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The Mining Room was completely redone with a new carpet and paint. New fixtures adorn the walls and free space, and Mayor Clark Smith added many artifacts.

The Old West is alive and well in the museum's Western Village. A variety of vintage home, farm, and ranch items can be seen in the cut-away village.

Other displays feature metates, a 1937 farm tractor and other old-time farm implements, a Mennonite wagon, a colorful array of tin containers, old railroad items, fire department paraphernalia, and a sassy collection of hats. Marsha Hill, Linda Erikson, Margaret Speer, and June Hill arranged thousands of items in the museum.

Implements from Speer's Barber Shop have found their way to the museum, as have the vault door from the old First National Bank, a collection of adding machines and typewriters, and many old Hidalgo County records dating back to the 1920s. Of interest to many is a fine collection of rock specimens.

Displayed in John A. Johnson's photograph room are copies of historic photos related to the county. This collection, which is arguably one of the best in the state, is constantly being updated.

The military room, prepared by Art De La Garza and friends, houses an impressive assortment of uniforms, pictures, swords, and other memorabilia from various military campaigns. The display is a work in progress, as new items are added frequently.

Junior Gomez's carved scale model and pencil sketches of his hometown of Rodeo, New Mexico, an old railroad town nearby, are a great attraction. Visitors can almost hear Junior's guitar and harmonica music as they view his display.

The Avon room is a testament to the longevity of long-time Avon lady Lyne (Lesly) Hassenager, who spent more than 40 years delivering Avon to her customers. The Avon containers, which number in the hundreds, are a delight to both young and old.

The Doc Baxter room brings back fond memories of Dr. James H. Baxter. However, those who found themselves on the business end of a hypodermic needle might disagree—until they remember the sucker or the shiny dime that followed the shot.

Doc's widow, Emeline, generously donated items from his office to the museum, which were then arranged by John Hill.

Visitors to the museum will come away having seen the tangible history of New Mexico's bootheel. It is a place where the ghosts of the past and the folks of the present can spend a pleasant afternoon.

# HIDALGO COUNTY

## Established in 1919

**H**idalgo County was created in 1919 after being annexed from neighboring Grant County. This was done, in part, to shorten the great distances that the people of Lordsburg and towns to the south had to travel in order to reach Silver City, the county seat.

Hidalgo County's birthday is Feb. 25, 1919, when the New Mexico state legislators met in session and passed the act that officially created the new county. New Mexico had become a state only seven years before, in 1912. On January 1, 1920, Hidalgo County began the New Year with its property valued by the State Tax Commission at \$6,498,358.

According to the late Ena Mitchell, long-time Hidalgo County resident and pioneer, one of the names considered for the newly formed county was "Pyramid County," after the Pyramid Mountains prominent to the south of Lordsburg.

The name "Hidalgo" was chosen in honor of Miguel Dolores Hidalgo, who led the revolution in Mexico in 1810, which eventually led to its independence from Spain. Hidalgo County's courthouse was dedicated on September 5, 1927 and cost \$40,000 to build. Prior to this, the Muir & Birchfield Building and the original Knights of Pythias building (now demolished) were leased to house the county offices. Hidalgo County shares 86 miles of its southern border with Mexico. It is bordered to the north and east by Grant County, to the west by the state of Arizona. Because of its shape, this area is known as the "bootheel."



*The stately Hidalgo County Courthouse stands on Shakespeare Street between 3rd and 4th Streets.*

# MOM & POP'S

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