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The Hell Canyon Trip

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THE PUERTOCITO FIELD TRIP

On Sunday, February 21, Mu Alpha Nu inaugurated a series of regular field trips by sponsoring an expedition of interested persons to the Puertocito Navajo Area lying north of Magdalena and west of the Ladrones mountains, New Mexico. This first expedition had as its destination a certain little known Pueblo Viejo on a tributary of the Rio Alamosa. The party, composed of three car loads of students under the guidance of Dr. Donald Brand and Mr. Frank Hibben, went by way of the Laguna cut-off, Suwanee, and south to Field, New Mexico. Between Suwanee and Field, a small ruin, a rock shelter showing past occupation, and a fortified mesa, were discovered. Just beyond Field, on the Rio Alamosa near a prominent land mark consisting of three peaks known as Los Tres Hermanos, a group of occupied Navajo hogans was visited. The people there were friendly as always, and proved to belong to the Salt and Yucca Fruit Clans. Working up the Rio Alamosa towards Pueblo Viejo the party discovered many small ruins or sherd areas dating back to black-on-white times, as well as many old hogan sites, with late glaze wares associated. Practically every fairly level hill terrace had been the site of a small Navajo or or an Anasazi house, or of both. It was suggested that the defensive location of the sites possibly indicates the usage of this territory as a refuge area, in the troublesome days of late Pueblo IV. Bad roads and the too speedy fall of night prevented the party from reaching Pueblo Viejo, so all returned home, going by way of Puertocito, Magdalena, and Socorro.

The Puertocito Navajo Area is a little known area. According to Mr. Field, the trader at Field Post Office, some 200 Navajos now live there. It is not an official part of the Navajo reservation, although many Navajos hold government land allotments, but is included in the current Navajo Reservation extension bill.

J. C. Kelley

THE HELL CANYON TRIP

Hell Canyon, in the Manzano Mountains, was the objective of the reconnoitering trip of Sunday, February 23. On the flats of nearly every bend of Hell Canyon arroyo, sherd areas were found. The first stop was to explore the depths of an abandoned copper mine. At another point, after all had braved a herd of cattle and had climbed to various heights of a likely looking hill, Bertha Dutton found one sherd. The next point of interest was the cut made by the present stream across an old tributary that had filled up. By that time all were famished, and lunch was enjoyed under and in the shade of some cottonwoods. As after-dinner amusement, a hilarious game of soft ball in the midst of brambles was enjoyed. The memory of that game will stick in our memories for some time. At least, the girls managed to get the ball a few times. After scouting over several other sherd areas, a spring was found where Messrs. Lehmer and Kelley indulged in a short swim. We then turned up Carolina Canyon in an effort to avoid a reportedly stalled car--and found it in two feet of mud, half way up the canyon. The last stop for archaeological reconnoitering found an interesting set of pictographs on a limestone ledge. All stops after that were to explore mud depths and rock heights ahead--and to allow the boys, having pushed the last car through some mud, to catch up with the first car to push it through some more mud. Thus the top of the canyon was achieved and, with

paved road a few short miles ahead, we ignored the turnoff and came winding down the upper stretches of Hell Canyon. And so home across the starlit mesa.

S. E. Murphey

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