corporation. Items sold in the shop are tax free. Happy Shopping!



Josefa The Lifetime of Maria Josefa Jaramillo Carson 1828-1868

DONATIONS

Always Needed
Always Appreciated
Always Tax-deductible

Please mail your donation in the enclosed envelope, or if you wish to donate electronically, go to kitcarsonhouse.org and click on the "donate" button on the upper left.

Thank you for your support of Kit Carson House National Historic Landmark.



The Kit Carson House
113 Kit Carson Road
Taos, NM 87571
575-758-4945
museum@kitcarsonhouse.org

Kit Carson House Inc.

The Kit Carson House, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization incorporated in the State of New Mexico and governed by a Board of Directors. The home of Kit and Josefa Carson has been owned by Bent Lodge #42 AF & AM since 1911.

113 Kit Carson Road, Taos, NM, 87571
575-758-4945
museum@kitcarsonhouse.org

Board of Directors

Martin Jagers, President
Harvey Yocum, Secretary
David C. Schultz, Treasurer
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Justin Lenhart, Director

Corporate Advisor

Elizabeth Crittenden Palacios

Museum Manager

Dave Cordova

Newsletter Editor

Barbara Schultz

National Historic Landmark plaque



Mission Statement

The mission of the corporation is to operate exclusively to protect, preserve and maintain the Kit Carson House, adjacent buildings and grounds as a designated National Historic Landmark; and to operate the museum therewith for public education and enjoyment.

The corporation will maintain and display the collection of historical artifacts to the public.

The focus of education is the life and times of Christopher "Kit" Carson, Scout, Mountain man, Union Army Officer, Freemason and Family man.