

BUD NEWMAN

Protector of History

by Lenore Harris Hughes
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Simeon H. (Bud) Newman III - an El Paso historian, a "superb writer" and protector for years of the UTEP Library's Special Collections archives - died Sept. 17 He was 68.

Newman, who in his youth became a monk and spent years in various monasteries, also was a student of Urbici Solar, the sculptor who put the "Christ the King" statue atop Mount Cristo Rey.

Newman's passion for history was kindled while researching the colorful life of his grandfather, Simeon H. Newman I, the feisty editor of the crusading El Paso Lone Star newspaper.

The first Simeon Newman was born in Kentucky in 1846, and came by mule train to Las Vegas, N.M., in 1869. He became co-editor of an English- Spanish newspaper called The Las Vegas Weekly Mail, railed against the infamous Santa Fe Ring and wound up in jail for libel. He later published 'The Las Cruces 34" in Las Cruces and once interviewed Billy the Kid.

Newman I came to El Paso and started the Lone Star in 1881 to crusade against gambling, saloons and prostitution. He died in 1915.

Bud Newman was born Oct. 4, 1927, to Dr. Simeon Harrison Newman II and Willie Lea Montague Newman. He graduated from Austin High School and studied art at Texas Western College under Urbici Soler.

In an article for NOVA Newman said of his studies with Soler: "I entered his class in February 1947, a number of years after he

had built his statue of Christ the King. I was a 19-year-old piece of clay. I saw a side of his personality not apparent to everyone."

During the late '40s, his brother, Fletcher, recalled, Bud began a five-year quest for the solitary life of a monk. He went to the Trappist Abbey of Our Lady of Guadalupe in New Mexico's Sangre de Cristo mountains, spent a summer in Mexico, then lived three years in Spain.

On Dec. 21, 1954, deciding the monastic life wasn't for him, he married Pilar, a dress-



maker from Madrid.

During 1965, Leon Metz, the initial archivist for the UTEP library, met Bud.

"When I first met Bud Newman, he was working in a key shop behind the old Sears store in Five Points," Metz said. "He was writing a biography of his grandfather. He impressed me so much that I asked Baxter Polk, then librarian for UTEP, if I could have him as an assistant. He was very tal-

ented, loved records. I was there 15 years, and he stayed a little longer, writing articles for various publications as well as catalogs for the archives.”

“He loved reading and writing about the Southwest,” Fletcher said. “As a member of the El Paso County Historical Society and its board of directors, he wrote many articles about the Newman and Geck families.” Bud was also a member of the Westerners and the Pioneers of El Paso.

“He was a superb writer,” Metz said. “In fact, he was one of the finest writers I have ever encountered. He wrote beautifully penned letters and had a good way with words, always to the point and pregnant with meaning.”

He is survived by his wife, Pilar; brother, Fletcher; sister, Frances Thiel; and daughters, Mercedes, and Angelina.

“He was a generous and loving man and always helped me,” his brother said.

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