

Historical Society to honor Virginia Couse Leavitt at annual meeting

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The Taos County Historical Society will honor Virginia Couse Leavitt at a lunch Sunday, May 3.

Couse Leavitt, co-founder and board member of the Couse Foundation, is the granddaughter of E. Irving Couse, a founding member of the Taos Society of Artists.

With husband Ernest Leavitt, she serves as acting curator at the Couse-Sharp Historic Site, which involves giving tours, caring for the collections and preparing special exhibitions. For over 20 years Couse Leavitt has led the restoration effort of her grandmother's garden on this site.

Couse Leavitt received her master's in art history from the University of Arizona. Since then she has devoted her time to the preservation of the Couse-Sharp Historic Site and also to researching the life, art and artistic development of E. Irving Couse and other members of the Taos Society of Artists which was founded 100 years ago.

As a recognized art historian she has lectured and published many articles in her subject area and is currently completing a major biography of Couse. She has lectured and contributed to exhibitions and publications for numerous organizations including The Taos Institute of Arts, Artists of America, Phoenix Art Museum, Albuquerque Museum and Taos Historic Museums.

In keeping with Taos Society of Artists theme, the luncheon's guest speaker will be arts patron and historian Barbara Brenner who will present "Oscar Berninghaus and his Lighter Moments."

The granddaughter Berninghaus, a member of the Taos Society of Artists, Barbara has served for decades in Taos in various capacities for Taos' historical and cultural arts organizations including Taos Historic Museums, Millicent Rogers Museum, Taos Art Association, Taos Opera Guild, and as a founding member of the Taos Fall Arts Festival.

The luncheon will be held at noon in the Los Vaqueros Dining Room at the Sagebrush Inn.



Virginia Couse Leavitt

Virginia Couse Leavitt, photographed during 2009, in the same spot where her grandfather, Eanger Irving Couse, was pictured with members of the Taos Society of Artists in the previous photo.

The luncheon features three menu options at \$25 each: New York strip steak, chicken breast and fettuccini Alfredo. Reservations are requested by Monday (April 27). For reservations, contact Ernestina Córdova at (575) 770-0681.

The Taos County Historical Society meets the first Saturday of the month, 2 p.m. at the Kit Carson Electric board room, 118 Cruz Alta Road. Current board includes: president Ernestina Córdova; vice president Benton Bond; treasurer Darren Bond; secretary Judy Weinrobe; member-at-large Paul Figueroa; ex-official Ouray Meyers; board members Jennifer Felsburg, Juanita Lavadie, Nita Murphy and Dave Córdova. The Mission of the Society is to record and preserve the irreplaceable. To become a member, visit taoscountyhistoricalsociety.org.