



THE BUGLE CALL

Quarterly Newsletter of the Fort Bayard

Historic Preservation Society

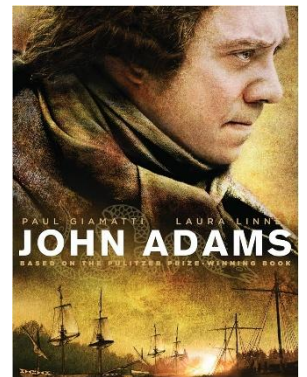
April 2026

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As everyone is aware by now, our nation turns 250 years old on July 4th of this year. To commemorate that important event, our organization is presenting a very special film series that will run every Thursday evening from May 14 through June 28. The centerpiece of the series will be the critically acclaimed PBS miniseries *John Adams* which is based on the award-winning biography written by historian David McCulloch. The series will be held at the Santa Clara Armory Building, across US 180 from the Village of Santa Clara (next to



Dollar General). Doors open at 6 p.m., with the program commencing at 6:30. The schedule is as follows:

May 14: (Double Feature) Episode 1: "Join or Die" from *John Adams* miniseries, plus *Johnny Tremain*, a Walt Disney production from the 1950s that tells the story of the outbreak of revolution from a teenager's viewpoint.

May 21: Episode 2: "Independence" from the *John Adams* Miniseries

May 28: *1776*, the story of our nation's beginning, told in the form of a Broadway musical.

June 4: *The Patriot* starring Mel Gibson, which examines the Revolution's bloody fighting in the American South.

June 11: (Double Feature) Episode 3: "Don't Tread on Me" and Episode 4: "Reunion" from *John Adams* miniseries.

June 18: (Double Feature) Episode 5: "Unite or Die" from *John Adams* miniseries plus *George Washington, The Man Who Wouldn't Be King*.

June 25: *A More Perfect Union*, which dramatizes the Constitutional Convention of 1787

As many of you know, I am a retired history professor, and one of my areas of expertise is the American Revolution. I will be presenting a short introduction to each of the films, and will provide more in-depth information in written form for anyone with an interest.



In these times of social and political upheaval, please join us for this retrospective on the events that set our great nation on its often-turbulent course. It is my personal hope that by better understanding those events, we might find clues to finding remedy for our modern challenges.

Doug Dinwiddie
President, FBHPS

FBHPS BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS 2026 - 2027

At our March meeting the following members were elected to new two-year terms on our Board of Directors:

John Baker

Cecilia Bell
Dr. John Bell
Dr. Dale Giese
Denise Singleton
Ansel Walters

The following Board members will be serving the second year of their terms:

Dave Chandler
Becky Dinwiddie
Dr. Doug Dinwiddie
Lorie Hildebrand
Ken Schuster

The Board then elected the following Board members as Officers for 2026-27:

Dr. Doug Dinwiddie, President
Cecilia Bell, Vice President
Denise Singleton, Secretary
Becky Dinwiddie, Treasurer
Dr. John Bell, Village Liaison

We wish to thank all of the members who participated in the election, and especially the individuals who consented to serve as board members and officers.

2026 GIVE GRANDLY APRIL 13 - 24

This year's Give Grandly in-person event will be happening on Saturday April 18, from 10 am – 2 pm at Gough Park in Silver City. We hope you will stop by and visit our booth in the park, but if you can't make it there, you can also donate securely online April 13 – 24 (www.givegrandly.org). We hope you will take this opportunity to support Fort Bayard by donating to FBHPS.



State funding has been sporadic at best, and federal funds are nonexistent. Give Grandly is our primary source of revenue each year. We need your help to support our mission to preserve and protect this treasured National Historic Landmark. Anything you can give is greatly appreciated!

3rd COMMUNITY MEETING ON FORT BAYARD REVITALIZATION PLAN

On April 1st the third and final public input meeting for the latest master plan for the future of Fort Bayard was presented by the consulting firm Stantec Engineering. Three options were presented, and included modifications reflecting public comment from the two previous input meetings. FBPHS was well represented in the audience as several board members and officers were in attendance. The Society officers were pleased to see that historic preservation is a top priority in all three options presented.

More information will be forthcoming soon, and after some needed troubleshooting on the firm's website is done, a link will be made available for the public to view the options in detail.

VOLUNTEER OF THE QUARTER

Ken Schuster

The Fort Bayard Historic Preservation Society is pleased to honor Kenneth Schuster as our Volunteer of the Quarter for this edition of the Bugle. Ken brings a wealth of experience to the organization, having recently retired to the area following a career in art and museum work. A native of Raton, New Mexico, Ken received his B.A. and M.A. degrees from WNMU. For four years he served as the Curator of the WNMU Museum, working with Doug Dinwiddie in getting the museum firmly established as part of the university and the community. In 1982 he was hired by the University of Wyoming Art Museum where, among many other duties, he operated the Art Mobile program, taking fine art to every corner of that state. He later became the Director of the Bradford Brinton Museum in Big Horn, Wyoming, a post he held for several decades. The Brinton is recognized as one of the leading western art museums in the world, a reputation that Ken and his wife Barbara enhanced during their lengthy tenure there.



Following their retirement, Ken, Barbara and their Airedale Thommi decided to make Grant County their home, and have become active in FBHPS. Ken was elected to our Board of Directors, and helps out with our archives, education and public programming, and is generally a very welcome addition to the group. He is also known for his sense of humor, and keeps all of us from ever taking ourselves too seriously! Thanks, Ken for all you do, and welcome home!

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Becky Dinwiddie, our volunteer archivist and collections manager, reports that recent acquisitions have built our research library to now include 1,368 books. Cataloguing of several important collections of Southwest historical documents is ongoing as well, including material related not only to the history of Fort Bayard, but to native Apache culture. At present, the collection is held at our leased space in the Santa Clara Armory, and plans are being discussed to transfer the resources to a location at historic Fort Bayard, once appropriate facilities are made ready. Anyone desiring to use our research collection may make an appointment by calling Becky at 970-222-5084.



THE FORT BAYARD STORY

Dr. John Bell is leading a project to collect oral histories of persons who worked and/or lived at Fort Bayard during the hospital era. We will publish one of these interviews in each issue of *The Bugle Call*. (Stories are edited for space and clarity.)

THE LOWE FAMILY

*As told to Dr. John Bell
(Story primarily related by Kathy Lowe Heidrick)*

Irene Hoey grew up in Jersey City, New Jersey. She became a Registered Nurse (RN) and was employed near her home. One of the physicians with whom she was associated moved to Indianapolis, Indiana. She and a few other nurses followed him and worked at Sunny Side Tuberculosis Sanatorium in Indianapolis, Indiana in the late 1940's.

Walter Lowe was a patient in the sanatorium for two or three years, suffering from tuberculosis. There is no knowledge of other members of his family having tuberculosis. He did have surgery, probably a thoracoplasty, which was frequently performed during that period. His left lower lung was collapsed or resected. He had scars over the area of the surgery but suffered no serious kyphoscoliosis, or facial twisting, which was common in some patients with thoracoplasties. Medication or antibiotics for tuberculosis were developed during this period, but it is unclear if Mr. Lowe received these drugs.

Walter and Irene developed an affection for each other while he was a patient at Sunny Side. On their first date Irene said she was amazed how much nicer he looked when in street clothes.

When Mr. Lowe was discharged from Sunny Side Sanatorium, his physician told Mr. Lowe that he could live wherever he liked but he probably would do better in the West. He and three other men headed west to Tuson, AZ. When they arrived in Deming one of the men wanted to visit a friend in Bayard, NM. They never went further west.

After Walter headed west, Irene returned to New Jersey. A year or two later Walter headed back East, and they were married in New Jersey, becoming Mr. and Mrs. Walter Lowe in 1952. He was 32 and she was 25.

Walter Lowe worked for the highway department at Gila for a time. He later worked at a company in Silver City that was contracted by the copper mine to build and repair radios. Irene Lowe worked at Hillcrest General Hospital for about 12 years. The family lived at Mangus Springs and Gila and the children attended school at Cliff.

Mrs. Lowe started working at Fort Bayard about 1964 when it was still a Veterans Hospital, but about a year later it closed as a VA hospital (it reopened later as a state hospital). The family was not residing at Fort Bayard during that period. All the people who were living at Fort Bayard had to leave. Most people working there were given the option of transferring to another VA facility. Mrs. Lowe considered transferring to another VA hospital, which would have possibly meant moving to a big city, but Mr. Lowe strongly objected.

As it evolved, Fort Bayard transitioned into a long-term state hospital. Ms. Patsy Miller, who was the Director of Nursing at Fort Bayard for many years both when it was a VA and state hospital, called Mrs. Lowe to work at Fort Bayard when it opened as a state facility. The family then moved to Fort Bayard.



Walter and Irene Lowe at Fort Bayard House

The house they occupied previously had been a nurses' home. There were six bedrooms, each with a sink but no bathroom. There were two large bathrooms, a very large living room and a kitchen. Some of the previous furniture had been removed but much remained. There was an attic with a bathroom that had previously been used for living quarters, but they did not use the attic except for storage. The hallway was so large that they had room there for a pool table that also doubled for a ping-pong table. It was a very old building. It was down the hill from the water towers and the larger

nurses' quarters, north of and on the same street as Doctors' Row. The home was surrounded by beautiful pines and Arizona Cypress trees.

Between their home and the last large building at the north end of Doctor's Row was an open field that became the playground for the Lowe children and others. At one time this field was the site of General Crook's home when Fort Bayard was a US Army fort.

Mrs. Lowe held various positions at Fort Bayard including Assistant Nursing Director, Supervisor, and Education Director. Initially, most of the patients were from the State Hospital in Las Vegas. Many patients came at about the same time. This presented challenges in evaluating so many patients so quickly, especially when they were often unable or unwilling to cooperate. Fort Stanton also closed at about the same time. This institution housed many mentally and physically handicapped patients. A few of those patients came to Fort Bayard. Some employees also transferred from Fort Stanton to Fort Bayard.

Mrs. Lowe retired in the 1980's and of course the family moved. Some of the children were already grown. After they moved the building became vacant, but various support groups met there. The building burned in the mid-to-late 1980s. People smoked during those meetings and probably the building burned because cigarettes were not properly extinguished.

Kathy, the oldest child, was 12 when the family moved to Fort Bayard. There was eventually a total of seven children, two girls and five boys.



I asked Kathy if there was housing segregation at Fort Bayard, since another historian told me there was housing segregation when it was a VA hospital. Kathy said there were separate Spanish quarters when they first arrived, but the entire housing campus was closed at the end of the VA period. People moved back into the housing again after it reopened as a long-term state hospital. She does not think there was ever segregated housing after it became a NM long-term care facility. The area where the Spanish housing was previously located became a trailer park.

Kathy remembers the location of the golf course, but the state did not continue upkeep of the golf course, and she does not remember it being used. The cemetery was the same size as it is now.

There was always plenty of entertainment. The children rode bikes everywhere, particularly north

The Lowes' Fort Bayard House

of the old administration building where the foundations of buildings from the US Army Tuberculosis Hospital of the early 1900s still exist. They also played hide and seek in this area.

They played in the old orchard and had plums and apples near their house in abundance. Near the orchard, Kathy remembers an area where they played that was near the arroyo where WWII POWs who had been held at Fort Bayard cleared and built a tennis and basketball court.

Kathy has a special memory of a young wheelchair-bound patient that lost the use of her lower extremities due to an accident. Kathy's mother, Mrs. Lowe, encouraged Kathy to visit this patient, play jacks with her, and take her outside to engage the patient in as many activities as possible.

Joe, the oldest Lowe son, lived in the nurses' quarters/cottages and worked in the laundry at Fort Bayard for a number of years during the 1970s through the mid-1980s.

Pat, one of the younger brothers, recalls that they used to swim in the old wooden, open top water tank, not exactly an approved activity. He said the first time he swam there he followed his older brothers. He had to climb outside of the tank and then drop into the water. The first time he participated, he was in the water when the older brothers climbed out and left him in the water. When he tried to extend his upper body to reach the step where he could maneuver to climb out of the tower, he couldn't do it and had to yell for help. Fortunately, the older brothers heard him and returned to rescue him. Pat later had a professional career with the US Forest Service.



Enjoying the Snow at Fort Bayard

Mary, the younger of the two daughters, worked in the hospital kitchen and then became a Registered Nurse and served as an outstanding health care provider in Grant County throughout her career. This culminated in becoming Dr. Shelby King's nurse and assistant during his last years of practice. Dr. King was a very special friend of mine.

The Sojourner's Club at Fort Bayard was built in the early 1920s by the Masons as a recreational facility for patients. General John J. Pershing, whose first assignment after graduation from West Point was at Fort Bayard in the 1880s and who later served as the Commander of the American Expeditionary Forces in WWI, returned to Fort Bayard in the 1920s and drove a golden spike into the beam supporting the front of the Sojourner's Club.

Many people know of General Pershing's fame in WWI. Not so many know that his wife and three daughters perished in a house fire in San Francisco in 1915. Even fewer know of his ties to Fort Bayard. He returned to Fort Bayard often to visit patients, as his brother was a tuberculosis patient at Fort Bayard.

In the 1940s the Sojourner's Club served as the primary school at Fort Bayard. This was after the previous school at the fort was converted to a compound that housed the German POWs at Fort Bayard at the end of WWII. Kathy's younger brother, Danny, was handicapped and had special needs. The Sojourner's Club was by then being used as a school again. It was named a School for Special Children.

Danny lived at home until he was 17. Then he lived in several different group homes. He died in 2021. Mike, the youngest son, lived in Las Vegas and recently has died.

Some members of the Lowe family have had health problems. Kathy's Dad died of lung cancer in 1971 at age 51. Mr. Lowe had been a smoker, but quit ten years before his death. Many tubercular patients of that era, like Mr. Lowe, had mixed blessings from the use of radiology during their treatment. Radiology had many medical benefits, but the risk of radiation was not understood. Overuse of fluoroscopy and radiation resulted in a high rate of lung cancer among tuberculosis patients and medical personnel alike.

Kathy Lowe and Joe Heidrick were married in 1978. They were both working at Hillcrest Hospital in Silver City, Kathy as a Nurse's Aide and Joe as an orderly. Joe was admitted to the LPN program at Western New Mexico University under the direction of Clare Goldsmith. After completing his LPN program Joe was accepted to a Registered Nursing program in Las Cruces, completed his training and became an RN. Kathy completed her LPN training in 1985 when they returned to Silver City from Las Cruces. They reared two children and Kathy was a homemaker part of her life. Joe continued working at Gila Regional Medical Center for several years. After the RN program was started at Western New Mexico University, Joe furthered his education and eventually became the Chair of the Nursing School at WNMU.

When Kathy resumed her nursing career, she worked nineteen years at Fort Bayard, from 1989 to 2007. She worked primarily on 2 East, the women's locked unit. She concluded her professional career with six years' work at the Veteran's hospital in Truth or Consequences.

Kathy remembers her life at Fort Bayard with much affection, both as living there as a child and later working there as an adult. Some patients could be violent. Some patients had advanced dementia. Also, many people were transferred from Las Vegas, the State Hospital for mental illness, to Fort Bayard when their mental illness was supposedly controlled. These patients no longer needed acute care, but they had no family able to care for them and they were unable to care for themselves.



STANDING: PAT, WALTER, DANNY, MIKE, JOE
KATHY, MOM, MARY

The Lowe Family

The problem was that sometimes the mental illness was not controlled. Kathy recalls being assaulted two times by patients. She also remembers her mother being assaulted. They were not seriously injured (bruises, scratches and broken glasses), but the assaults left lasting memories.

Mrs. Lowe later developed pulmonary fibrosis. She never smoked, but she may have been exposed to excessive radiation while working that contributed to her death in 2007 at age 82. She lived with Kathy and Joe with compromised health for the last three years of her life.

I wish to thank the Lowe and Heidrick families for their contribution to the health of the people of Fort Bayard and southwestern New Mexico over two generations.

--John Bell

HISTORIC CHARACTERS OF OLD FORT BAYARD

CORPORAL CLINTON GREAVES, FORT BAYARD'S FIRST MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT



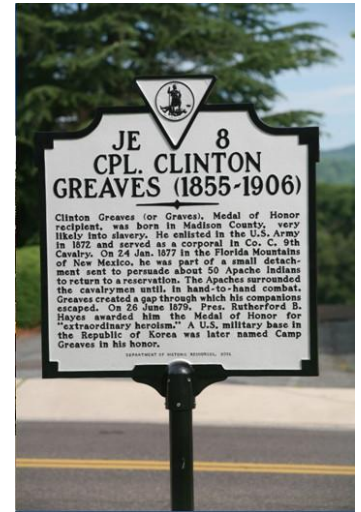
Visitors to Fort Bayard today will immediately notice the bronze sculpture that stands at the center of the historic parade ground, showing the figure of a soldier in a dramatic pose with his carbine at the ready. Those who make the short walk to the signage near the sculpture will learn the story of Corporal Clinton Greaves, the man immortalized in the bronze work of art. The sculpture was completed and dedicated in 1992 by local artist Greg Whipple, and is meant to capture the moment that Corporal Greaves helped to save the lives of his fellow soldiers by enabling them to fight their way through a force of hostile Apache warriors who were trying to prevent them from escaping to their horses. The incident occurred in the Florida Mountains near present day Deming, New Mexico in January of 1877.



According to the official citation calling for Greaves to receive the Medal of Honor “While part of a small detachment to persuade a band of renegade Apache Indians to surrender, his group was surrounded. Cpl. Greaves in the center of the savage hand-to-hand fighting, managed to shoot and bash a gap through the swarming Apaches, permitting his companions to break free.”

While much of Clinton Greaves’ life story remains uncertain, we know that he was born in Madison, Virginia in 1855, the son of enslaved parents. He enlisted on November 21, 1872, and was assigned to the 9th Cavalry Regiment, serving in Company C. His second enlistment was at Santa Fe, New Mexico, December 21, 1877. He spent over 20 years in the Army, most of it in the 9th Cavalry as a Buffalo Soldier, and he eventually reached the rank of Sergeant. The Medal of Honor was issued on June 26, 1879. He died in Columbus, Ohio in 1906 and is interred there at Greenlawn Cemetery. His birthplace in Madison now is commemorated by an official historic marker, which was obtained through the efforts of many interested groups in his native region of Virginia.

We are happy to continue to tell the story of Corporal Greaves and the thousands of other men and women whose service at Fort Bayard was an important chapter of our national history.



Greaves Historic Marker in Virginia

ARTIFACT OF THE ISSUE

WOODEN ICEBOX

Board member Dale Giese has gifted the museum a chest type wooden icebox that he found at a swap meet. First appearing in the United States in the early 1800s, wooden



cabinets with hollow walls insulated with sawdust and compartments lined with tin, soon became known as “iceboxes.” This innovation allowed for preserving food with blocks of ice delivered by commercial “ice men”, and prior to the introduction of electrical refrigerators, were common household conveniences. Our icebox is now on exhibit in the

pantry area of the Commanding Doctor’s home, which serves as our museum at Fort Bayard National Historic Landmark.

MUSEUM HOURS

The museum is continuing with winter hours until the arrival of warm weather in spring. It is open on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday hours will return soon, so please stay tuned to our website for information.



New artifacts have been added to our growing collection, so please be sure to stop by our museum any weekend and bring your family, friends, and out-of-town guests. Admission is always free, although donations are gratefully accepted. And remember, members who present their membership card will receive a 10% discount on all gift shop purchases.

MONTHLY MEETING AND CONTACT INFORMATION

The FBHPS meets the second Wednesday of every month from 10 am-12 pm at the Santa Clara Armory. Please join us! We welcome ideas from all members.

You can also actively engage in our operation by volunteering your time as a tour guide, collections curator, living history performer, building and grounds worker, or records keeper and researcher. Training will be provided as needed.

FBHPS Officers:

Dr. Doug Dinwiddie, President
Cecilia Bell, Vice President
Becky Dinwiddie, Treasurer

Denise Singleton, Secretary
Dr. John O. Bell, Village of Santa Clara
Liaison

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