



8-year-old Renee Roybal, who represents the bride, or *novia*, is the only female in El Rancho's re-enactment of the historic dance of Los Matachines

A Village Revives the Dance of Los Matachines

By Merrilee Dolan

"I can't believe this. This is just like a scene out of *National Geographic*," says the tall blond man, a newcomer to the village of El Rancho, which snuggles between the Rio Grande and the road to Los Alamos.

Here on the dirt parking area in front of the closed double doors of the El Rancho Club bar, a dance-drama which seems to belong to another time and place is under way. It is *Los Matachines*.

In days gone by, it was danced on festive occasions such as New Year's Day or the village patron saint's day, but in 1956, it was danced for the last time in El Rancho. Then some people from the village decided a 25-year hiatus was long enough and it was time to revive the tradition.

Under lead-gray skies, the bright capes worn by the men of the *Matachines* billow in the stiff gusts of wind, and long rainbow-colored ribbon streamers attached to their tall crown-like head ornaments swirl about their shoulders. On metal folding chairs, three village musicians, two guitarists and a violinist,

sit facing the two rows of masked dancers who skip, circle, and kneel in careful unison.

A young girl in white communion frock, white leotards, white bridal veil, and white shoes and gloves skips alongside an adult dancer whose headdress is more elaborate than the others. Soon the dancers are joined by a boy of perhaps 5 years of age. He is dressed in a bull's costume, complete with tail and little horns.

Meanwhile, ignoring the rhythm of the dance, three characters wearing grotesque masks circle the dance area, eyeing the clusters of onlookers and beating the dusty ground with their rope whips. These are the *abuelos* or "grandfathers," who generally clown around and menace one another and the onlookers. An *abuelo* may suddenly lurch toward a child who, if very young, might start to cry before finding refuge by grabbing mama's slacks and ducking behind her leg.

Now and then an outrageous *abuelo* may steal a purse from a woman onlooker who covers her eyes and groans, "Oh, no!" as the *abuelo* squats down and plows through the purse's contents, holding them up for the world to see.

"Sweetheart!" booms the long and bushy-haired *abuelo* with the gold nose from which

grows an enormous gold wart. The young woman being addressed grins but takes a step backward, wishing she could melt into the crowd.

"I love you! How do you like my jacket?" he asks, strutting and proudly stroking his tattered brown coat. "Doesn't it smell good? I just pulled it out of the chicken coop."

Suddenly he turns and in a loud voice addresses the entire audience. "Ladies and gentlemen! *Que viven los Matachines del Rancho!*" The dancers rise from their kneeled positions and begin to skip while the happy notes of guitar and violin flood the air.

The natural beauty of the surroundings lends itself perfectly to the overall enchantment of the dance-drama. Bordering one side of the parking lot where the dance is in progress, tan adobe walls and the tall jagged posts of a cedar fence flank a dirt road. In the distance, Black Mesa, a massive volcanic plug, stands timeless and solid like a sentinel of the ages.

In another direction, behind the El Rancho Club, pinon-studded hills rise, one after another. Beyond the hills, the horizon is marked by the dark blue peaks of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. No wonder the feeling of tradition hangs heavily over the dancers and the friends, relatives, and visitors who cluster around, leaning against cars, smiling, exchanging comments, and drinking pop or beer.

Indeed, the dance of the *Matachines* is a tradition which reaches across the ocean and back into time to blend Spanish and Moorish tradition with a New World flavor. Despite the New World additions, the feeling the dance invokes is more Old World than New. The *Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend* describes the word, *Matachin*, as deriving from Arabic. It refers to "two men who faced each other as in a dance or that which was used to describe a man who put on a face (mask)."

One can well imagine, while watching the dance, that it is a medieval morality play which is accompanied by a light tune, the strains of which are repeated over and over. Perhaps it is the musical repetition that lends an Oriental touch to the mood of the event — or perhaps it is the mystery inherent in a dance where the mouths and noses of the adult dancers are covered by silk-like scarves worn bandit style, while the eyes are covered by long black fringes hanging from the *coronas* or crownlike head ornaments.

The mood is also that of a religious ceremony, for in their white-gloved left hands, the dancers hold crosses or three-pronged swords (*palmas*). In their gloved right hands, they hold gourd rattles which they shake in precise but slow rhythmic motion while they remain in a prolonged posture of genuflection with their heads bowed.

As they kneel and lightly shake their gourd rattles, the little girl trips and skips between the rows of dancers. Suddenly the kneeling *Matachines* arise and begin skipping and pivoting, the full pillowcase flounces on their pants legs blowing about their ankles. A gay and airy feeling replaces the somber worshipful mood of a moment ago.

"It's a real lively dance, especially during

Now and then an outrageous *abuelo* may steal a purse from a woman onlooker who covers her eyes ...

the winter," says Pedro Roybal. "I used to dance it with the Indians over at San Ildefonso. My father — he died three years ago at age 93 — used to dance *Los Matachines* here in El Rancho. That was many years ago."

Over coffee, in the comfort of their living room, Pedro "Pete" and Dora Roybal describe how the dance was revived in El Rancho and how their four sons as well as their little niece and nephew, take part. One son, Larry Roybal, represents the Spanish conqueror Cortez and is referred to in the dance as the *monarca* or monarch. He is distinguished by the larger *corona*. The other three sons dance as *soldados* or soldiers and *capitanes* or captains. There are four *capitanes*. Each holds a position at the front and end of the two lines of dancers.

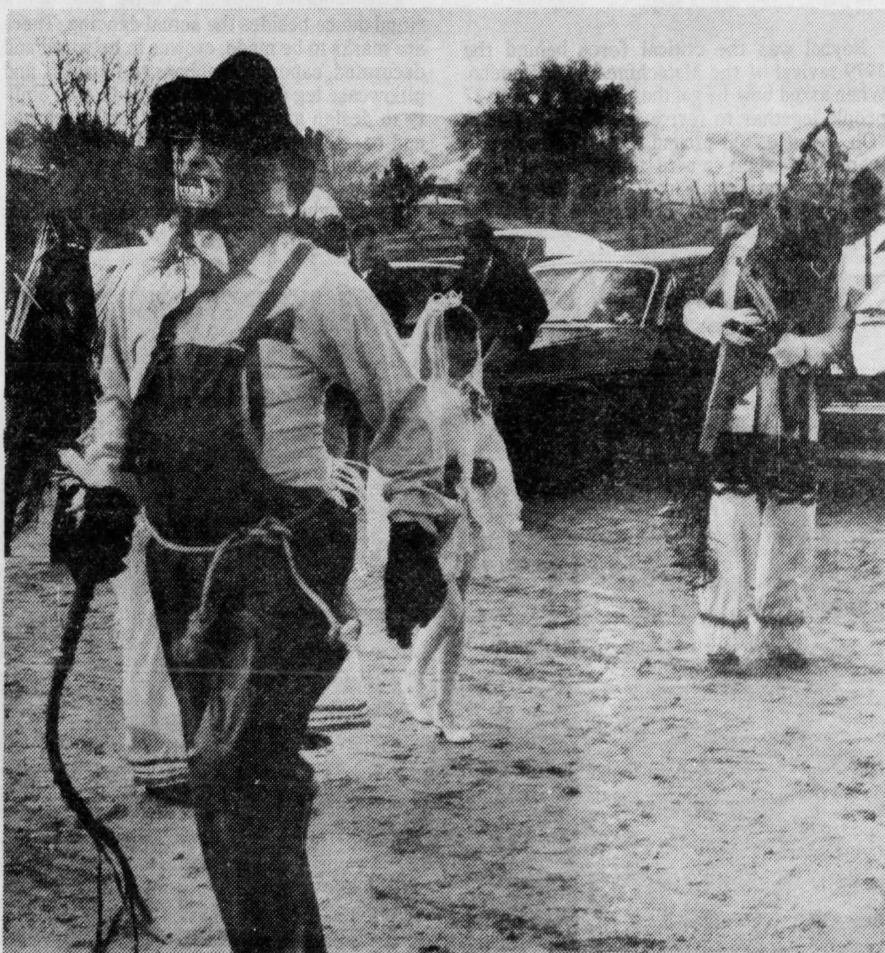
The Roybals' niece, 8-year-old Renee Roy-

bal, is the only female dancer. She represents the bride or *novia* (meaning sweetheart). She is also known as the *Malinche*, whose fame derived from being the Aztec Emperor Moctezuma's daughter who became guide, interpreter and lover to Cortez as he made his way victoriously through the Aztec empire. Without *Malinche*, Cortez most likely would have been killed. *Malinche* symbolizes not only the first mother of the Mestizo people, but also the first Christian convert.

Lenny Roybal, the Roybals' little nephew, dances as the *torito* or little bull. The miniature bull is said to be a representation of authority. During the dance, the *abuelos* "casterate" the *torito* who, amazingly, gets up from the ground immediately after the ordeal and begins dancing.

Ms. Roybal spreads her photograph album

One of three *abuelos*, or grandfathers, replete in grotesque mask and carrying a rope whip, strikes fear into those watching the pageant.





Another *abuelo* moves toward the onlooking crowd to see what embarrassment he can create for an unfortunate spectator

out on the coffee table, and we shuffle through stacks of color prints. Dora Roybal suddenly points her finger at a photograph picturing a man in brown leather jacket, everyday slacks and a cowboy hat. "See that cowboy in the middle of the dance? That's my husband," Pedro Roybal laughs. He explains that he leads the *Malinche* and sees to it that the *Matachines* are in step.

Roybal was the critical force behind the 1979 revival of the *Matachines* in El Rancho. When asked how he got the necessary 16 or 17 people together to revive the dance, he said, "Oh, I just asked around. Lots of people remembered when it used to be danced here, and they wanted to learn it. They thought we shouldn't let the tradition die."

Roybal described how they used a tape of the music from a San Ildefonso performance to practice. The dancers met two to three times a week for several months and practiced until they knew all the steps. Now they practice two or three times just before a dance.

A tremendous amount of work goes into a ritual dance besides the actual dancing. There are masks to be made, crowns to be wired and decorated, capes and ribbons to be sewn, and pillowcase leg flouncies to be made. The ability to design and craft these items is learned and passed from generation to generation by the women.

Dora Roybal knows all about making outfits

Renee Roybal and her young brother, Lenny, who dances as the torito, or little bull, have key parts in the dance of Los *Matachines*



for the *Matachines*. She has made at least four and has offered to help other women who have sons or husbands dancing. The crown is a combination of cardboard, wire and various decorative touches. It may have an ancient Christmas tree ornament at its top — like the little silver bird that bobs up and down on its spring atop one of the crowns made by Ms. Roybal. By far the most elaborate head-dress — and certainly the most expensive — is Dora Roybal's silver and turquoise squash blossom crown which she fashioned by sewing a squash blossom necklace onto the tall cardboard-backed mitre-like headpiece.

From embroidered pillowcases to elaborate head ornaments, putting together the finery for each *Matachin* is not only time-consuming, it costs money. Five years ago, the material which went into the Monarch's outfit cost \$55 — not counting the squash blossom necklace. Just how similar the costumes of today are to those which might have been worn in a dance in old Spain is not addressed in the available literature, but one book depicts a headdress from Leon, Spain, which bears a striking resemblance to those used for the *Matachines* in New Mexico.

Although there is speculation about the origin of the *Matachines*, the dance is generally believed to have been introduced by Spain to both Europe and the New World. Some of the symbols in the dance appear to be modified versions of old Spain's drama of *Los Moros y Los Cristianos*, the Moors and the Christians, a morality play about the triumph of Christianity over the Muslim religion.

The Muslim conquest of the Iberian Peninsula was complete by the year 718, and Spain was organized under a Muslim governor from Africa. Throughout the subjugation, which lasted 800 years, a great amount of cultural exchange occurred. The Christians, who were allowed to continue practicing their religion, never resigned themselves to the conquest. According to reports, the dance of *Los Matachines*, sometimes representing a sword fight between Christians and Muslims, was performed in 15th and 16th century Spain.

When the missionaries from Spain sought to convert the Aztecs of Mexico to Christianity in the 1500s, they used the play to portray the triumph of Christianity in the New World. It was a simple step to insert *La Malinche* as a symbol of the new religion.

In his book, *Masked Gods*, Frank Waters says the *Matachines* was first danced in New Mexico by Spaniards with Don Juan de Oñate in 1598 at San Juan Pueblo. Oñate, colonizer of New Mexico, was married to Dona Isabel Tolosa Cortez Moctezuma, great-granddaughter of Moctezuma and the granddaughter of Malinche and Cortez.

The dance is still performed in parts of Mexico and New Mexico. The town of Bernalillo is known for its performances. However, the tradition might have died in the Hispanic villages had not the Pueblos, which had readily adapted the dance, kept it alive throughout recent years.

When Pedro and Dora Roybal and the people from the village of El Rancho revived the traditional dance, they revived a representation of historic events spanning centuries — a living monument of history.

Merrilee Dolan is a free lance writer who lives in Los Alamos.

Ex-Lab Employee Addresses Discrimination

Merrilee A. Dolan is a former equal opportunity employment specialist at Los Alamos National Laboratory. She was part of the group that Ed Trujillo, once second in command of that unit, claimed was formed under former LANL Director Harold Agnew to help the Lab conform to the federal equal opportunity and affirmative action law. It was dismantled under Donald Kerr, who in 1980 became director. As the group was being dissolved by the current administration, Dolan was transferred to another job within the Lab, that of compensation analyst. She resigned from LANL last month.

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There has been increasing focus on the Los Alamos National Laboratory's employment practices since Ed Trujillo spoke with SUN reporter, Gail Olson. Some Lab employees laughed that there were more photocopies of the articles circulating than there were papers published in one week's issue of the Rio Grande SUN.

Reactions have been mixed. Some employees have been resentful and defensive. "I've been treated well," they say. Others have said "I'm glad Ed spoke up. What they did to him was awful." Still others have been privately amused but have maintained a discreet silence, winking one eye while keeping the other wide open and firmly fixed on that bimonthly paycheck.

As one who no longer has to concern herself with how speaking out will embarrass co-workers or threaten the flow of paychecks (I resigned in July), I will offer my own perspective to the issues Ed raised.

SPECIALIST

I worked closely with Ed. When I went to work at the Lab as an Equal Employment Specialist in August, 1979, our Group, Employee Relations, handled informal as well as formal equal employment complaints. I felt good about the job we were doing in helping the Lab comply with the law. We investigated formal complaints

(those filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or the Human Rights Commission), and then recommended settlement if we found discrimination.

The EEOC agreed with our findings 100 percent of the time. That is, if we recommended "no cause to believe there had been discrimination," the EEOC, after its own investigation, concluded the same. If we recommended settlement, we presented our reasoning to Harold Agnew, then Lab director, and he backed us.

INFORMAL

We followed the same general procedure on informal complaints — those brought to us for resolution rather than being filed with an outside agency. The idea was, if we could do a good job on informal complaints, there would be better employee morale and less embarrassing publicity for the Laboratory. Equal employment law suits cost tax dollars and give employers bad reputations.

Soon after Dr. Agnew's departure, I recommended settlement on a charge of age discrimination. I had done a thorough investigation, gathering relevant documents and interviewing many witnesses. I did not selectively include or delete information. The case was settled, but my report and my recommendation irritated the new administration.

After the Morrison and Foerster consultants came, they reviewed several cases. Then David Slate, Morrison-Foerster attorney and a Lab consultant, cautioned us to "be careful how you develop cases." He said we were not better qualified to "quantify" evidence than managers or anyone else. He said if there was clear admission that something like age or handicap was a factor in an adverse employment action, we should "kick that case up to the legal department." He told us to develop cases to "put the Laboratory in the best possible light."

Slate was wrong, and his advice was bad. As highly experienced EEO Specialists, we were qualified to "quantify" evidence under Equal Employment Law. Some of us had been trained by Civil Rights

lawyers with a lot more knowledge — and commitment — than Slate had.

Further, the "light" Slate spoke of was not bright enough to see by. When a compliance agency investigator receives generalized categorical denials of any wrongdoing from an employer ("It is our policy to not discriminate.") instead of a well-documented honest appraisal of the issues, the investigator loses all respect for that employer.

When I did EEO work for the EEOC, if an employer sent me generalized drivel, my reaction was, how stupid does he think I am? Yet, this is what the Lab began doing. One well-documented "no cause" case that had been investigated and written by Mark Trujillo was later rewritten to say nothing of substance. A solidly documented piece of work was replaced by platitudes and general denials. Why? Why ruin a strong "no cause" finding? If it were "cause" it would at least have made sense.

"UPSTAIRS"

Soon after the new personnel director, George Damoulos, began work and the consultants had finished their review, the reorganizations began. Our Group Leader, Dimas Chavez, was moved "upstairs", and the Group's name was changed (more than once). The Group was placed under Personnel, and the communication line to the Director's Office was severed. (This placed Group members in a difficult spot when they had to oppose an action of their boss, the Personnel Director.) The Group was then split. Responsibilities, one by one, were removed. Vacated positions went unfilled.

For hours, Ed Trujillo and I argued with the Personnel Director about our approach to equal employment. He wanted us to look for "business necessity" arguments to defend management decisions. It seemed to me that he was under pressure to do something about us. The handwriting on the wall was in boldface letters.

NEW GROUP

He told us we would no longer handle informal complaints. They would be handled by a new

Group: the Organization-Employee Development Group which would stop complaints at the lowest level, he said. We wondered about this, because this is what we had been doing. What had not set well was that sometimes our resolutions had involved counseling managers to remedy their actions. This brought pressure to bear on Personnel.

The Personnel Department was there to serve, to get along with management, not to police it. This is precisely why the EEO unit should be independent from Personnel. We also quit reviewing personnel hiring and selection actions. A relic of the eliminated function exists today in the blank for "PAD-4" signature on personnel action forms. Today, the blank goes unsigned.

During the time our Group was under siege, I told the Personnel Director to find out exactly what our superior wanted us to do. "If she wants us to cover for discrimination," I said, "then I won't do that, and I want another job." Shortly thereafter, the Personnel Director asked me if I would like to help out in the Wage and Salary Group. Eventually, the move was made permanent, and I became a compensation analyst.

STAFF RELATIONS

A new Group called Staff Relations was established to process employee grievances and formal EEOC and HRC complaints. This Group would also prepare the Affirmative Action Plan required by the Office of Federal Contract Compliance (OFCCP). When I left the Lab, there were about three people in this Group. All the former EEO people had been replaced. The new Group was quite understaffed. Nobody investigates informal complaints anymore.

Since I left, I understand that Dennis Good began work (around mid-July) as a Group Leader of a new Group once again called Employee Relations (back to square one — it was called that when I started work there.) The Group combines Staff Relations and the Employee Organizational Assistance Group. (Its name

changed.)

The Group Leader, Good, is positioned so that he will report to the Personnel Director and to the (Acting) Equal Employment Officer (appointed when Dimas Chavez left) who reports to the Associate Director for Technical Support who reports to the Director. Somewhere in this scheme the legal department enters in. If compliance with equal employment laws and good faith efforts to settle valid EEO complaints can make a comeback in this hierarchy, it will be interesting to see how it is done.

DISCRIMINATION

Is there discrimination at the Lab? I challenge anyone to show me a large employment force where it never happens. With 7,000 employees, there is bound to be some. It can take any form. I've seen women in vendettas against men, Hispanics can give Anglos a hard time as well as vice versa. The important question becomes: Is there a mechanism to deal with the discrimination that is bound to take place where people gather to work?

Sometimes a practice can discriminate, and no one really notices. The Lab still sends out pre-employment questionnaires asking women if they are pregnant, when their last period was, and other related non-sensical questions that other companies, under the pressure of feminist groups, eliminated ten or fifteen years ago.

The question cannot be justified by toxic exposure arguments, because they are asked of everyone, not just those who will work with toxic materials. When I hired on, I was asked computerized questions that were insulting and nobody's business. Part of the physical exam was degrading and about as far from modern concepts of respectful women's health care as you can get. The examining doctor was patriarchal, condescending, and rude. Was he sexist? I'd say so.

PENDULUM SWINGS

Within the past year, there was discussion about removing the general statement about Equal Employment Affirmative Action on Laboratory forms. The only reason I heard for this was,

"the pendulum is swinging back." In a male-dominated, new-technology, defense-related organization, more emphasis on Affirmative Action, not less, is needed.

As for percentages of hispanics, Native Americans, females, blacks, older employees, handicapped employees, or any group — these tell but part of the story. Progress came about as a result of affirmative efforts; it didn't just happen. And in talking about progress, you have to look at what kinds of jobs people are in. Finally, if people are treated poorly, then all the numbers in the world won't show progress.

The Lab has been accused of nepotism. Feminist groups, years ago, pointed out how nepotism rules hurt women, not men. Under equal employment law, strict nepotism rules were eliminated. Surely no one is advocating that all relatives be fired (translate relatives* to wives, because that is what used to happen). The problem is when relatives are given preference over other qualified people or if they are being hired when others are being laid off. A strong EEO compliance section can prevent this sort of problem — if it has the authority to review such actions and be listened to.

PHILOSOPHY CHANGED

Ed Trujillo, Paul Maestas, and I were told by consultants that the philosophy on EEO had changed since Reagan had become President. Another consultant told Ed and me that the Lab wanted to force complainants who went to outside agencies (EEOC) into litigation. The Lab is still using "pending litigation" as an excuse not to discuss individual complaints. Why this insistence upon litigation? It is expensive. Is it a way to punish those of us who filed with EEOC?

Critics of the Lab aren't meanies interested in indicting the place. All the criticism has come about because open dialogue was impossible. The criticism I have seen has been to one end only: to get the Director to set the tone for treating all people with respect and dignity and to once again emphasize those EEO laws that the people of this country said they wanted.

TRAVEL

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Switzerland of the Rockies

By Merrilllee A. Dolan

JOURNAL CORRESPONDENT

Switzerland is less than a day's drive from Albuquerque. The Switzerland of the Rockies, Ouray, Colo., nestles at the foot of striated cliffs and snow-capped peaks. At 7,800 feet, Ouray looks like a postcard picture of a Swiss Alps village.

Yet Ouray, named for Ute Indian Chief Ouray, is 100 percent Western United States in history and culture.

No other town can claim such wonders: a waterfall that shakes the earth, an outdoor swimming pool fed by a hot springs named Uncompahgre by Ute Indians, more four-wheel drive vehicles per capita than any place else and a nightly show by famous Western singer C.W. McCall. From its rock and mineral shops to its sloping streets and Victorian homes with brilliant gardens, Ouray, in the heart of the San Juan Mountains, is beautiful beyond comparison.

To get to Ouray, take I-25 to the Cuba-Aztec exit, go north on Highway 44 to Aztec. From there, take U.S. 550 to Durango and Silverton, then continue north 22 miles to Ouray.

Box Canyon, at the south end of town, is a narrow corkscrew-shaped chasm through which a waterfall crashes 285 feet. Stairs, damp with spray, lead down to a wide spot where, in the dim light that filters through a crevice, people can get a close-up sense of the falls.

Here, midway between where the falls crash down from above, they roar forward a short distance before shooting out the crevice and plunging thunderously into the Uncompahgre River.

Another treat in Ouray is the large outdoor mineral-water pool at the north end of Main Street. Geothermal springs feed 540 gallons a minute of 155-degree water into the pool. The large oval-shaped pool's temperature is kept at 85 to 90 degrees by pumping in cold water.

To lie back in the tepid waters and look up to see mauve-colored cliffs towering to 5,000 feet is unforgettable. But the pool is only a preview of what awaits discovery in the surrounding country.

The San Juan Mountains are crisscrossed with old mining-camp roads, originally burrow pack-train trails.

Guided Jeep tours over these "roads" are the best way to see the country, learn its history and get a run-down on the plants and animals of the area.

The half-day Yankee Boy Basin tour goes to an Alpine wildflower paradise. Twin waterfalls form the backdrop to a meadow teeming with blue columbine, tall stalks of cobalt-blue Nelson's larkspur, white geranium, yellow-topped parsley, little creamy parrot's beak, clusters of pink nodding-onion flowers, blue chiming bells, waxy-white marsh marigolds, scarlet paintbrush, high-altitude sunflowers and bright rose-colored sedum — to name a few. Flowers reach their peak the first week of August.

An all-day tour over 13,144-foot Imogene Pass takes in the Smuggler and Tomboy mine ruins, winds past the still-active Camp Bird Mine and stops in Telluride for lunch. Three peaks higher than 14,000 feet can be seen from atop chilly Imogene Pass.

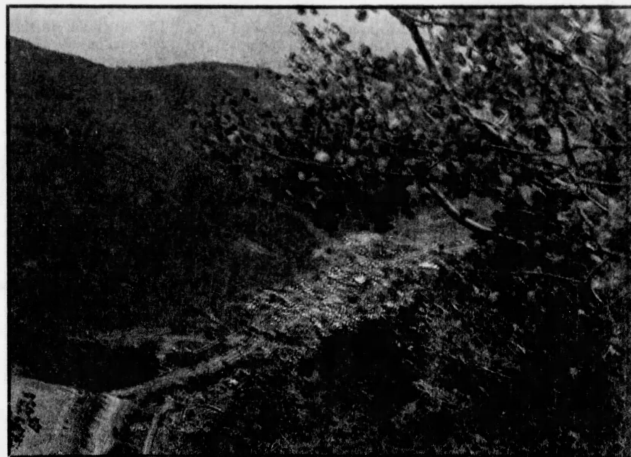
Passengers brace themselves as the Jeep whines and moans and bounces over rocks and foot-deep ruts where water gushes across the road.

Suddenly the Jeep stops, and the driver hops out. He scoops a handful of what appears to be pink snow.

"Smell this," he says. "What's it remind you of?"

"Watermelon!" someone says.

"Yep. That's why it's called watermelon snow. But don't eat it, or you'll get the



Telluride, once a mining town and now a year-round resort, glimmers at sunset.

Colorado quick-step. The color is caused by a form of algae."

Near Telluride the driver points to the valley where some of the world's first alternating current was used. Developed to power the King Gold Mine, it gave Telluride the best lighting in the country.

At an old mine, a whistling marmot peers from a pile of rocks at the noisy Jeep. With luck, a weasel might be spotted before the return to Ouray at 6 p.m.

Ouray has a number of restaurants within walking distance of most lodgings. The Outlaw restaurant's cookout is first-rate. A Jeep transports guests from motels to a mountain spot beside a river. Campfires roar, and the scents of rib-eye steak and skillet-fried fresh vegetables waft through the air. After dinner, guests roast marshmallows.

Four and a half miles north of town, the Bar C Chuckwagon dinner bell sounds, signaling, "Come and get it." After guests load their plates with food and fill tin cups

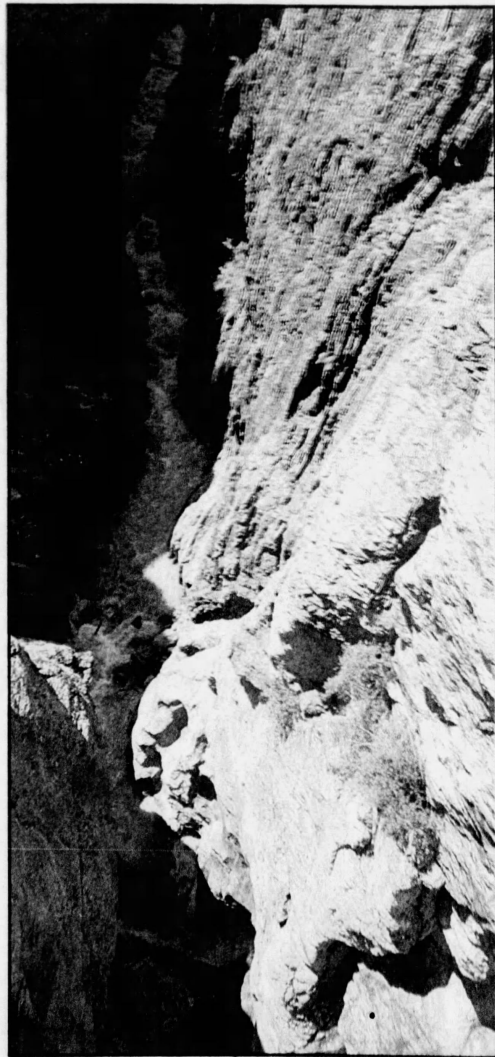
with campfire coffee, the New River Wranglers play and sing Sons of the Pioneers songs and other Western favorites.

Each evening at Ouray's Old Opera House, C.W. McCall's show entertains all age groups. McCall beckons children to the front row where they clap and sing along with him to "convoy" and other McCall creations about Jeeps and mountain-driving disasters.

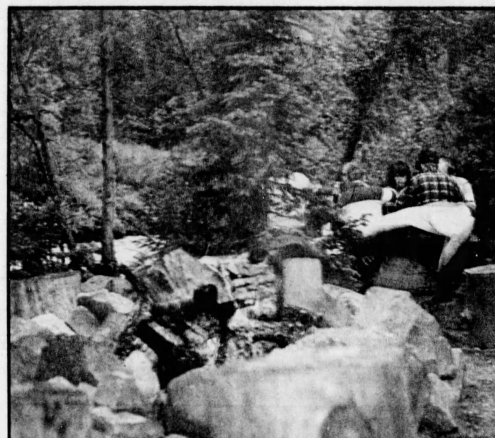
Ouray's heritage comes to life on a tour, 3,350 feet into the mountain, of an operating gold and silver mine, the Batchelor-Syracuse. "Keep what you pan" is the rule as your guide shows you how to pan for gold in a stream that flows from the mine. Mine tours run from June 15 through Sept. 10.

Fishing, horseback riding and hiking are also popular in Ouray County. A trail to Cascade Creek Falls starts in town at the east end of Eighth Street.

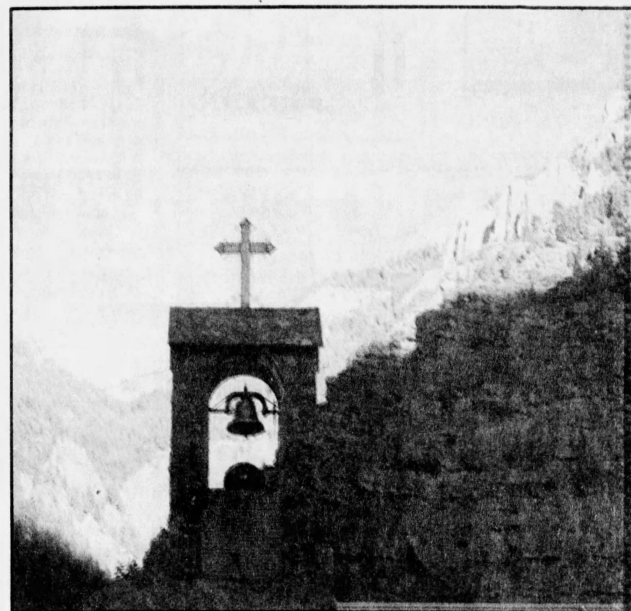
Merrilee A. Dolan is an Albuquerque freelance writer



Canyon Creek's Box Canyon Falls, seen from a bridge.



Customers of one restaurant are taken here for a barbecue.



Mountains form a scenic backdrop for St. Daniel's Catholic Church in Ouray.

PHOTOS BY MERRILLEE A. DOLAN

Southern Comfort

Gracious Atlanta Proves the South Can Rise Again

By Merrilee A. Dolan

JOURNAL CORRESPONDENT

Bright gardens, soft green lawns, splashing fountains and acre upon rolling acre of native pine forests rise throughout the city of Atlanta, cushioning mansions and giving the place a park-like quality.

It's easy to see why this state capital ranks high on favorite-city lists.

Although Atlanta has its share of big-city dazzle, its friendliness makes it more like a "hometown" than the fast-paced, large city it is.

But there is more to Atlanta than greenery and friendly people.

A visit to Atlanta is like a walk through the pages of an American history book. Monuments, memorials, even restaurants celebrate pivotal chapters in the American saga.

Atlanta's distinctive personality was born, like the legendary phoenix, of ashes and death. Torched and reduced to rubble during the Civil War, young Atlanta rebuilt and became a hub of industry and commerce. The city became a symbol of the New South and eventually a nexus of the civil rights movement as native son Martin Luther King, Jr. rallied nonviolent protests. Modern Atlanta is a progressive upbeat city with a deep sense of how the past shaped the present.

The civil rights movement is memorialized in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District. The two-block area includes the Nobel Peace Prize winner's birthplace, a modest two-story home, and the surprisingly small Ebenezer Baptist Church where Dr. King delivered nation-shaking sermons about freedom and equality. Light streams through stained-glass windows, and a warmth flows out from the church's attractive altar.

Surrounding Dr. King's gravesite are fountains, a pool, the Center for Nonviolent Social Change and the Freedom Hall Complex. Here visitors can view a film that chronicles the struggles and victories of the civil rights movement.

An outing to sprawling Stone Mountain State Park, 16 miles east of Atlanta, beckons visitors to a more distant past. The 3,200-acre park centers around a granite mountain, 820 feet high, in which is carved the largest bas-relief in the world. Confederacy President Jefferson Davis and Confederate Gens. Robert E. Lee and Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson rise out of the rock like giant ghosts emerging from a blue mist.

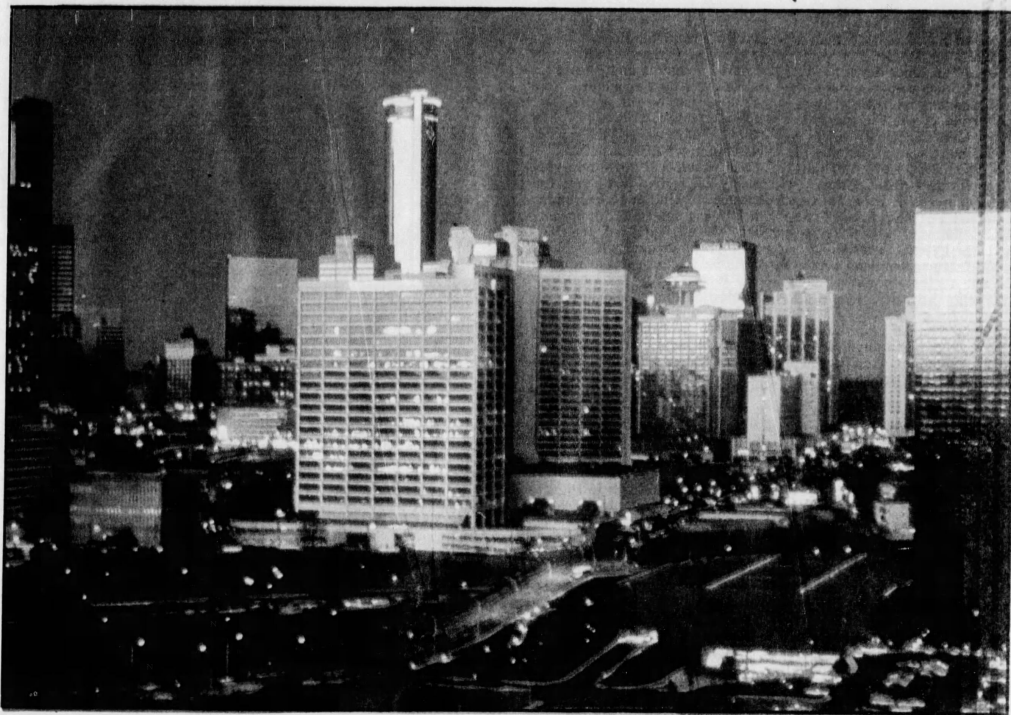
A tram airlifts people to the top of the mountain affording a close-up view of the carving. Passengers marvel as the majestic figures emerge larger than life.

The 90-by-190-foot carving rests in a hollow the size of a city block. Lee's head is 15½ feet high. Details, even hair strands, are visible. The sculpture's relief is so deep a car could drive over the back of Lee's horse. The project, begun more than 60 years ago and put on hold more than once, claimed two lives before it was completed in 1970.

From atop the dome-topped mountain, the view of woods and lake below is superb. But the mountain holds its own surprises. Here and there are eroded depressions filled with rain water. Two kinds of minute crustaceans, silver clam shrimp and pinkish fairy shrimp, appear in the pools during the rainy seasons, usually in spring and fall. These creatures, less than an eighth of an inch long, disappear but leave eggs when the pools evaporate. An 11-year-old boy from Atlanta discovered the shrimp.

Plants also grow on the more than 285-million-year-old rock outcropping. In early fall, bright yellow Confederate daisies, *Viguiera porteri*, spring from rock crevices, splashing such sunny color across the granite that a Yellow Daisy Festival is held in their tribute.

Stone Mountain's "War in Georgia" exhibit holds its audience spellbound as it recalls



Torched during the Civil War, Atlanta has become a hub of industry and commerce and a symbol of the New South.

characters and places from one of history's bloodiest chapters.

Miniature soldiers, narration and sound effects reenact fierce Civil War battles in an 1864 setting of Atlanta and hamlets on the path of Savannah. Troops light up in advances, retreats and flanking strategy. Muskets and cannons flash and crackle. The course of the war moves in cadence with Sherman's March to the Sea. The exhibit is one of the most educational American history displays anywhere.

A lazy paddlewheel boat trip on the Scarlett O'Hara around 363-acre Stone Mountain Lake while the soft ring of carillon bells floats over the water reflects the serenity of the Southland's green countryside. Bells from around the world ring out from a tower that sits on a peninsula in the lake. The Bells of Stone Mountain can be heard for three-fourths of a mile.

Stone Mountain's other attractions included an antebellum plantation to explore, a steam train, an ice-skating rink, golf course, a beach, a summer laser show, camp sites, an inn and more. Visitors can dine at Stone Mountain or return to Atlanta for dinner.

Atlanta's restaurants will satisfy any taste. Pittypat's Porch, inspired by "Gone With the Wind," features a porch stashed with old rocking chairs for patrons to sit in while they nibble little chicken-wing "drumsticks" and await their table.

Atlanta is home of the world's largest drive-in restaurant. The Varsity, across from Georgia Tech, opened more than 50 years ago with a promise to "get you to the game on time." Lunch time finds a crush of secretaries, clerks, police and other public servants, lawyers and business people crowding into endless winding lines that move with miraculous speed. Fingers and hand blur behind the long counter as loads of hotdogs, hamburgers, fries and onion rings make the fastest trip in history from



PHOTO: MERRILEE A. DOLAN

Confederate heroes are depicted on the largest bas-relief in the world at Stone Mountain.

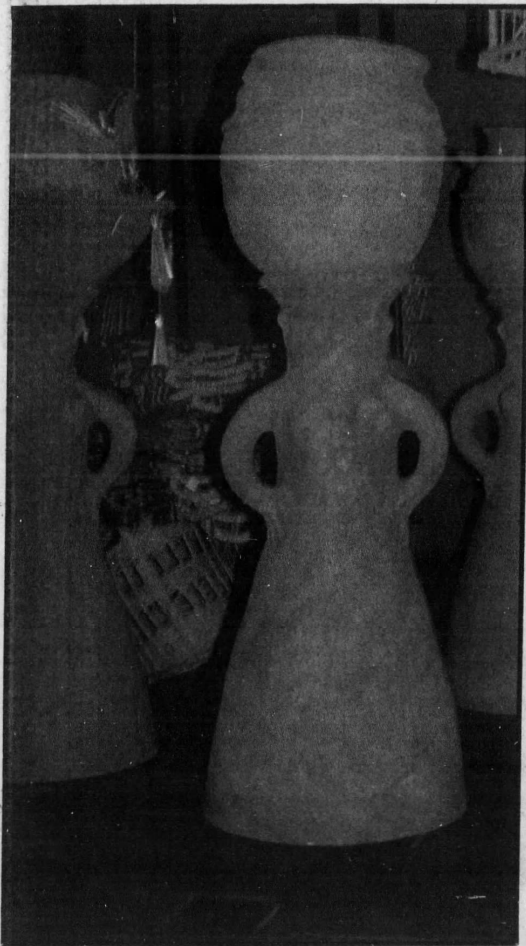
stove to plate. The Varsity is grassroots Atlanta. Unforgettable.

Atlanta, a city of more than two million, has more than a person can take in on one visit. Downtown hums with business. Peachtree Center has ritzy lucheon spots and boutiques. Nearby, low-cost apparel shops line streets reminding shoppers that this is the heart of textile country. It's not unusual to see a woman in a white choir

robe standing on a corner belting out gospel songs.

Come the weekend, a professional gospel show may be on the calendar. Perhaps a famous opera singer is due to perform. Or the Atlanta Symphony will feature James Brown. And teens will gather at the coliseum for a breakdancin' rap show. This peachy-state capital has something for everyone.

Juárez Offers All of Mexico's Crafts



The spirit of the tropical Isthmus of Tehuantepec is reflected in this unusual water cooler stand.

"And as for myself, I have never in all the days of my life

Seen things that so delighted my heart. For I saw among them

Wonderful works of art and was astonished by the subtle

Ingenuity of the men of those distant lands ..."

— Albrecht Dürer, German painter and engraver, 1471-1528

By Merrilee A. Dolan

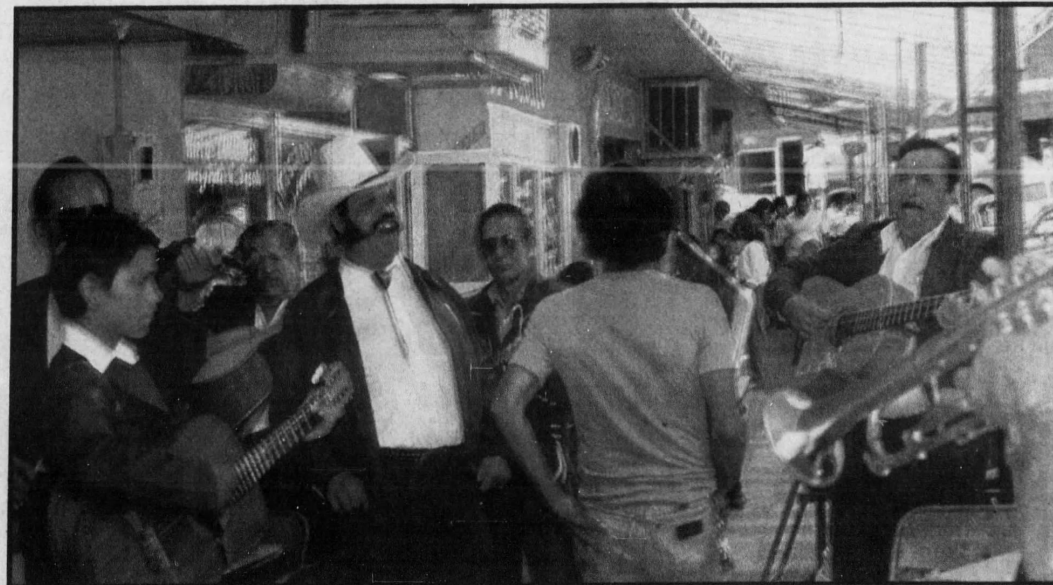
WRITTEN FOR THE JOURNAL

JUÁREZ, MEXICO — More than 460 years after Europeans first expressed amazement at the treasures Cortez had sent them from Mexico, a shopping visit to Juárez, 270 miles south of Albuquerque, still excites the imagination. Of all the countries of the Americas, Mexico maintains the greatest tradition of varied crafts, and many of the best of them can be found in the convenient shopping areas of Ciudad Juárez.

In the 1960s, the Mexican government built the Centro PRONAF to appeal to tourists and to showcase the country's decorum and grandeur. The PRONAF houses shops and an attractive arts and crafts center, all with fixed prices; a museum of art and history; fine restaurants and hotels. PRONAF stores display an array of crafts that staggers the imagination.

The PRONAF's folk art center, the FONART, displays silver earrings, rings, bracelets and pins from the mines near the town of Taxco. One popular earring style is the simple crescent shape. Another is fine-wire filigree fashioned into lacy designs from which dangle tiny silver balls and teardrops. Butterflies, once associated with the soul, love, flowers and the flickering fire, form the basis of many jewelry designs, from delicate filigree to heavy engraved pieces inlaid with mother-of-pearl, turquoise or malachite. Miniature charms for bracelets include the widely used pre-Hispanic scorpion and the jointed fish with delicate overlaid scales. Silver should be stamped with a 925 or an eagle to signify sterling.

Many crafts harken back to pre-conquest days. From the Sierra de Puebla comes *amate* bark paper painted



PHOTOS BY STEPHANIE MORGAN

Mariachis entertain along a Juárez street lined with curio shops.

with designs of brilliant red, green, blue and gold. Each design is hand-painted and unique. One might depict graceful, bright green and red birds with intertwining flowers and scroll-like twists, another a rural scene of people in profile making music and farming while birds, deer and lions play in the background and the sun, moon and stars hang in the sky.

Copperware comes from several places, but none surpasses the hand-hammered, forged copper called *martillado* from Santa Clara de Cobre, in the heart of Tarascan Indian country in southwestern Mexico's state of Michoacán. Coppersmiths inherited their craft from Tarascan Indians, whose knowledge of metallurgy was among the most advanced of any people in Mexico.

Small *cazos* (traditional copper cooking pots with handles on each side), cups for chocolate, trays with

fluted or engraved designs, pitchers, plates, jugs, washbasins and miniature dishes for children fill large open display shelves. Although expensive, copper is popular in Mexico, for it lasts many years. Copper pots coated with tin on the inside are a common sight at fiestas, where they hold boiled chicken or tantalizing soups. Authentic Santa Clara de Cobre copperware is lighter than its imitation, which is iron sprayed with copper-colored paint.

From the state of Michoacán come lacquer chests of drawers, boxes, trays and bowls decorated with bright leaves and flowers of red, gold and green on a background of black or creamy white. The pre-Hispanic lacquer craft, somewhat on the decline

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Juárez Offers Crafts From All Across Mexico

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because it is laborious and poorly paid, involves inlay. The artisan cuts a design into the lacquer background and fills it with a contrasting color of lacquer, then polishes it, achieving an Oriental appearance.

Mexican common pottery has a special appeal. Suns seem to make everyone happy, and craftsmen from the pottery center of Metepec near Mexico City recognize this. They produce clay suns with faces. Resembling giant sunflowers with large centers encircled by stubby rays, the suns' expressions vary from happy to droll. Metepec suns, which sometimes are up to two feet in diameter, decorate *cantina* patio walls and the faces of houses.

Clay trees of life also come from Metepec. The Roman Catholic Church introduced the idea of the tree with an Adam and Eve motif to teach the idea of original sin, but the Indians added happy flowers and birds, creating a truly Mexican product.

Internationally recognized blackware vases, pots and animal figures come from the Zapotec Indian village of Coyotepec just south of the town of Oaxaca in southern Mexico. Village potter Doña Rosa Real de Nieto hit the jackpot in 1952 when she accidentally scratched a dried, unfired pot

with a stone, then fired it. The pot emerged shining black where it was scratched. She scratched a larger area on another pot and fired it. It too emerged gleaming jet. Coyotepec's pottery had been shades of gray, an effect achieved with special wood and an oxygen-reduction process that created smoke in the firing pit. Doña Rosa rediscovered an ancient technique for polishing already outstanding gray ceramics.

From the Isthmus of Tehuantepec in southern Oaxaca, where Mexico narrows, comes a special pottery item that is displayed in the FONART. Tehuantepec men potters produce stands called *cabezas de tinajas*, water coolers made of enormous female figures with long skirts, thin arms and clown-like features. On their heads (*cabezas*), they balance enormous tubs — (*tinajas*) designed to hold cool, wet sand. A second tub for holding water sits inside the first one.

The theme of death in clay crafts startles non-Mexicans but soon makes them laugh. In Mexican art, death becomes a personality with an ironic grin. Since before the conquest, Mexicans have accepted death as part of life. During the celebration of All Souls Day, beginning in the last week of October, they display and eat small grinning sugar skulls, manipulate skeleton



PHOTO BY MERRILLEE A. DOLAN

The face used on this glazed vase has its roots in pre-Conquest art.

puppets to create a death dance and play with little figures that pull behind them a string of tiny coffins. As macabre as they seem at first glance, mockery and humor lurk behind representations of death as

skulls with pink flowers painted on their cheeks.

During Mexico's colonial period, from 1519 to 1810, Spanish ceramic techniques — glazes, the kick wheel and ovens built to reach hot firing temperatures — made their way to the town of Puebla. Gleaming tiles popped up all over church domes, park fountains, floors, walls and buildings. Today, Mexican tiles remain popular for kitchens, bathrooms and decorative work. Talavera tiles, which originated in Spain, display designs of cobalt blue, clear yellow and dark red in glistening white backgrounds. Tiles with swirls of color and petal-like designs come from Dolores Hidalgo and San Luis de la Paz, both in Guanajuato, where Spanish ceramic methods and indigenous designs combine to make a hybrid Mexican product.

In ceramic shops of Puebla, descendants of the artistic Toltecs added their own design motifs and colors to the Talavera style to create jars and vases that sparkle with the hues of a fine watercolor. Bowls with light yellow rims and designs of clear blue, yellow, red or gleaming black dance across the pieces.

The village of Tonalá in the west-central state of Jalisco is home of some of Mexico's most sought-after pottery: vases with Disney-like deer, rabbits and squirrels on soft blue-gray backgrounds and soap dishes

shaped like fish with splashes of flowers and leaves in blues and golds. Mexico's better glazed ceramics are suitable for table use whereas cheaper pottery should not be used to hold foods because lead in cheap glazes can leach out.

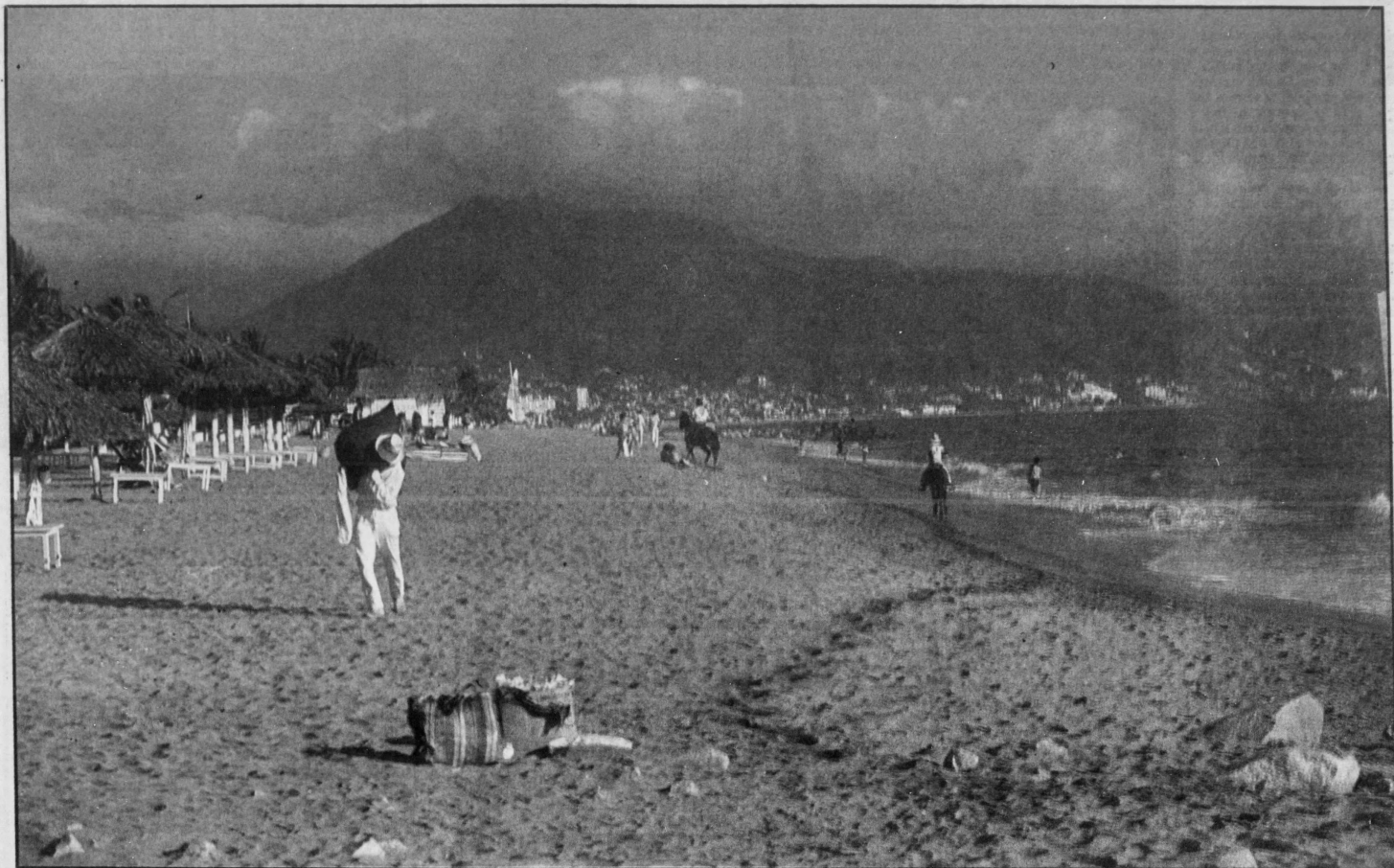
A crafts tour of Juárez should include a visit to the glass factory, *Cristales de Chihuahua*, 1916 Ote. Calle (Street) 16 de Septiembre, to watch the glass blowers at work. Craftsmen move back and forth from the great red-hot ovens, where waves of heat from temperatures of 4,000 to 5,000 degrees Fahrenheit shimmer in tubs of water.

Amber and light green drinking glasses and pitchers or sets of clear glasses with blue edges are popular, but more intriguing are the miniature glass cat families.

To get a sense of the Mexican love for bargaining, a trip to the old marketplace, *Mercado Cuauhtémoc*, is in order. Stalls are jammed with everything from live chickens to colorful *piñatas*. One can watch *piñatas* being made at the *Piñateria Bertha* on the upper floor of the market building.

A visit to Juárez to see Mexican crafts is a whirlwind introduction to folk art from around the Republic.

Merrilee A. Dolan is a free-lance writer living in Albuquerque.



A vendor peddles his wares along Puerto Vallarta's coast. Hats and blankets are always for sale along the beach.

PHOTO BY MERRILLEE A. DOLAN

Puerto Vallarta: Romantic, Restful

By Merrillee A. Dolan

WRITTEN FOR THE JOURNAL

DAY IS FADING. The sea takes on a glow of red-gold and violet. The sun shrinks to a white ball as it retreats toward that line where sky meets water. Bruised purple clouds stretch out across the horizon. Overhead, the sky darkens to inky cobalt.

The view from the terrace of Señor Chico's mountain-side restaurant in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, takes it all in. The crown on the Church of Guadalupe swells with light from the sun's long rays, and its bells begin to toll for vespers. Shouts of boys playing kickball in the courtyard below fade into darkness as lights blink on up and down the town's steep streets. The sounds of a Mexican guitar drift up from an open window in a lower level of the restaurant.

Puerto Vallarta is as romantic a seaside resort as one could hope to find. Still in many respects a fishing village, the town inhabits the lower slopes of mountains populated by iguanas, jaguars, pumas and javelinas. An occasional donkey cart still clatters over the town's cobblestone streets.

Along Banderas Bay, Mexico's largest, small coves and lagoons squeeze in between mountains and ocean. On some beaches, the Sierra Madre Mountains rise

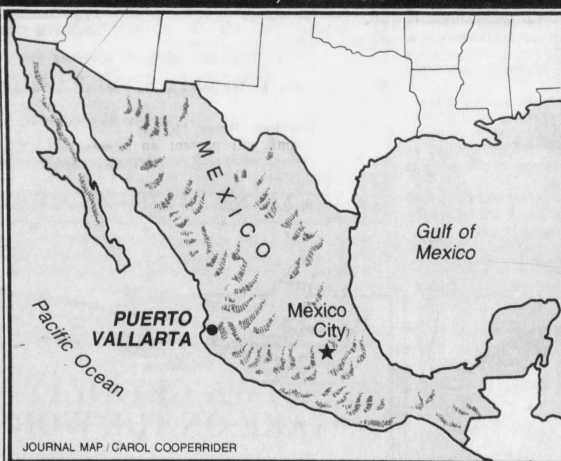
up directly behind narrow ribbons of white sand. Other beaches provide wide stretches of golden sand bordered by well-manicured flowering hedges and tall palm trees left from abandoned coconut plantations. Because law prohibits fencing beaches, all are open to hikers.

A six-hour tropical tour, available through hotels, introduces newcomers to the town and some of the surrounding country. We boarded a Volkswagen jungle bus, a "combi," which our guide informed us was air-conditioned. He fastened a side door and secured a rope across the opening. "See? Air conditioned for your tropical tour," he said.

Our breezy bus turned onto a stretch of road lined with hotels and headed toward town. The driver shifted into low gear and maneuvered through impossibly narrow, steep streets. Getting past the donkey carts posed no problem, but when we had to go around a stalled truck on a street that was so steep it pointed directly heavenward and as narrow as the eye of a needle, we groaned. "Oh no! We're stuck." By some miracle, we squeaked by without a scratch. Our driver announced we were now in Gringo Gulch.

Here on the cliffs above the Cuale River cluster white houses with red tile roofs, one of which is the town's most photographed landmark: Casa Kimberly, home of Elizabeth Taylor. An arched bridge spans the cobblestone street from the Taylor house to one formerly owned by

PUERTO VALLARTA, MEXICO



Richard Burton. The couple built the bridge after falling in love in 1963 while making "Night of the Iguana," the movie that launched the tourist rush to this

out-of-the-way paradise.

At a jewelry shop, our driver-guide stops, and we pile out. Inside, he mixes each of us a "charro negro" of tequila,

Coke and lime. Back on the road, we drive south along the Gold Coast past the ritzy mountain-side Conchas Chinas condominium development where a many-storied, spanking white house with eight waterfalls cascading down its walls catches everyone's attention.

Pink hibiscus and waxy yellow, star-shaped flowers of the Pulmeria shrub brighten the wayside. Below our high road, the blue ocean, spotted with white sight-seeing yachts, sparkles.

Beyond Mismaloya Beach, which in Indian Nahuatl means "place where the jaguar lives," we turn onto a dirt road and begin to wind into the mountains. Here and there we see huts with thatched roofs. As we pass, goats look up at us out of dark eyes while children continue playing without interruption.

On a red tile, bungalow roof, a giant iguana lizard lies motionless in the sun. The pointed fringe on its back makes it look like a rattle from prehistoric times. Puerto Vallartans like to make pets of the strange creatures, our guide says. Some of us had already learned about pet iguanas. A teen-age boy on the beach had one that he held close like a baby and introduced as "Carolina, mi amiga."

Soon the jungle thickens to a wall of green on either side of the road. Green parrots flutter in tree-top foliage as we

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Puerto Vallarta: Romantic, Restful

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bump along.

We pass the green fields of an "ejido," a cooperative farm similar to a kibbutz. Sun-bronzed men in straw hats and white pants and shirts look up from rows of crops they are tending.

At noon, we turn into the drive of a seafood restaurant sitting on a hilltop above a waterfall and pool, where people are swimming. After lunch and pink-colored tropical drinks in fish-bowl sized glasses, we head back to Mismaloya Beach, where "Night of the Iguana" was filmed. The crumbling movie set clings to cliffs above an ocean inlet. A hike to the ruins reveals falling tiles, missing doors and windows and invading jungle, all of which cast a melancholy spell. Far below, the horseshoe-shaped coast sweeps around at the base of steep mountains.

In Puerto Vallarta, a tourist can stay busy for days with horseback rides along the shore or through the countryside; glass-bottomed boat trips to see the fish; boat trips to Tahitian-like Yelapa, where seaside vendors sell coconut pies; hikes to mountain waterfalls; and parasailing. On Saturday evenings, many people show up at the Posada Vallarta for a Mexican fiesta with "mariachis," folk dances and good food.

From mornings brightened by fresh slices of mango and big pitchers of juice set in beds of ice to tropical nights with the moon rising behind the palm trees, memories of Puerto Vallarta remain as warm as the Mexican sun.

Practical Information:

Mexican businesses in the interior accept pesos only,

so tourists must change dollars to pesos at the border. The El Paso and Juárez airports have change windows (open in the daytime). Change houses (casas de cambio) in Puerto Vallarta change travelers' checks to pesos.

Avoid anxiety when changing planes in Mexican airports by locating the man who announces flights. Although he may call out flights in Spanish, he is bilingual and politely answers questions in English.

Tip by leaving 10 percent of the bill except in elegant places, where 15 percent is expected. Thirty pesos for carrying a bag is acceptable. A dollar is the customary tip for a tour guide, nothing for cab drivers, unless they do something special. Avoid overtipping, and if a service charge is added to your bill, leave no tip.

Resort wear is in order in Puerto Vallarta, but dining calls for full dress or swimsuit coverups. Tourists in very casual dress may feel out of place in Mexican airports, where travelers dress conservatively.

Temperate zone tourists visiting the tropics often get an infection which causes pain, diarrhea and fever. Drinking tap water or opening one's mouth in the shower courts illness. Brush teeth with mineral water and avoid ice in drinks. Drug stores (farmacias) and hotels sell remedies, but wise travelers pack their own favorites.

A travel agent can make travel and hotel reservations and inform you of the rules for getting into and out of Mexico's interior. "Fodor's Mexico" and "Texas Monthly Guidebook," both available at local libraries, offer invaluable tips, including how to enjoy layover time in places such as Guadalajara.

Merrilee A. Dolan is a free-lance writer living in Albuquerque.