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Explore the storytelling traditions of New Mexico set against the backdrop of the region's history, cultural traditions, and architecture. An entertaining reference on regional literature for residents and visitors alike, this guidebook presents familiar landmarks in a new light, revealing the stories of legendary and historical figures who have lived in and written about the Land of Enchantment.



*"Harrelson's Walks in Literary Santa Fe is long overdue. . . . [It] is as enchanting in tone, voice, and persona as the place of which she speaks."*

—**Robert Franklin Gish**, author of numerous books on the literature, history, and culture of the American Southwest

*"Walks in Literary Santa Fe offers an engaging and informative way to explore and understand Old Santa Fe's rich cultural history on foot."*

—**Candelora Versace**, Santa Fe writer and founding editor of *Southwest Book Views*

More than a decade ago, **Barbara Harrelson** developed "Storytellers and the Southwest," a literary walking tour of Santa Fe, which she has been conducting ever since. One of the few literary walking tours in the nation, it is described in Frommer's *Santa Fe, Taos & Albuquerque* as "a great way to absorb the unique character of Santa Fe." Previously Harrelson was a docent at the Smithsonian's Museum of American History and at Dumbarton Oaks, Harvard University's Center for Byzantine and Pre-Columbian Studies. She is currently an independent writer whose work has appeared in the *Bloomsbury Review*, the *Newark Star-Ledger*, the *Santa Fe New Mexican*, and other publications.

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Walks in Literary SANTA FE

BARBARA HARRELSON

# Walks in Literary SANTA FE

*A Guide to Landmarks, Legends, and Lore*

BARBARA HARRELSON





*The Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi, one of Santa Fe's most prominent landmarks, is identified with the award-winning novel *Death Comes for the Archbishop*.*

### **CATHEDRAL BASILICA OF ST. FRANCIS**

BEFORE CROSSING THE STREET to the **Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis (6)**, pause at the corner, facing it, to get a full view of this prominent Santa Fe landmark, identified with the best-known novel about Santa Fe, *Death Comes for the Archbishop*, by **Willa Cather**. The Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi is the mother church of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe. It could not have been built in its

## DOWNTOWN SANTA FE

## THE PLAZA

THE WALK IN DOWNTOWN SANTA FE begins and ends at the Plaza, the heart (*el corazón*) of Santa Fe today as it was at the beginning. La Villa Real de Santa Fe (“the Royal City of Holy Faith”) was laid out in the traditional Spanish design in 1609–1610, with the first structures surrounding a central square (or rectangle, as it was then), the *plaza mayor*. The Palace of the Governors (the executive offices and residence), soldiers’ barracks, a parish church, a few businesses, and some residences around the Plaza constituted downtown Santa Fe. In territorial days, a wooden bandstand stood in the center of the Plaza; it was replaced by the soldiers’ monument (obelisk) that still stands there today.

For four hundred years, the Santa Fe Plaza has witnessed the parade of history through five changes in government—from early Spanish rule to statehood in 1912. Community proclamations, religious processions, markets, and fiestas have occupied its space, along with public floggings, cockfights—and the “first American Revolution,” when the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 succeeded in driving the Spanish out of Santa Fe.<sup>1</sup> When the Spanish returned in 1693, most of the settlement around the Plaza had to be rebuilt; only the Palace survived.

The Santa Fe Plaza speaks of beginnings and endings, past and prologue. The oldest capital city in the United States, Santa Fe was founded about 1607 (historians disagree about the actual date). It

<sup>1</sup>The Pueblo Revolt of 1680 is the name generally used to describe this historical event, but many Native Americans do not use it because they believe that the name itself reflects a biased view of events. They would say that a more accurate term is revolution. Pueblo Independence Day is celebrated on August 10, the day that the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 began, or on any of the days through August 13.

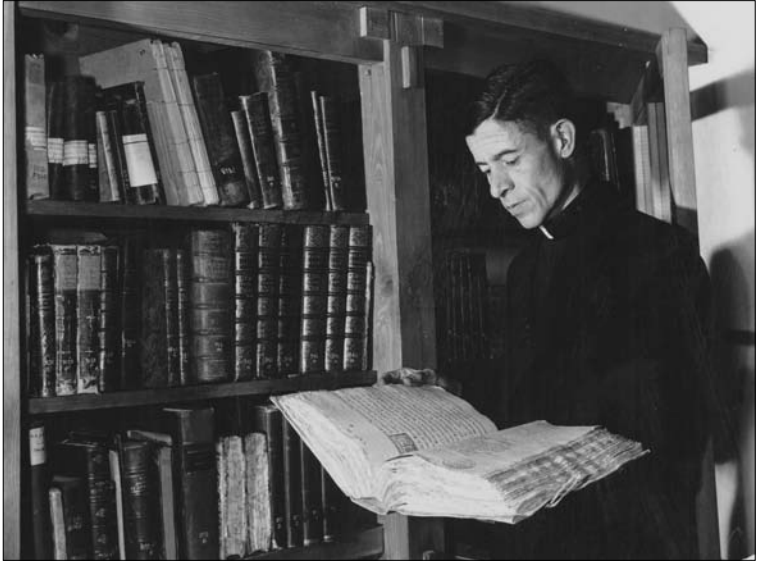


Revelers dance in the streets around the Plaza during the Santa Fe Fiesta, 1938.

was established as the capital of *la Nueva México*, the northernmost region of viceregal New Spain. More than two centuries later, beginning in 1821, the Plaza marked the end of the nine-hundred-mile journey across the Santa Fe Trail from Missouri. It was also the terminus for the Camino Real (“Royal Road”), connecting Santa Fe to Mexico City—a vital link during the Spanish Colonial years. Santa Fe and its Plaza remained at the nexus of these great trade routes until the coming of the railroad in 1880 created a new economy and a new era.

Today, the downtown Plaza hosts community gatherings, musical concerts, several major art markets and crafts fairs—and individuals who want to enjoy the sunset or a winter snowfall.

The Fourth of July in Santa Fe means a pancake breakfast on the Plaza (to benefit the United Way) and a display of vintage automobiles



*Fray Angélico Chávez, one of New Mexico's native sons, left an impressive literary legacy.*

## FRAY ANGÉLICO CHÁVEZ HISTORY LIBRARY

PAUSE IN FRONT OF THE STATUE of Fray Angélico Chávez, outside of the **History Library (3)** building named in his honor.

**Fray Angélico Chávez** (1910–1996) is one of Santa Fe's most beloved authors yet his name is unfamiliar outside of New Mexico. His legacy looms large here not only for his body of work but also because he is a native son who earned the respect and affection of his neighbors and readers.

Angélico Chávez was born Manuel Chávez in Wagon Mound (east of Las Vegas, New Mexico) but came to live in Santa Fe about age sixteen. He became a Franciscan priest and was given the name