



The Douglas-Williams House

The Douglas Historical Society

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douglasazhistory.com

July 27, 2022

Jesús Ernesto Ibarra Quijada, President
Asociación Historia de Nacozari de García, A.C.

Dear Mr. Ibarra and Citizens of Nacozari de Garcia:

Thank you very much for inviting The Douglas Historical Society to be part of the 125th Anniversary of the founding of Nacozari de Garcia, Sonora — sister city of Douglas, Arizona.

Our historical connections go way back to 1897 when the Phelps-Dodge Co. purchased the Pilares Mine and Rancho Juarez 175 miles south of the international border. The company soon recognized the necessity for processing and concentrating the ore locally before transporting it via railroad to the smelter in Douglas, constructed in 1904. The new town of Nacozari de Garcia was built for this purpose and as a railroad terminal.

Both Dr. James Douglas and his son, Jimmy, were employed by Phelps-Dodge. Dr. Douglas identified the location for a new smelter on vacant land adjacent to the small border town of Agua Prieta, Sonora. The site was downhill from the copper mines in Bisbee and Nacozari, and there was a source of water.

The municipality of Douglas, Arizona was founded in 1901 and formally incorporated in 1905. Jimmy Douglas was very involved in the organization of the new town, laying out the grid of streets and avenues, and deciding where parks, schools, and churches should be situated. He also named the town after his father.

The Douglas family lived in Nacozari for several years, while Jimmy worked as Phelps-Dodge supervisor. They were residing there when the Jesus Garcia train disaster occurred. During the explosion a piece of the train landed in their yard! In 1908, the Jesus Garcia Monument was placed in the Nacozari Plaza, and Dr. James Douglas — then President and Chairman of the

Board of Directors — was the main speaker at the dedication ceremony. In 1920, a sculptured fountain was placed in Nacozari Plaza. Jimmy Douglas hired the sculptor and paid for his work.


By the end of 1909, Jimmy Douglas and family had moved to their new home in Douglas, a two-story house located at 1001 D Avenue across from the 10th Street Park. They owned the house until 1943 when it was purchased by the Williams family. In 1989 it was sold to the Arizona Historical Society by Ben Williams, Jr., so that it could serve as the city's museum. The Douglas Historical Society was created in 1990 to care for the property and the collections, for the benefit of the people of Douglas and surrounding areas.

Jimmy Douglas' son, Lewis, had an illustrious career which included serving as U.S. Ambassador to Great Britain during the 1950's. While conversing with Winston Churchill and Gen. Bernard Montgomery on the subject of bravery, Lewis declared that Jesus Garcia was the bravest man he had ever known.

The most recent connection that our organization has had with Nacozari was the occasion of reaffirming the Sister Cities agreement first signed in 1977. It took place at our museum, The Douglas-Williams House, on the 21st of November 2014, during the annual commemoration of the beginning of the Mexican Revolution.

We send our warmest greetings to you and all our friends in Nacozari de Garcia on the occasion of the 125th Anniversary of its founding.

Sincerely,



DeNise Bauer, President

Cindy Hayostek, Historian

