



News Release

State of New Mexico

Historic Preservation Division, Department of Cultural Affairs

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Preservation Milestones Celebrated During May

Santa Fe – The year 2016 is a milestone in historic preservation. The Centennial of the National Park Service, the 50th anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act and Mission 66, which reshaped the nation's parks and gave us the visitor center, will be commemorated in New Mexico beginning May 1.

The New Mexico Historic Preservation Division announced today that events will be held statewide during Heritage Preservation Month, established in 1973 by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. State preservation offices, historical societies, local preservation groups, parks and municipalities host events throughout New Mexico and the nation during May. An events calendar is posted on HPD's website: nmhistoricpreservation.org.

HPD, New Mexico's State Historic Preservation Office, has issued a commemorative poster to draw attention to May's events. It interprets the anniversaries with a photo the El Morro National Monument visitor center. The building is an outstanding example of "Park Service Modern," the Mission 66 style that incorporated elements of 1950s and 1960s architecture to convey a bold, contemporary appearance meant to attract visitors.

"After World War II, Americans began visiting the nation's parks in huge numbers that overtaxed the humble amenities mostly built in the 1920s and 1930s," said Jeff Pappas, HPD director and State Historic Preservation Officer. "With Mission 66, many national parks for the first time provided adequate restrooms, interpretive displays and open, expansive indoor spaces from which people could gaze upon the cultural or natural resources they were visiting."

In all, 114 visitor centers were established during the 10-year program beginning in 1956. The centers often were built near the cultural resource they interpreted, perhaps most famously at Mount Rushmore as seen in the 1959 film *North by Northwest*, but also at El Morro near the massive cuesta known for Inscription Rock, its natural pool, and the Atsinna Pueblo ruins on top.

Mission 66 also vastly improved park roads and hiking trails, made funds available to complete significant projects such as the Eero Saarinen-designed Gateway Arch in St. Louis, and at \$750 million became the largest infrastructure investment ever made by NPS.

The El Morro visitor center was designed by Cecil J. Doty with significant modernistic design enhancements by DeLong, Zahm Associates. Doty's long career with NPS included designing the nationally known park service headquarters building in Santa Fe during the Great Depression.

Mission 66 began to wind down in 1966, the year Congress enacted the National Historic Preservation Act. Today many of the visitor centers established under the program are recognized in the National Register of Historic Places, which was established by the NHPA in part to raise awareness of and encourage preservation of the nation's historic buildings and cultural sites.

Events

Events this year are highlighted by heritage awards and the New Mexico Archaeology Fair, May 7, in Las Cruces at Organ Mountains – Desert Peaks National Monument. The fair runs 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. Fairgoers can learn and practice ancient technologies such as atlatl, cordage and petroglyph making. The monument's admission fee is waived for people attending the fair.

May 13 is the 44th annual Heritage Preservation Awards Ceremony presented by the state Cultural Properties Review Committee at the historic Scottish Rite Temple in Santa Fe, at 2 p.m., and hosted by HPD. The 2016 award winners will be announced in early May.

A sampling of the 40 scheduled preservation events follows. To see a complete listing visit the *Calendar of Events* compiled by New Mexico Heritage Preservation Alliance and posted on HPD's website and Face Book.

During Heritage Preservation Month, the Tinkertown Museum in Sandia Park outside Albuquerque offers two-for-one admission to people who mention that May is preservation month.

At Chaco Culture National Historical Park on Tuesday, Friday and Saturday nights in May, there is a one-hour archaeoastronomy presentation with free access to the observatory next to the visitor center. It is part of Chaco's program to preserve the night sky in New Mexico, the first state to enact night sky protection laws. Stargazing from the one-time spiritual center of Chacoan culture is not to be missed. Events begin at sunset.

The annual guided tour of Navajo defensive pueblitos is offered May 2 from 1 p.m. – 4 p.m. by Salmon Ruins Museum in Bloomfield. A rock art and pueblito tour is scheduled for May 14. A daylong open house, the director's ruins tour, and a prehistoric-ceramics lecture are May 21, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

LMNOC Broadcasting in Taos hosts the 15th annual Mother's Day weekend of traditional heritage events at Kit Carson Park.

Pair up the Archaeology Fair in Las Cruces with a dowsing class at the New Mexico Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum, May 7. Nearby Mesilla hosts a Cinco de Mayo fiesta, May 8.

May 8 is the annual Mother's Day Tour hosted by the Historic Santa Fe Foundation. Tickets can be purchased at any of the four buildings on tour including the Bataan Memorial Building, the statehood-era capitol and current home of HPD. Find the hidden Senate chambers dome from over a century ago. Details are in the events calendar and on HSFF's website.

Fort Bayard near Silver City has walking tours of the National Historic Landmark on May 14, May 21, and May 30, 9:30 a.m. – Noon.

Bandelier National Monument marks its Centennial by hosting host a BioBlitz with NPS and the *National Geographic*, May 20 and 21. It is one of seven regional parks hosting the two-day event Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Teams of scientists, students and the public will identify plants, animals, microbes, fungi and more as part of a Biodiversity and Cultural Fiesta. There's a guided tour at 1 p.m., May 20 to illustrate how the monument has re-adapted its preservation approach over the last 100 years. A guided cavate tour is scheduled the morning of May 27. Admission is free for Preservation Month events.

Nob Hill in Albuquerque also turns 100 this year. May 22 is the "Insider's Tour" of eight historic homes and buildings rarely open to the public in the city's most-happening neighborhood. Proceeds benefit the New Mexico School of Architecture and Planning Program in Historic Preservation and Regionalism. Tickets and a list of buildings on tour are available from Nob Hill Main Street.

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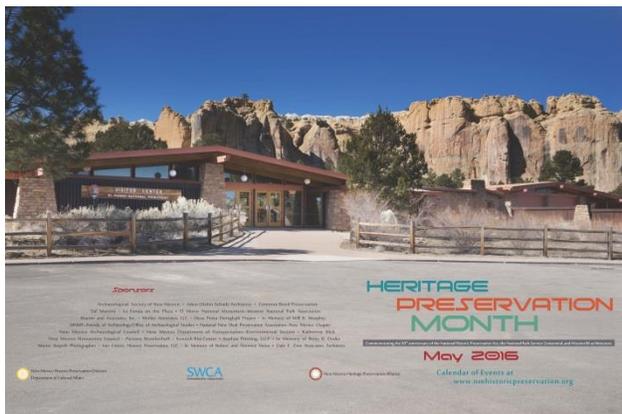


Photo caption: The 2016 Heritage Preservation Month poster features a photograph of the El Morro Visitor Center by Albuquerque-based photographer Martin Stupich. The poster was designed by Tom Drake, of HPD.

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