

La Sociedad de la Entrada

After Action Report for Oñate Event 4/28/1607

Event

Juan de Oñate and the colonists held a rite of possession ceremony and feast on April 30, 1598, near Socorro del Sur (near El Paso, Texas). Termed the First Thanksgiving, the Camino Real International Heritage Center holds a Dia de los Niños (Children's Day) to celebrate. There were many children's activities including storytelling, games, a weaving exhibit from Los Golondrinas, making corn husk dolls, and a children's Mexican dance group from Arrey. The Basque Club also attended in commemoration of Oñate's event, which made it a double-header for Sam since he is a member of both groups. They were participating because Oñate and other members of the expedition also were Basques, and many can trace their heritage to that event. It was a Saturday, one day only event and visitor attendance was light. The weather was a bit windy and the air was cooled by dark clouds, enough for us to be comfortable. Rains threatened us in the afternoon and we were surrounded on three sides by dark clouds but we received no rain. For more information on the Camino Real Center see: <http://www.caminorealheritage.org/>

Muster

Eight soldados were mustered in: Roberto Valdez, Tony Campisi, Samuel Ulibarri, Dave and Bennett Poulin, Adam Flores, Benjamin Kennedy, and Brandon Johnston; and two 'Soldaderas' (camp followers): Angelina Poulin and Lucia Hernandez. Stephanie Sanchez also attended as a spectator. Roberto acted as Sargento Mayor (Sergeant Major) and Dave acted as Quartermaster, handing out the loaner gear. The museum set up a small pavilion at the entrance for us with a table and chairs. We were able to place some gear on the table for display but due to the wind we could only set out the heavy stuff.



Representing la Compania Voluntarios de San Juan de los Caballeros,
The First New Mexico Volunteers.
L-R: Roberto, Tony, Adam, Sam, Dave, Bennett, Brandon, and Benjamin.



Fiancées Lucia Hernandez and Adam Flores
Before the backdrop of Sheep Canyon..



Recruits (L-R): Brandon Johnston and Benjamin Kennedy

*S*word *D*rill

Sam and Tony demonstrated the sword drill. Then Tony instructed Bennett on some of the moves.



Tony and Bennett square off...

Pike Drill

Assembly was called. We grabbed our picas medias (half-pikes) and Sargento Mayor Valdez, assisted by Sargento Campisi and Cabo Ulibarri, led us in a spirited Pike drill.



¡Atención! ¡Al hombro - las picas! (Attention, shoulder pikes)...



¡Preparen a marchar! ¡Adelante! (Prepare to march – Forward)



Uno, Dos, Uno (need a drum – tambor)



¡Carguen las Picas! (Charge Pikes)



¡Adelante! (Advance)... “San-Tiago, San-Tiago, San-Tiago...”
(Chanting Santiago, “Saint James,” the patron Saint of Spain.)



¡Contra cavallería! ¡Carguen las picas! (Set pikes to meet cavalry)
Ouch! Looks like Dave’s about to fall over.

Comida

The museum fed us lunch including hot dogs, potato salad, chips, and soft drinks.

Museum Visit

Many of our people took time to visit the museum after lunch, especially the newcomers.



This reproduction Spanish cuera in the museum was made by our very own Roberto Valdez. He also constructed an adarga – a Moorish style bullhide shield.

In the late afternoon, about 3 pm, we were almost blown away with a renewed gust of wind. The pavilion was about to take off so we proceeded to dismantle it. And by the time we got it down the wind stopped (of course). So we decided to break down a little early.



We did it! Winded but exhilarated...

Photos by Angelina Poulin

Conclusion

Great fun as usual and for the first time we could sense the importance of the pike drill as well as the necessity of having a drummer to keep time. The museum gave us \$120.00 travel reimbursement which was distributed thus: Roberto \$20.00, Sam \$20.00, Bennett and Stevie \$20.00, Brandon and Benjamin \$20.00, Adam and Lucia \$20.00, Dave and Angelina \$20.00.

Roberto and Dave

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