

HISTORIC SANTA FE

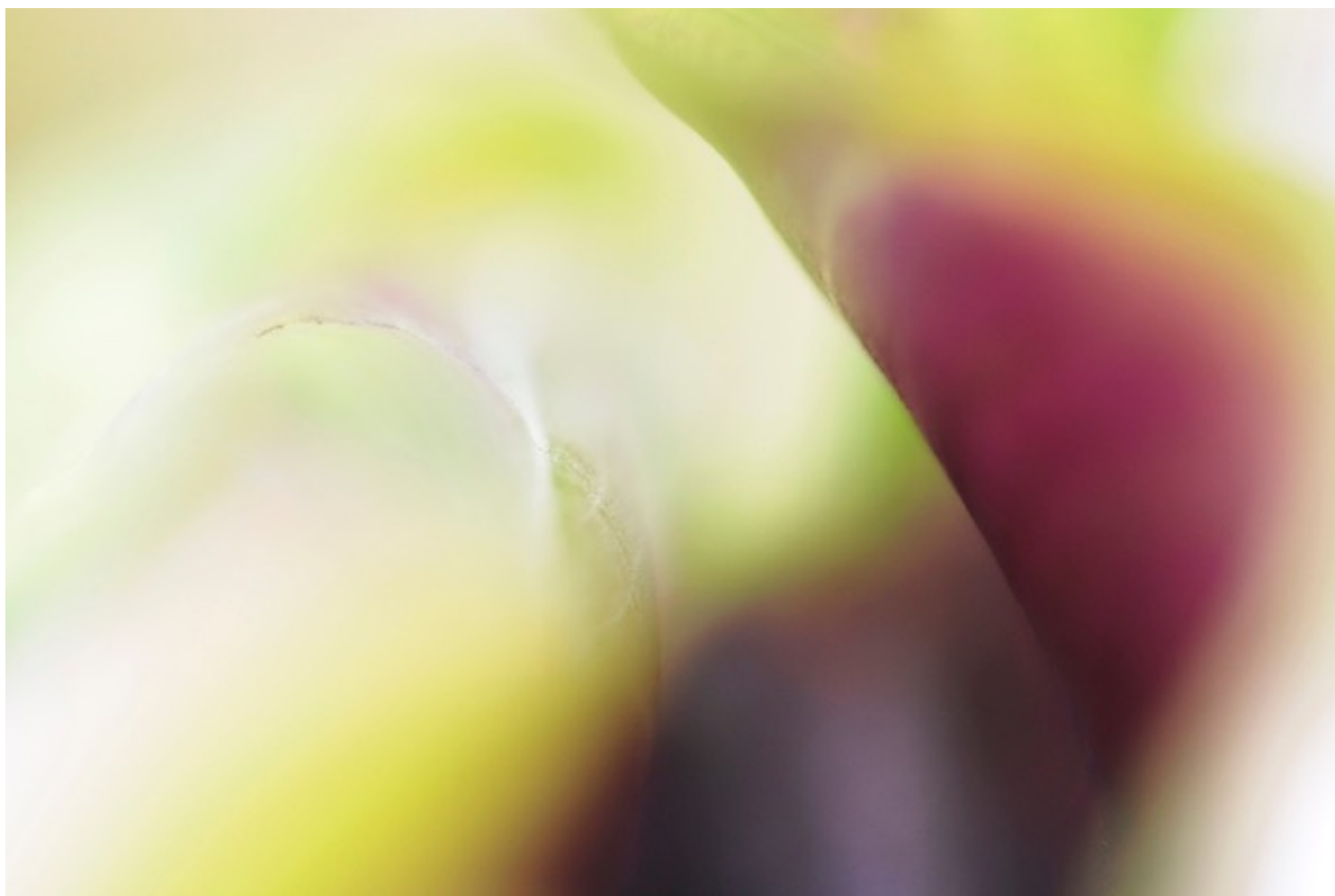
MONTHLY E-MAGAZINE OF THE HISTORIC SANTA FE FOUNDATION FEB. 2016

INSIDE HISTORIC SANTA FE

El Zaguán is teeming with activity – a bit of spring cleaning as the Archives Committee, Mara and Jacqueline clean up the adjacent office transforming it into a usable space to explore the valuable trove of photographs, documents, books and ephemera. Spring is on its way and as always, we are looking forward to the new year with a renewed energy that comes with the even more sunny days and blossoms.

The staff and board welcomed the public and members of the La Fonda and St. John's College to the recent opening that highlighted these properties' inclusion to the prestigious Register of Historical Properties. The successful opening is a harbinger for more fun and lively openings for the remaining 2016 exhibitions beginning with the upcoming HSFF's staff opening on March 5th.

This month's eZine is centered around those two historical properties added to the Register in 2016: La Fonda on the Plaza and St John's College in Santa Fe.



The exhibition in El Zaguán *La Fonda on the Plaza and St. John's College New Historic Santa Fe Foundation Plaque Additions* run through the end of February 2016 and includes photographs, architectural drawings, maps and ephemera relating to both locations. HSFF hosted a popular opening for the exhibition with talks by Ed Pulsifer on *La Fonda on the Plaza* and Steven Moffson on *St. John's College* that expanded on the ideas and images in the displayed pieces. This publication continues with an exploration of the properties and its associated per-

sonalities with an interview by Pete Warzel with *St. John's College's* newly appointed President Mark Roosevelt and *La Fonda* supporter, renovation architect for the hotel's bar and lobby and HSFF Board Member Barbara Felix. Conci Bokum offers up another edition of “From the Archives” focused the Hinojos House that is currently being restored to its historical condition.

As always, we look forward to hearing from you. —Melanie McWorter,
Historic Santa Fe Foundation
Development Associate





ABOUT LA FONDA: AN INTERVIEW WITH BARBARA FELIX

Interviewed by Melanie McWhorter

What is your relationship to La Fonda and how did it start?

BF: Sam Ballen hired me in 2007 to repair the leaking skylight in La Plazuela restaurant (the 1926 open-air courtyard that had been enclosed in the 1970's) and to upgrade some of the bed linens/FF&E of the guest rooms. *Continues next page*

He had heard about my work at the Pueblo of Acoma (Sky City Cultural Center + Haak'u Museum which opened in 2006) and some residential work I had completed in Santa Fe. Sadly, Sam passed away in early 2008. Fortunately, Sam had made provisions to pass the reigns of the hotel to Jennifer Kimball, the Chairman of the Board. I have been incredibly fortunate to work with her ever since. Jennifer has a strong love for La Fonda, its history, and its story.

When conceiving of the narrative of the history of La Fonda and that history's relationship to the listing as a Plaqued Property with HSFF, how did you select the images in the exhibition currently on display in El Zaguan at HSFF?

BF: Interestingly enough, for how old La Fonda is, there is a mixture of an abundance of material (photos, drawings, old letters from the 1930's) and a complete lack of documentation from later periods (including the Los Alamos atomic era, the 1950's, and later). We are fortunate the hotel was a Harvey Hotel because there are historic photos located at the University of Arizona and at the Museum of New Mexico of guestrooms, the lobby, and the old courtyard, and some other areas. We are also fortunate that some

members of the Harvey family still reside in Santa Fe (and that Stephen Fried wrote the great book "Appetite for America" about their influence). We are equally lucky Nancy Meem Wirth, the daughter of John Gaw Meem, is here – and that there has been a resurgence of interest in Mary Elizabeth Jane Colter, the architect and designer who worked for the Harvey Company/Santa Fe Railroad, and Mr. Meem on the design of the hotel.

Ed Pulisfer, Director of Sales & Marketing at La Fonda, and I chose the photos because they speak to the influence of La Fonda on Santa Fe. We are also hoping someone will recognize some of the people or events where they were taken. We have very little information about the people in the images – and we'd love to know more.

You have a trademarked style marketed on your website as Woven Architecture. Will you briefly explain this concept and how it relates to the renovation of La Fonda?

BF: Woven Architecture is about the many parts woven together to make a whole. The story of La Fonda is the story of Santa Fe; it's the story of Southwestern design, the influence of Native American culture, and Spanish Colonial culture.

Woven Architecture is the art of taking different strands or fibers of history, story-telling, culture, design, architecture, art, and my own personal passion, and weaving them together in an authentic manner that speaks of place.

What are some of the changes that the public might expect to see in La Fonda's lobby and bar? How did you maintain the historical integrity of the location? How did historical photographs play a role in the remodel?

BF: We were able to reference old photos for the lobby. I'm super excited we were able to work with Jennifer Kimball

and her team to open the lobby in way that is much more similar to what was in place in the 1920s. Originally, the reception desk and the current location of the newsstand were tucked back into the architecture (in alignment with columns and beams). Over time these were pushed out into the lobby, making the lobby feel congested and cramped. We have been able to re-align the front desk with the architecture, move the concierge into the old newsstand area (the newsstand is moving to the northwest corner of the building and being re-named "Detours at La Fonda" in honor of the Indian Detours of the 1920s), and



we're removing the 1970s wall that split the bar area from the lobby. The lobby will return to a gracious, welcoming gathering place with historic light fixtures and corbels returned to their rightful locations. Finally, we were able to recreate some of the lobby furniture seen in old photos so that the lobby again becomes a place for locals and guests to meet and gather.

Unfortunately, we have not found historical photos of the bar. We know from Nancy Wirth there were tin panels around the perimeter, though they are long gone, and from old floor plans that there was a bar in the current location at least from the 1950s (including a horseshoe shape for the actual bar). We know Mary Elizabeth Jane Colter was an expert at mixing cultural references and that she had a sense of whimsy that was evident in colors, textiles, carvings, and fixtures, which we can see in old photos. We wanted to bring that sense of whimsy back into the bar, reference the historic horseshoe shape, play with colors, and textiles, yet still make the bar meet modern requirements (USB ports, updated electrical, and plumbing), and provide space for the beloved stage and dancing.

You joined the board of HSFF in 2015, what prompted this action and why do you value HSFF and its role in the community?

BF: History is an integral part of a community and architecture is a specific language that helps us understand history. Our daily lives take place in and around architecture, and in a sense it becomes the backdrop for the theater of our existence. While that sounds pretentious, it really means architecture, and historical buildings specifically, can tell us about ourselves. I joined the HSFF Board because I want to make sure our historical buildings are cared for in a meaningful and authentic way.

On the flip side, it means our new buildings shouldn't necessarily copy our historical buildings – they need to be able to tell the story of where we are today. Sometimes by copying (particularly when we only copy the outside appearance and details without the underlying reason for them being there), we actually dilute the story and authenticity of what makes our Santa Fe and New Mexico architecture unique.

Thank you for your time, Barbara.



INSIGHTS: A CONVERSATION WITH MARK ROOSEVELT

President, St. John's College –
Santa Fe.

By Pete Warzel

Welcome to Santa Fe Mark. Have you had any prior relationship with this extraordinary city?

MR: Yes. Like many, I have loved this city for a very long time. Just had trouble getting here to be a permanent resident. I visited perhaps six times in my twenties, thirties and forties, and my wife and I got married here – eloped - in January of 2005. We then lived here for five blissful months that year before we moved to Pittsburgh.

You have a very interesting background, having served as a state legis-

lator in Massachusetts, superintendent of Pittsburgh Public Schools, President of Antioch College and now here at St. John's College. How did one thing lead to another?

MR: When I was in the Massachusetts legislature, I was chosen to be chair of the Committee on Education in 1990 and was charged with leading a comprehensive redesign of how the Commonwealth funded and managed its public schools. That immersed me in the arduous politics of school reform. After much debate and considerable rancor, we were able to pass a very good bill in 1993, a law that propelled Massachusetts to top rankings in virtually all categories of educational achievement. So, after a failed bid for governor in 1994 I made education, rather than politics, my life's work, enrolling in the Broad Superintendent's Academy, a training program for non-traditional candidates to be large city school superintendents.

A short while after graduating from that program, I was hired to lead the Pittsburgh schools in 2005. Wow. Tough work. After five-plus years and some considerable progress, I was ready for another kind of challenge. The alumni who were working to re-open Antioch College (it had closed in 2008) hired me to over-

see that recreation. Again – tough work, very stressful, but also gratifying. I believe I left Antioch in a good position, with a decent chance to establish itself again as an innovative force in higher education.

St. John's is a different kind of challenge. The academic program is solid, healthy, even transformational. It is just not sufficiently well known. So my role here is more of an evangelist. There are also some management issues caused in part by this being one college on two campuses. But the main challenge here is to "spread the gospel" of a program that deals in deep durable things and runs counter – in a beautiful way – to many unfortunate trends in American culture as well as higher education.

Town and Gown – what do you see the role of St. John's in the community of Santa

MR: My predecessor Mike Peters worked hard to raise St. John's profile in Santa Fe, but there is more work to be done. Lovely city; lovely college. There should and will be many ways to deepen the ties. I will work at it as well.

The campus at St. John's has recently been added to the HSFF Register of Properties Worthy of Preservation, as

well as to the state and national registers. The Annapolis campus of St. John's is one of the oldest educational institutions in the country. How does this sense of history align with the educational life of your new students?

MR: St John's is all about a sense of history. Of people delving into what matters most and wrestling with age-old problems. Of understanding that we twenty-first century beings are not the first to ponder and examine the complex issues of human existence. The Santa Fe campus may be much younger than the Annapolis campus, but it has its own remarkable qualities that have now been recognized by national, state and local preservation registers. (And many thanks to the Historic Santa Fe Foundation for your leadership.) It is an amazing place for students to spend four years. Many students sense that privilege right from the start; many will gain perspective on it as they get older.

Strategic planning seems to be one of your strengths as an administrator. Do you see any long-term directional change at St. John's?

MR: Not sure. Depends on what you mean. Most aspects of the educational

program are close to sacrosanct, for good reason. But what we do "around" that program may need attention and perhaps some directional change.

How important are alumni in the planning process?

MR: Very. St John's has passionate alumni who care deeply about the college. They are also creative folk who can offer great ideas about many aspects of our work.

You knew Jeff Pappas, state SHPO, in your prior lives in Massachusetts. Small world. Do all roads lead to Santa Fe?

MR: Yes, Jeff and I worked in the Massachusetts legislature at the same time. Ah...perhaps not all roads lead to Santa Fe, but some rather beautiful ones certainly do. My family and I feel privileged to live here. I feel privileged to have good work to do here. And we are real partisans. We get testy, for example, when people complain about the cold weather this winter. And feel like exclaiming – "What about the sun! The crisp clean air! The beauty all around us!" This place is fantastic.

Thanks for your time, Mark.

FEB/MARCH 2016 **EVENTS CALENDAR**

Through February 29. St. John's/La Fonda Plaque Exhibition at El Zaguán

Gallery: Exhibition of historic photographs and ephemera from our two new significant additions to the HSFF Register of Properties Worthy of Preservation - La Fonda on the Plaza and St. John's College.

Thursday, February 18, 2016 7PM,

WildEarth Guardians: Telluride Mountainfilm on Tour. Explore all the action-packed, thought-provoking, and captivating films presented by Telluride Mountainfilm. Lensic Performing Arts Center.

February 20, 2016 @ 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm, Desert Academy Performing Arts Class of 2020 Presents: A Class Act: Cole Porter, Warehouse 21, 1614 Paseo De Peralta.

Wednesday, February 24th, 2016 6PM, Winter Lecture Series at the St. Francis Auditorium, New Mexico Museum of Art. Chasing the Santa Fe Ring with David Caffey

Friday, March 4th, Opening for HSFF Staff Show, Off Hours 2 with works by Pete Warzel, Jacqueline Hill, Mara Saxer, Melanie McWhorter, and John Hufnagle. Exhibition continues through March.

HSFF MISSION

Our mission is to preserve, protect, and promote the historic properties and diverse cultural heritage of the Santa Fe area, and to educate the public about Santa Fe's history and the importance of preservation.

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