

*As published in the Santa Fe New Mexican, April 24, 1926*

## **Opposition to Club Cultural Colony Holds Meeting and Petitions the City Council**

**Move to Get Land Back of Sunmount Results in Mass Meeting at Which Speakers Say Project is Not Desirable**

### **THE PETITION**

**Santa Fe, New Mexico**

**April 23, 1926**

**To the Honorable Mayor and City Council of the City of Santa Fe:**

We, the members of the Old Santa Fe Association, desire an opportunity to register our emphatic disapproval of the proposal to establish a so-called Cultural Colony or Chautauqua here; and our protest against the City Council's conveying any land for this purpose. We respectfully request that a special public meeting of the City Council be called within a week, for the purpose of hearing our objections and the reasons therefore; and we further respectfully request that pending such special meeting, no action be taken by the Council covering this matter.

Signed: *Frank E. Mera, Robert O. Brown, Frank F. Gormley, Alice Corbin Henderson, James A. Massie, John Zook, Hubert Galt, Mrs. Ashley Pond, Cassius D. McCormick, Gustave Baumann, B.J.O. Nordfeldt, Mrs. Burton Thompson, Mary Austin, K. M. Chapman, Sara W. McComb, Elizabeth E. Massie, Marie C. Robinson, Howard Huey, Florence Davey, Margaret McKittrick, Theodosius Meyer O.F.M., Mrs. F. Gormley, A.F. Field, Edwin Brooks, Isabel L. Eckles, Vera E.W. Johnson, Kate Chapman, Mary V. Conkey, H. P. Mera, William Penhallow Henderson, Francis C. Wilson, Margaret D. Nordfeldt, Helen B. Stevens, John Meem, Kate G. Rolls, Mary H. Eckles, Teresa Dorman, Raymond Jonson, Marjorie C. Holmes, Josef G. Bakos, Madeline Galt, Edna R. Mera, Janet Lewis, G..D. Holmes, F. G.. Applegate, Charles J. Little, Louise Leigh Hunt, Theodore Van Soelen, Anna V. Huey, Adelina Otero Warren, Carlos Vierra, Ida Rauh, Mrs. H.P. Mera, Mrs. Edwin Brooks, Grace Johnson, Lewis Riley.*

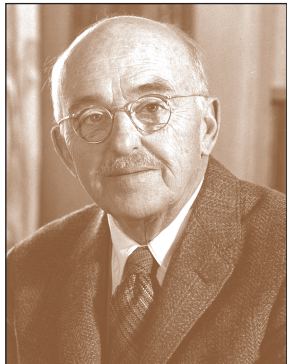
### **OLD SANTA FE ASSOCIATION FORMED**

The move to secure land as a site for the proposed cultural colony, or Chautauqua, in the cove in the foothills just east of Sunmount Sanitarium resulted in a mass meeting at Sunmount last night, which petitioned the City Council for a special meeting at which objections and protests against the establishing of the colony here could be heard. At the meeting attended by between 60 and 75 persons, tentative organization was also effected of the Old Santa Fe Association.

### **TO PRESERVE THE BEST OF OLD SANTA FE**

The brief statement of purposes to which the organizers attached their signatures, in order to get the tentative association going, was as follows:

"We, the undersigned, do hereby organize ourselves into a permanent body to be known as the Old Santa Fe Association, for the purpose of working for the preservation of Old Santa Fe, and of guiding new growth and development and advancement in material welfare, in such a way as to sacrifice as little as possible of the unique charm and distinction of this city, born of age, tradition and environment, and which are Santa Fe's most priceless assets."



*Top: Alice Corbin and William Penhallow Henderson  
Middle: Mary Austin  
Bottom: John Gaw Meem*

**This commemorative edition was compiled and edited by Barbara Harrelson, with the help of John Pen La Farge and Randall Bell.**

## Celebrating Santa Fe Since 1926



Margretta Stewart Dietrich and an OSFA-inspired float in the first Pasatiempo Parade, Fiesta de Santa Fe, 1926 (NMHM/DCA:NN010932)

The Old Santa Fe Association is one of the nation's oldest community preservation groups, with a 90-year record of advocacy and accomplishment. Since its beginning in 1926, OSFA has helped to preserve the authenticity of architectural heritage and cultural traditions of one of the nation's most historic cities.

It all began in April 1926, when a group of Santa Fe artists and writers joined with other community leaders to prevent the development of a Chautauqua-like "summer culture colony" on city land near present-day St. John's



Gustave Bauman, c.1959

College. OSFA, along with *La Union Protectiva*, the Rotary Club, other community groups, and "at least half of the city's population" convinced the Chamber of Commerce and the City Council to deny the land sale. In that victory, OSFA preserved not only that site for local purposes, but also Santa Fe's unique culture and traditions, which, they argued, needed no such Chautauqua-like enrichment.

Again in 1926, OSFA members worked to expand public participation in the annual Fiesta de Santa Fe, calling for all celebrations to be open and free to all residents. They staged the first public burning of Zozobra, and initiated the first Pasatiempo Parade, later known as the Historical/Hysterical Parade, with floats and parodies of local issues and world events.

In 1946, an OSFA-led community coalition defeated a plan to build a highway directly through downtown Santa Fe, thus saving not only the historic Plaza, but also the revered *Santuario de Guadalupe* and nearby neighborhoods.

In 1948, with founding member John Gaw Meem at the helm of the City Planning Commission, OSFA helped draft the city's first Master Plan.

OSFA's leadership made Santa Fe a pioneer in enacting an historic preservation ordinance in 1957. (The National Historic Preservation Act was not enacted until 1966.) The city's landmark Historic Zoning Ordinance was one of a handful of such laws in the nation at the time.

In 1961, the Historic Santa Fe Foundation was founded by OSFA leaders to receive tax-exempt donations, to administer properties, and to engage in educational activities and research. (OSFA, as a nonprofit that advocates and lobbies, cannot participate in tax-exempt donations.)

In 1968, OSFA and the National Park Service saved the historic Barrio de Analco from urban renewal by having it named a National Historic Landmark.

In 2009, an OSFA-led coalition successfully changed the State Historic Districts and Landmark Act of 1964. The revised law, significantly, provides for a collaborative process between the state and cities of New Mexico to protect historic districts, including state capital-outlay projects that may fall in such districts.

Over the years, OSFA members have participated in most city and county committees or task forces. By city ordinance, OSFA has a dedicated position on the Historic Districts Review Board that continues today. OSFA members frequently give testimony before the City Council and other governing bodies. OSFA accomplishes its work through working in alliance with other community groups and regional officials.