



Once upon a time there was a small town in northern New Mexico called Santa Fe. For over 300 years it had been the capitol of the northerly expansion of Spain in North America. It was the terminus of the Camino Real to Mexico as well as the end of the Santa Fe Trail which opened the westward expansion of the US. Despite the military takeover by the US, the influx of traders and settlers from the East, the arrival of freight by railroad and the grant of Statehood in 1912, Santa Fe remained a small, predominantly Hispanic community.

Inspired by the healthful qualities of clear air and the high, dry climate, a TB sanatorium, Sunmount, was established that attract new people/into the community who found a commonality with many artists and creative people in residence. Southwestern archeology was still in its infancy but its enthusiasts made Santa Fe its focus. This was "The City Different" with its own unique identity and diverse population.

In 1926 Santa Fe had a population of about 11,000. You could walk to the Plaza from wherever you lived. You probably lived in a house that you or your family built. Everyone knew everyone. Everyone went home for lunch. Everything you needed was downtown; stores, schools, government, theatres, museums, utilities, gas stations, hardware, lumber. The road to Albuquerque was unpaved.

The town valued its heritage and its uniqueness and wanted to keep those characteristics that differentiated it from other places. Into this tight self-sufficient structure came a proposal to turn the Sunmount property on the edge of town into a summer home resort and entertainment center for "summer visitors". The proposal was received as disruptive to traditional community values by a large number of people who assembled to mount opposition to this perceived exploitation.

This was the beginning of the Old Santa Fe Association. Stimulated by a passion for this unique community, it was on the cutting edge of what became the Historic Preservation movement across the country. It was also unique in recognizing the importance of social and cultural values beyond the physical buildings. This group of civic leaders was ultimately successful in its first endeavor. The Articles of Incorporation were signed by J.A. Massie, Mary Austin, Frank Mera, James H. McMillan and Gustave Baumann.

Mary Austin and Ina Sizer Cassidy were the leading stalwarts over this period of time.

Apparently Santa Fe went through the Depression and WWII with so little internal turmoil that it was not until 1946 that the organization was again galvanized into action. The amended Incorporation documents were signed by: Witter Bynner, David Hughes, Frank Mera, Henry Kaune, Mrs. Gerald Cassidy, Martha L.D. Field, Mrs. Francis D.

Wilson, George M. Bloom, Marion Curtis Kinney, Eleanor Brownell, Alice Howland, Helen B. Steven, Reese P. Fullerton.

The postwar period brought new pressures, a proposal for a new highway to bisect the downtown which OSFA and the Archbishop were instrumental in defeating. OSFA then sponsored with \$2000 the first General Plan for Santa Fe in 1948.

In 1956 major changes in OSFA leadership occurred with the death of Francis Wilson and George Broom. Inez Sizer Cassidy and Mrs. Charles Kenney went off the Board. But they were replaced by Webb Young, Nina Otero Warren and Anita Gonzales Thomas. Oliver LaFarge, Kenneth Chapman and May Spitz served in Advisory capacity and in 1956 Oliver LaFarge and Irene VonHorvath drafted the first Historic District regulations for Santa Fe which were successfully tested in the New Mexico Supreme Court in 1961. The impetus for these regulations was the building of the very contemporary Desert Inn on the site of the Boyle-orchard as well as the impending expansion of the capitol complex into the Barrio de Analco, now a National Historic District.

1961 was the year of OSFA's biggest failure in losing the Nusbaum house. In spite of a major fund raising campaign for purchase, the building was leveled and the site became a parking lot for 25 years.

Also in 1961 OSFA bought the Borrego house and restored it for use by the Three Cities of Spain. El Zaguán also became available at this time and there was public interest in protection of both properties. A private corporation for its conservation took over El Zaguán. The Incorporators were the Meems, Marshall McCune, and Amelia White. IRS ruling prevented OSFA from receiving tax-exempt gifts because of its civic involvement and lobbying activities to influence legislation. In consultation with the National Trust the necessity became apparent for an organization to receive and preserve properties tax free while leaving OSFA free to affect public policy in historic preservation and cultural issues. The Historic Santa Fe Foundation was set up to serve this function.

OSFA also led a campaign against building a new Post Office on the Federal Oval which was then a forested park on the fringe of town. (No Paseo de Peralta). Over 4000 signatures were collected to no avail. The building design was obviously under different influence from those that built the old Post Office on Cathedral Place. It was another example of Federal funds determining Santa Fe policy. Through these events membership in OSFA rose to over 800.

Sanctuario de Guadalupe was also saved due largely to the efforts of a Board member. And the paving of Canyon Road was a hot topic with heavy discussion of curbs and proper drainage.

The 60's saw the culmination of the Plaza portal improvements opening of the cornerstone of the Obelisk on its 100th anniversary. (The documents are now in the State Archives). The last grasp of Urban Renewal found Santa Fe. It altered downtown street patterns and destroyed the entire old buildings along the river around Galisteo and Sandoval. Only one row of old double adobe buildings remained. They were gutted and redesigned. The Hilton Hotel encapsulated the Ortiz house.

The Church closed Loretta Academy and moved the College of Santa Fe and St. Mike's High School, putting its old campus on the market. To settle on an appropriate design for this prominent site, OSFA worked with the architect of the Inn at Loretta for over 2 years.

Highlights of the 70's included a lawsuit by the Holiday Inn against the City of Santa Fe in which OSFA intervened. The sign Ordinance prohibiting neon and moving lights was upheld by the New Mexico Supreme Court.

The Tully House was purchased for preservation by the HSFF with a fund drive involving OSFA and the Hewett House was likewise guaranteed reprieve. In 1975 OSFA joined with the League of Women Voters in organizing the Santa Fe Federation, a coalition of perhaps 30 or more civic groups interested in promoting rational growth policies in the city. The group was comprised of both neighborhood and environmental groups and interested citizens working together.

OSFA members habitually turned out to help clear the Acequia Madre on Ditch Day. The Acequia is listed on both the State and National Register of Historic Places and so became involved in another lawsuit when Julian Garcia sued because Mr. Hoya's bulldozer dug up his parking lot. That was settled without bloodshed.

The Borrego House was sold both for tax and maintenance reasons, unfortunately just before a major upturn in real estate values. However OSFA retained architectural control over the vacant land and has had to exercise its authority to discourage inappropriate usage of that corner.

OSFA for a number of years had an office in El Zaguán, Sena Plaza, and then upstairs on the south side of the Plaza. In the 80's as the popularity of Santa Fe boomed it was not feasible for a small non-profit to compete for Plaza rental space.

The 80's were an era of rampant growth in Santa Fe and saw OSFA generally involved with issues of broad interest in the community. In 1973 Nat Owings had promoted the use of open space and OSFA introduced programs and speakers on related land use issues that found their way into the 1983 General Plan.

Since supporting the first Master Plan in the 40's, OSFA has been involved in each plan update. Both the citywide Architectural Ordinance and the Archeological Review Ordinance were originally initiated by OSFA (not that they are perfect).

The Eldorado Hotel plan which also involved demolition of an historic building finally got approval with the sole dissenting vote cast by the OSFA representative on the Historic Review Board, Richard Hubbell.

In 1986 the Santa Fe Federation was superseded by the Congress which is now in the process of replacement by the HSFF's instigation of the Neighborhood Network. For OSFA's 60th Birthday at LaFonda, some of the old timers like Myrtle Stedman, Jack

Watson and Fabian Chavez reminisced. Since it was also the 60th anniversary of Zozobra and one of OSFA's purposes is to support of Fiesta, the people behind it discussed Zozobra, Jacques Cartier the Fire Dancer until 1970, Gus the builder, Harold Cans the Voice and John Conron the pyrotechnician. Special Founders Awards honored Sylvia Loomis, Faith Meem, Amarante Romers, Y.A. and Leonora Paloheimo, Bruce Ellis, and Alice Bullock. Architectural Awards were also presented honoring traditional buildings.

In 1988, OSFA initiated discussions of the future of the Railyards with a Railyards Redevelopment Workshop. This has finally culminated in December 1995 in city acquisition of the Railyards. The planning process began in 1996. Architectural awards with varying criteria continued through 1990. OSFA was embroiled with city and neighborhood concerns on the Castillo Corps-Tano Santa Fe project from 1983 to 1993 to no avail.

But on the Historic District front there was some progress. Over the years the Historic Ordinance has been through some evolution. OSFA involved the National Trust in instituting revision in 1988 which slowly resulted in staffing from the planning Department, gaining professional staff by the city and two major amendments to the ordinance giving discretionary authority over height to the HDRB and providing protection for contributing and significant buildings which are in a style other than Pueblo or Territorial Revival.

Along with the broader issues of land use planning OSFA has tended to focus in the 90's on the social and cultural aspects of community. Mayor Jaramillo was featured speaker at the 1994 Annual Meeting and her Vision was well received. Continuing interest in water issues has resulted in acceptance of a broad plan for revitalizing the Santa Fe River and long range financing being sought.

Santa Fe has six times the population in 1996 from 1926. The problems are similarly increased.