**Archaeology and History in Your Backyard—after 1692**

**The 1600s # 3**

Hello everyone, this is **Archaeology and History Your Backyard.** This script was written by Bob Berglund, and my name is \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_. KXNM 88.7 FM and the Torrance County Archaeological Society are pleased to bring you a series of programs designed to acquaint you, our listening audience with little known people, places, and events that took place in the past, right here in your own back yard. Our goal is to inform, educate, and possibly enlist your help in preserving and protecting the past.

Previous programs talked about the 1600s starting with Onate’s entrance into New Mexico in 1598 and culminating in the **pueblo revolt** of 1680. During the 1600s the Spaniards brutally put down several revolts before the Indians succeeded in driving them out in 1680. In the 12 years before the Spanish finally reestablished themselves in Santa Fe there were 3 unsuccessful attempts to reconquer New Mexico before the 4th successful attempt in 1692. The years after 1692 continued to be violent and are the subject of today’s program.

Diego de Vargas in 1692 was successful in getting the Indians living in Santa Fe to surrender peacefully, at least initially, and the Spanish never left after that. But to say peace was established isn’t correct. The factionalism and revolts continued. Recall that in the 1600s there were several attempts at revolt that were brutally put down before the successful revolt of 1680. Three unsuccessful attempts were made by the Spanish to retake New Mexico before the 4th attempt by Vargas was successful. In the years following 1692 the brutal suppression of Indian revolts continued before a tentative overall peace was established.

After subduing Santa Fe de Vargas during the fall and winter went from pueblo to pueblo making a show of reestablishing the Catholic friars and baptizing babies and children born after 1680. Pecos embraced the reestablished relations with the Spanish and provided needed warriors later when help was needed. The Hopis were unimpressed, and remain that way today. When Vargas visited the Zunis he was led to a room that contained a Christian altar with lighted candles, silver chalices and a monstrance, three images of Christ and dozens of other religious objects. In every other pueblo the Catholic objects were found to be destroyed. The story came out many years later that the friar in 1680 had elected to be adopted instead of martyrdom, and had maintained his disguise while other Spanish women with children were later ransomed.

Vargas understood that a short term truce was not the same as long term peace. Everywhere he went the pueblos wanted his help fighting their enemies. He was continually told some pueblos were good, some were bad, some had fallen in with Apaches and Navajos. His reply was that if they renewed their obedience they would be protected.

The Indians knew that following Vargas would be many more Spaniards and they had a lot of time during the winter and spring to mull over their response. After subduing the still volatile western pueblos Vargas went back to El Paso in early 1693 in order to bring the refugees living there back to New Mexico. Vargas proudly related to the viceroy in Mexico City that he had pacified 23 pueblos and over 2000 Indians had been baptized. No Indians had been killed other than Apaches.

In early October of 1693, 13 years after the revolt, the old colony left El Paso for their old homeland. There were 70 families, 18 friars and many Indian allies. The train heading north included horses and mules pulling wagons and 3 cannon, and 2000 horses and 900 cattle. In mid-December Santa Fe was reached after a brutal journey north on the Camino Real. Thirty women and children had died crossing the Jornada Del Muerto, the Dead Man’s March on the Camino Real. On reaching Santa Fe Vargas reclaimed it for the Spanish and gave the Indians time to move out. The two weeks the colonists camped a short ways away were brutally cold with another twenty-one colonists dying from exposure. In the meantime the Indians were fortifying the pueblo they had built over the government buildings. The soldiers lost patience and attacked and drove the Indians out. Vargas to make sure that patience wasn’t confused with weakness, had 70 leaders executed. By New Year’s Day rebellion was once again widespread. With the help of Pecos, Santa Ana, Zia, and San Felipe the other pueblos were subdued one-by-one by the violent conquest that had happened so often—siege assaults, burning roof rafters, seized corn, hundreds of dead Indians and a few lost Spaniards. Uneasy peace was restored.

New families arrived from Mexico and resettled the haciendas. Santa Cruz was a town established with sixty-six families in 1695, and Bernalillo established shortly after on the site of the old Bernal family estate. This being in the middle of the little ice age the winter was much harder than we have been used to in modern times. The disruptions resulted in poor or no crops and settlers and Indians alike suffered a very hard winter of 1695-96. The sullen Indians brooded all winter and in June 1696 all hell broke loose again—five priests and 21 soldiers were massacred, and a number of pueblos burned and trashed their churches and escaped to the mountains. While the rebellion was similar to 1680, it was not so widespread. Vargas with the help of loyal Indian warriors such as from Pecos moved fast and severely and was able to suppress this last revolt, the revolt of 1696. The battles were over permanently now and the Indians submitted to the Spanish forever.

Vargas got the job done as far as permanently establishing New Mexico as part of New Spain. However in early 1697 a new governor named Cubero arrived to replace him. Vargas turned the office over to him and, as was normal, remained to brief the new man on what the job entailed. There were delays, and then Vargas was suddenly arrested by order of the new governor. The town council drew up a long list of charges at the pleasure of the new governor, and he was confined and lost all of his property by confiscation. For two and a half years he lived confined in a cell like a criminal. No one was allowed to see him. The new governor was rumored to be a drunkard and he was suspicious of everyone. Finally the head priest went to the Viceroy in Mexico City and a report went to the King. Vargas’s record was immediately cleared and he was promoted to Marquis by the King and reappointed governor of New Mexico in 1703. Before Marquis Vargas arrived Cubero announced he was leaving on an expedition against the Apaches and never came back. Cubero now was plainly seen to be a wretched governor who drank and neglected the basic duties of maintaining and strengthening New Mexico.

Vargas reorganized the army and none too soon. In spring of 1704 the Apaches were coming through Tijeras and Abo Canyons to raid haciendas in the valley. Vargas himself led the force to try to intercept and defeat them. Reports were that the Apaches were seen near Tajique within sight of the salt lakes and were skirting the east side of the Manzano Mountains, a fact Vargas noted in his daily journal—the last entry he made. Suddenly weak with distressed breathing and in pain and tightness in his chest, he knew what was happening and couldn’t go on. His officers took him back to Bernalillo and to bed in the mayor’s house. There he dictated his will and his funeral arrangements and died the next day. He was buried with full honors under the platform of the principal altar of the church of St. Francis.

New Mexico continued to be a poor backwater of New Spain, but more families arrived and new towns were formed. Los Padillas was established on the west side of the river above Isleta in 1705. Albuquerque was established in 1706 with thirty-five families totaling about 250 people. Despite recurring Apache raids on livestock and neglect by the Spanish authorities the settlements took root.

Many of the churches destroyed in 1680 were never rebuilt and those that had been restored were poor. The Franciscans with difficulty maintained twenty-five missions. A mid-1700s census counted 771 households totaling about 10,000 people. The river haciendas grew to be clusters of families usually dominated by one family with wealth or family connections. Change was very slow and life was dominated by hard work and the Church. The Franciscan friars complained bitterly that Spanish civil authorities were still abusing the Indians with forced labor, and confiscating crops and other items such as blankets with little recompense. Buying and selling of slaves was permitted, and rape of Indian girls and women was looked on with brutal shamelessness. The friars found themselves powerless to stop the abuses. New Mexico was a poor backwater where lawlessness and corruption characterized the civil authorities. Similar poor governance and brutality still occurs in 2016 in many poor developing countries. Some things never change.

For more details I highly recommend the book Great River: The Rio Grande in North American History by Paul Horgan, the source for most of this talk.

The Torrance County Archaeology Society is currently on winter break. We are scheduled to meet the first Tuesday of every month from March through November. We always have interesting expert speakers at our meetings—come and join us! You can listen to **Archaeology in Your Backyard** on Monday at 1 PM, Tuesday at 7 PM, Friday at 10 AM, and Saturday at 4 PM. Thank you for listening.