

University of Northern Colorado

Scholarship & Creative Works @ Digital UNC

Great Sand Dunes National Park

Colorado National Parks

Establishment Day Release

Harold P. Schaafsma

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digscholarship.unco.edu/grsa>

GREAT SAND DUNES NATIONAL MONUMENT
Alamosa, Colorado

March 11, 1956

ESTABLISHMENT DAY

March 17 is usually associated with Saint Patrick's Day but this date also commemorates a very important event in the San Luis Valley. It represents "Establishment Day" when Great Sand Dunes National Monument was created by Presidential Proclamation in 1932.

The following record was taken from the Alamosa Journal, dated April 1, 1932. It illustrates the continued efforts of the good people of the San Luis Valley to have the sand dunes set aside under the protection of the National Park Service.

"The creation of the Great Sand Dunes National Monument is a source of gratification to all those interested in the designation which only came after years of agitation and effort. In addition to preservation of this masterpiece of nature, the designation will result in much publicity for the valley and attendant travel."

"To Mrs. Ward Darley, sister-in-law of the late Reverend George S. Darley who was most beloved in Alamosa, the Journal is indebted for the short account that follows of the inception of the idea and its final success. Mrs. Darley was president of Monte Vista Chapter V of P.E.O. Sisterhood when this organization started the active campaign in which other valley P.E.O. chapters were enlisted in the concerted efforts. In June of 1930 Mrs. Frank C. Spencer, who is the wife of Dr. Spencer, historian and member of Adams State College, gave an address advocating the creation of the Sand Dunes National Monument and suggested that the movement be taken up by the chapter."

All Americans, wherever and wherever they may be, share in that great heritage which is represented by our National Park System-our scenery and our historic shrines. As our vacation lands, they bring enjoyment of mind, body and spirit to millions of Americans each year. The Department of the Interior is charged by Congress with preserving and protecting our heritage for the benefit and enjoyment of this and future generations. Your Great Sand Dunes National Monument is a jewel among the cluster of national park gems.

Harold F. Schaafsma
Superintendent