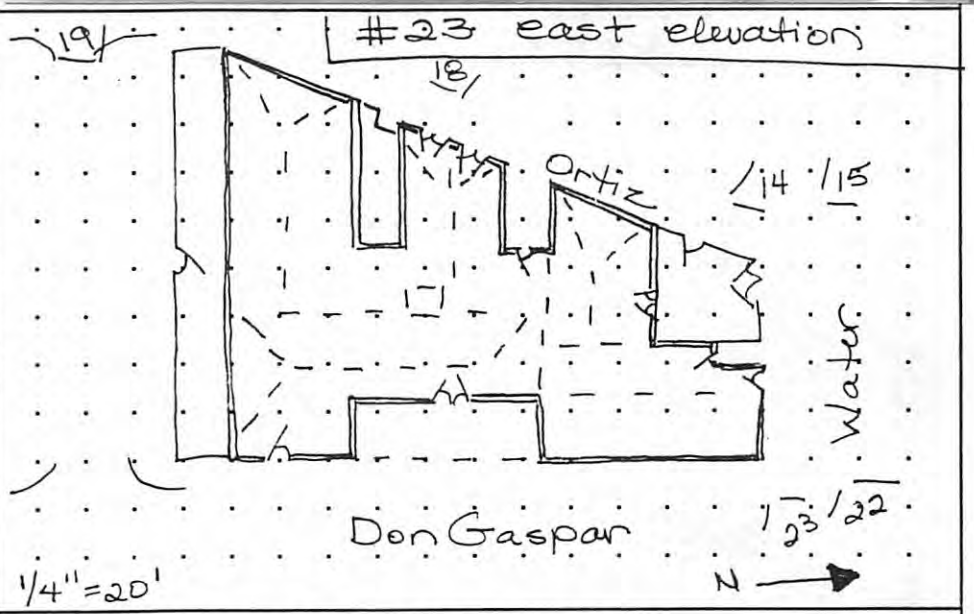


NEW MEXICO HISTORIC BUILDING INVENTORY - SANTA FE RESURVEY 1995

IDENTIFICATION	ADDRESS: <u>210 Don Gaspar</u>	ID NUMBER: 0516 10317	
	UTM REFERENCE EASTING NORTHING ZONE 12 13	LEGAL DESCRIPTION: TNSP <u>17</u> (N) S RANGE <u>9</u> (E) W SEC <u>24</u> SW 1/4 NE 1/4	BUILDING NAME: <u>De Vargas Hotel</u> SANTA FE ID NUMBER: <u>H1786</u>
	FIELD MAP <u>Santa Fe Historic Structures Survey, 1983-85/1992</u>		
	DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: <u>news papers portions by 1924 ESTIMATE 1890 ACTUAL hotel by 1930</u> SOURCE(S) <u>Sarborn map</u>		
BUILDING DATA	ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: <u>Mission Revival</u>	PHOTO	
	USE: HISTORIC: <del>residential</del> OTHER <u>commercial</u> PRESENT: <del>residential</del> OTHER <u>commercial</u> <u>Hotel St. Francis</u>		
	SURROUNDINGS: <u>commercial</u>		
	RELATIONSHIP TO HISTORIC SURROUNDINGS: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SIMILAR <input type="checkbox"/> NOT SIMILAR		
	ASSOCIATED BUILDINGS ON SITE: <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO WHAT TYPE? IF INVENTORIED, LIST ID NUMBER(S) -----		
	DEGREE OF REMODELING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MINOR <input type="checkbox"/> MODERATE restoration in 1985-1986 - some doors replaced; <input type="checkbox"/> MAJOR EXPLAIN: <u>change in storefront on N</u>		
SIGNIFICANCE	OVERALL CONDITION: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD <input type="checkbox"/> FAIR <input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	SITE PLAN	
	BUILDING THREATENED? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO		
	LISTED ON NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> ELIGIBLE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONTRIBUTING <input type="checkbox"/> NON-CONTRIBUTING		
	LISTED ON STATE REGISTER OF CULTURAL PROPERTIES? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> ELIGIBLE LOCAL DESIGNATION: <u>Core</u> HISTORIC DISTRICT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SIGNIFICANT <input type="checkbox"/> CONTRIBUTING <input type="checkbox"/> NON-CONTRIBUTING LOCAL LANDMARK <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO		



SURVEYED 8/95 BY DB

NEGATIVES WITH NMHPD ROLL # DB12 NEG # 22 TO 23  
DB13 #14-15 & 18-19

ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES: STYLE, MATERIALS, AND CONDITION	ROOFS & DRAINS	intersecting hipped roofs with flared overhang, metal fascia
	BUILDING WALLS	stucco painted beige - S section has continuous sill below 3rd floor windows
	FOUNDATIONS	not visible
	DOORS	NE - single light wood, most sealed, grouped with windows E - pair of heavy wd doors with 3 lights each leaf, transom, brass hardware; W - paired wood panel with transom, above grade; E - wd plank door in concrete neoclassical surround
	WINDOWS	3 sizes of paired wd casement - 4 light on ground floor, 3 light on 2nd, 4 light on 3rd - each progressively smaller - 3rd floor windows slightly recessed in segmental surrounds, 2nd floor have balconets with projecting concrete sills & wrought
	PORCHES OR PORTALES	iron balustrades; W - some 6/6 wd D&Ws, 10/10 wd D&Ws, 2 light wd csmt paired w/ wrought iron grilles; NE - large fixed lights with frosted transoms, leaded in 18 and 56 lights
	PORCHES BALCONIES	E center - recessed porch with heavy piers with bases & capitals, arched openings, concrete floor, wrought iron balustrade, T&G ceiling
	COURTYARDS	NW - courtyard patio - now part of restaurant - has shed roofed portal with red tile roof, square posts, conchals
	FENCES/WALLS	S - 5' stucco wall, wd plank gates; NW - 5' stucco wall, heavy wood gates with wrought iron hinges
	ARCH. DETAILS	
OTHER	blue canvas awnings patio restaurant N - created during renovation	
COMMENTS	N restaurant door was moved back 8-10' to permit handicapped access - original stucco sill & wainscot remain.	

ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHS



#22 northeast

NEW MEXICO HISTORIC BUILDING INVENTORY - SANTA FE RESURVEY 1995 (concluded)

IDENTIFICATION	ADDRESS	ID NUMBER: 0516 10317
	210 Don Gaspar	SANTA FE ID NUMBER: H1786
		SURVEYED/RESEARCHED DATE <u>8/95</u> BY <u>OB</u>



#15 northwest



#14 west elevation, N end

NEW MEXICO HISTORIC BUILDING INVENTORY - SANTA FE RESURVEY 1995 (concluded)

IDENTIFICATION

ADDRESS

210 Don Gaspar

ID NUMBER: 0516 10317

SANTA FE ID NUMBER: #1786

SURVEYED/RESEARCHED

DATE 8/95 BY DB



# 18 west center



# 19 south elevation

JAN. 1930  
SANTA FE  
N. MEX.

SHELBY (WASHINGTON)

SHELBY (SELIGMAN)

THE PLAZA

E. SAN FRANCISCO

E. WATER

Y (SELIGMAN)

SANTA FE TRANSPORTATION GARAGE  
(PRIVATE)  
CAPACITY: 45 BUSES AND CARS  
CONCRETE FLOOR ON RAISED  
RESTROOM LIGHTS, ETC.

NEW MEXICO POWER CO. SUB STATION  
NO. 101  
NO. 102  
NO. 103  
NO. 104  
NO. 105  
NO. 106  
NO. 107  
NO. 108  
NO. 109  
NO. 110  
NO. 111  
NO. 112  
NO. 113  
NO. 114  
NO. 115  
NO. 116  
NO. 117  
NO. 118  
NO. 119  
NO. 120  
NO. 121  
NO. 122  
NO. 123  
NO. 124  
NO. 125  
NO. 126  
NO. 127  
NO. 128  
NO. 129  
NO. 130  
NO. 131  
NO. 132  
NO. 133  
NO. 134  
NO. 135  
NO. 136  
NO. 137  
NO. 138  
NO. 139  
NO. 140  
NO. 141  
NO. 142  
NO. 143  
NO. 144  
NO. 145  
NO. 146  
NO. 147  
NO. 148  
NO. 149  
NO. 150  
NO. 151  
NO. 152  
NO. 153  
NO. 154  
NO. 155  
NO. 156  
NO. 157  
NO. 158  
NO. 159  
NO. 160  
NO. 161  
NO. 162  
NO. 163  
NO. 164  
NO. 165  
NO. 166  
NO. 167  
NO. 168  
NO. 169  
NO. 170  
NO. 171  
NO. 172  
NO. 173  
NO. 174  
NO. 175  
NO. 176  
NO. 177  
NO. 178  
NO. 179  
NO. 180  
NO. 181  
NO. 182  
NO. 183  
NO. 184  
NO. 185  
NO. 186  
NO. 187  
NO. 188  
NO. 189  
NO. 190  
NO. 191  
NO. 192  
NO. 193  
NO. 194  
NO. 195  
NO. 196  
NO. 197  
NO. 198  
NO. 199  
NO. 200

OFFICE & STORE

POWER HO.

WATER WORKS  
Cooling station

COOL. BIN

NO. 101  
NO. 102  
NO. 103  
NO. 104  
NO. 105  
NO. 106  
NO. 107  
NO. 108  
NO. 109  
NO. 110  
NO. 111  
NO. 112  
NO. 113  
NO. 114  
NO. 115  
NO. 116  
NO. 117  
NO. 118  
NO. 119  
NO. 120  
NO. 121  
NO. 122  
NO. 123  
NO. 124  
NO. 125  
NO. 126  
NO. 127  
NO. 128  
NO. 129  
NO. 130  
NO. 131  
NO. 132  
NO. 133  
NO. 134  
NO. 135  
NO. 136  
NO. 137  
NO. 138  
NO. 139  
NO. 140  
NO. 141  
NO. 142  
NO. 143  
NO. 144  
NO. 145  
NO. 146  
NO. 147  
NO. 148  
NO. 149  
NO. 150  
NO. 151  
NO. 152  
NO. 153  
NO. 154  
NO. 155  
NO. 156  
NO. 157  
NO. 158  
NO. 159  
NO. 160  
NO. 161  
NO. 162  
NO. 163  
NO. 164  
NO. 165  
NO. 166  
NO. 167  
NO. 168  
NO. 169  
NO. 170  
NO. 171  
NO. 172  
NO. 173  
NO. 174  
NO. 175  
NO. 176  
NO. 177  
NO. 178  
NO. 179  
NO. 180  
NO. 181  
NO. 182  
NO. 183  
NO. 184  
NO. 185  
NO. 186  
NO. 187  
NO. 188  
NO. 189  
NO. 190  
NO. 191  
NO. 192  
NO. 193  
NO. 194  
NO. 195  
NO. 196  
NO. 197  
NO. 198  
NO. 199  
NO. 200

W. PALACE AV.

LINCOLN AV.

DON GASPAR AV.

AV.

W. SAN FRANCISCO

W. WATER

GALISTEO

ORTIZ

DE VARGAS HOTEL

DINING ROOM

LOBBY

MAIL ROOM

RESTAURANT

BAR

WATER SYSTEM

WATER SYSTEM

WATER SYSTEM

WATER SYSTEM

WATER SYSTEM

WATER SYSTEM

WATER SYSTEM

210 Don Gaspar

Sanborn

1930

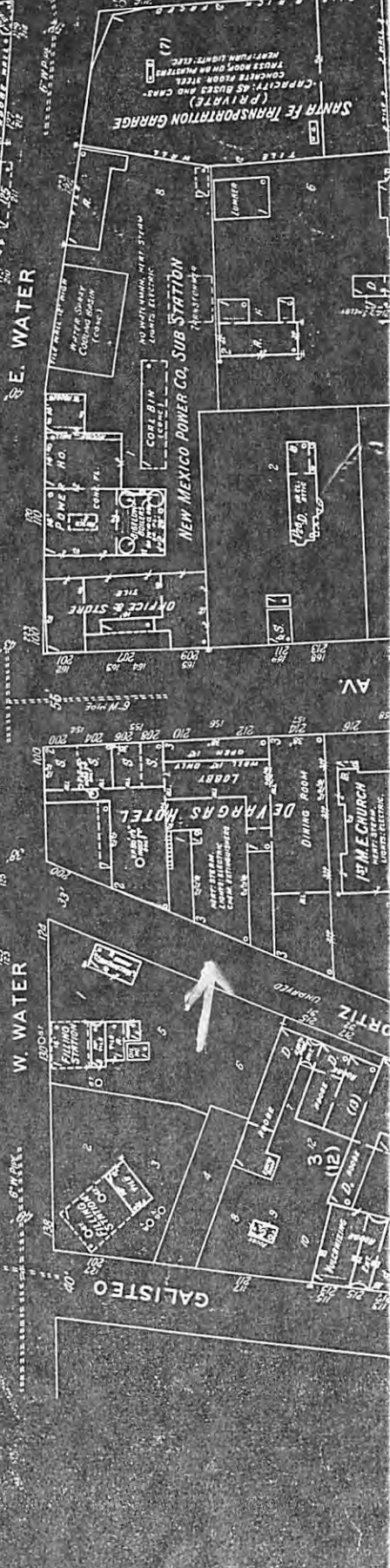
3

4

7

3

2



5

4

8

3

6

10

11

12

APRIL 1908  
**SANTA FE**  
NEW MEX.

WASHINGTON

PLAZA SQUARE

AV.

PALACE

LINCOLN

AV.

SAN FRANCISCO

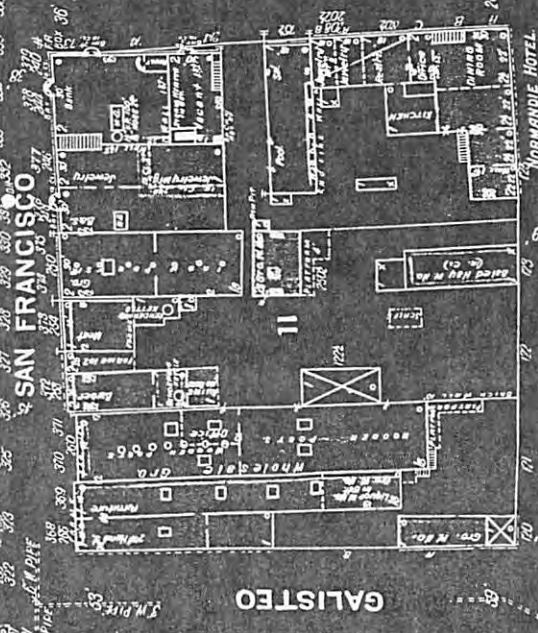
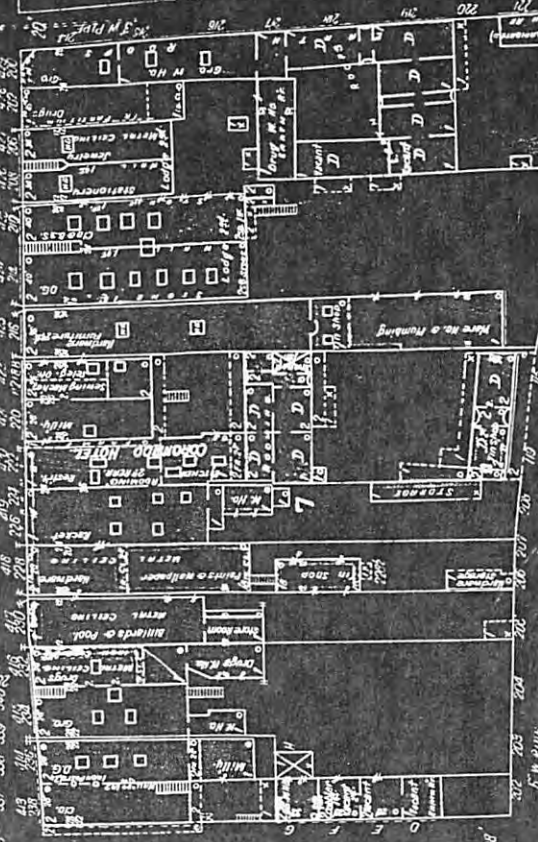
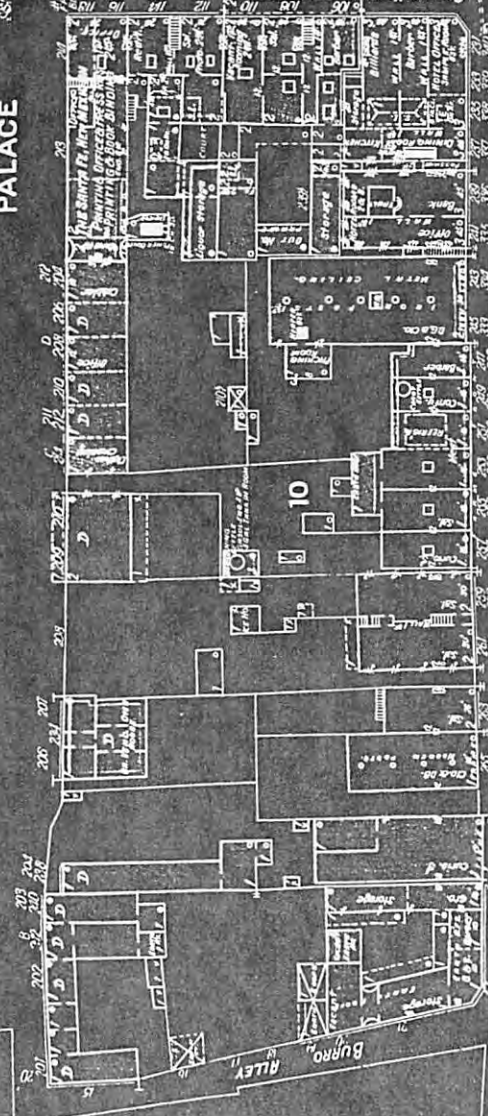
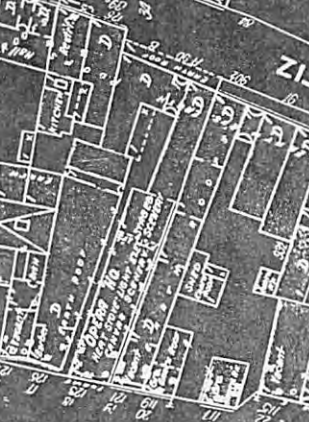
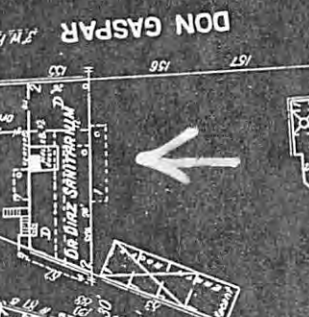
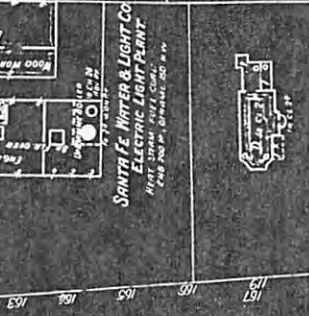
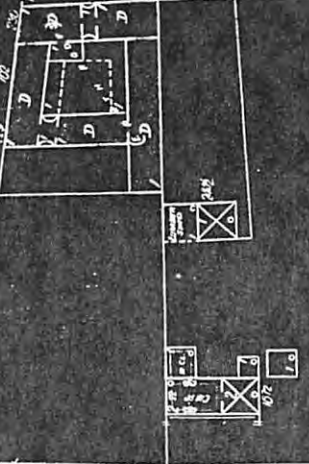
GALISTEO

WATER

DON GASPAR

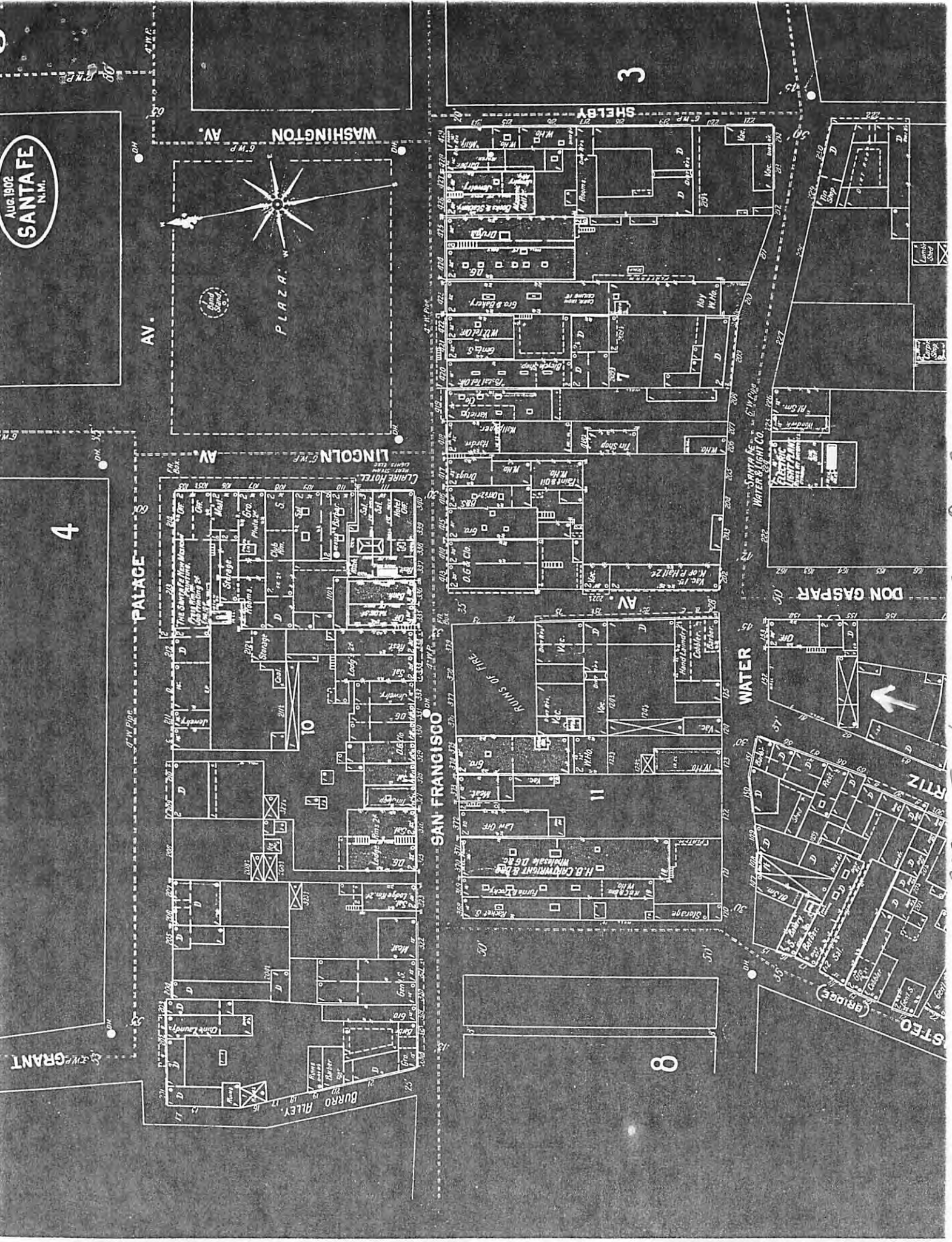
NORMANDE HOTEL

ORTIZ

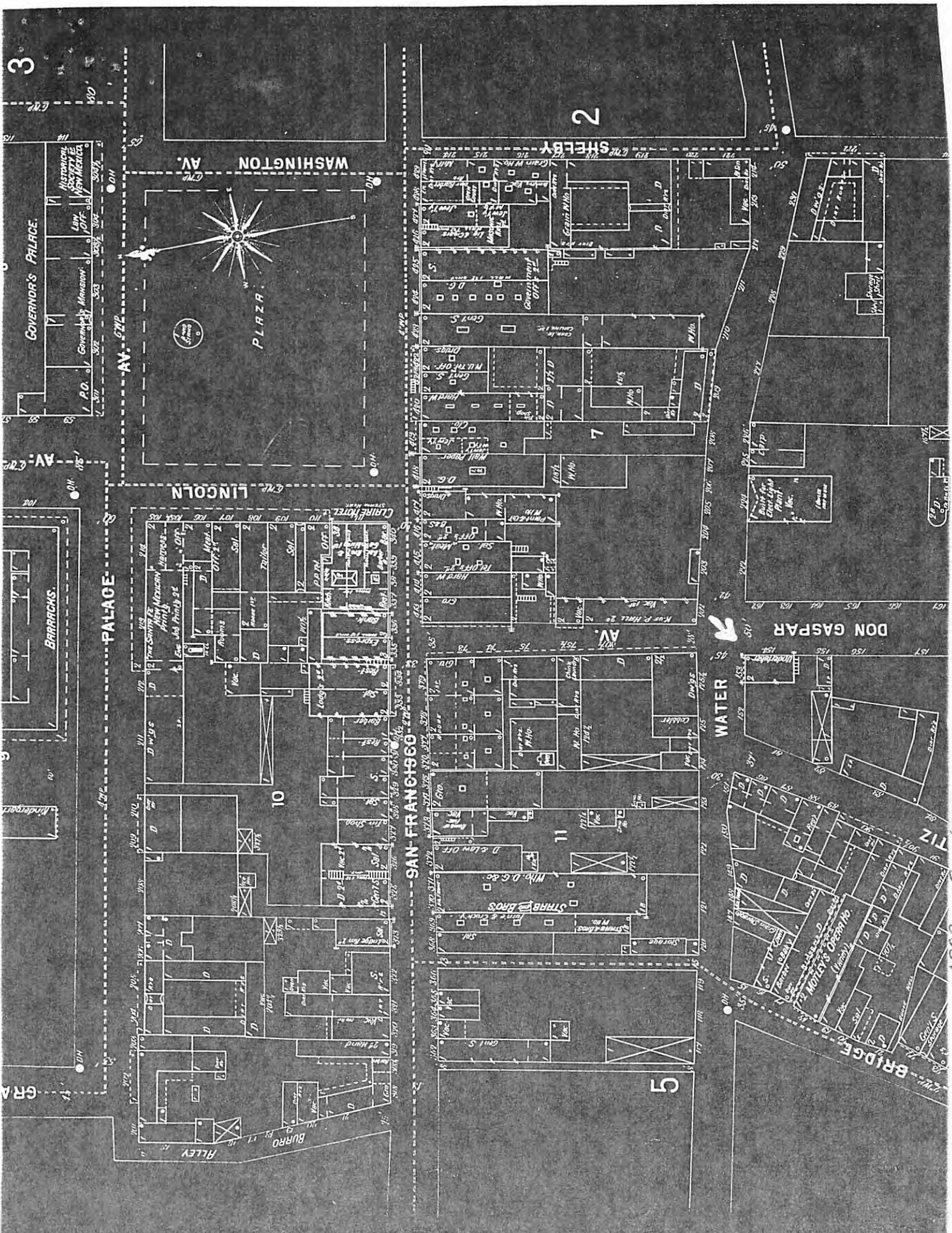


1908 Sanborn 210 Don Gaspar

AUG. 1902  
**SANTA FE**  
N.M.



1902 Sanborn 210 Don Gaspar



3

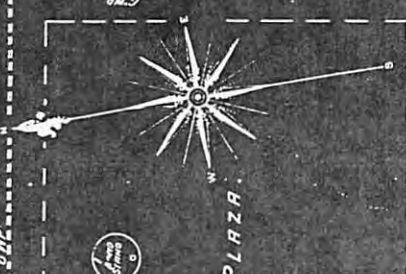
2

5

10

7

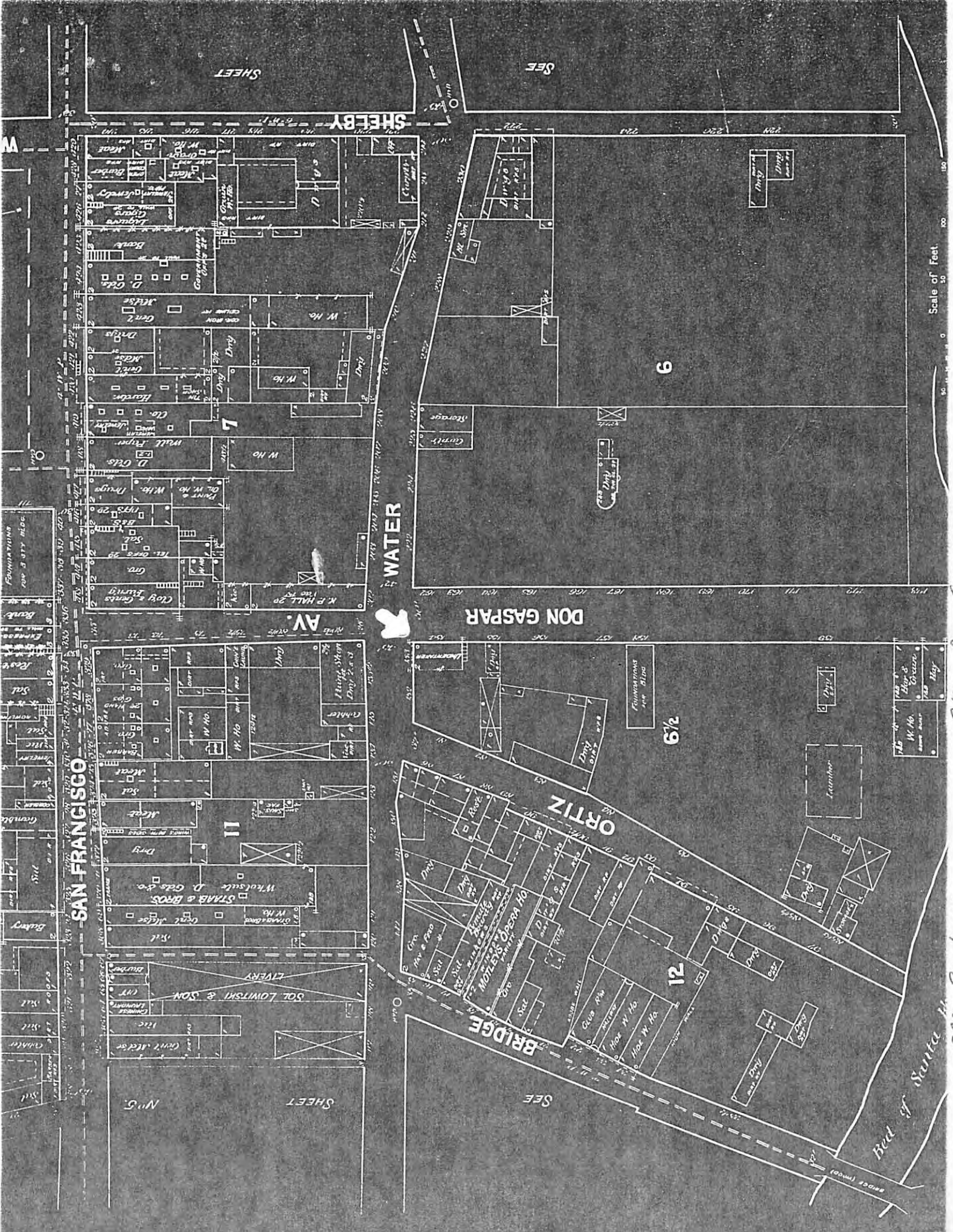
GOVERNOR'S PALACE  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
LAW OFFICE  
P.D.  
GOVERNOR'S MANSION  
AV. WASHINGTON  
PLAZA  
SHEBLY  
CLARE HOTEL  
BARACKS  
PALACE  
SAN FRANCISCO  
AV. LINCOLN  
AV. WATER  
DON GASPAR  
STRAUB BROS  
MOTLEY'S Opera Ho  
TIZ  
BURRO ALLEY  
GOVERNOR'S PALACE  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
LAW OFFICE  
P.D.  
GOVERNOR'S MANSION  
AV. WASHINGTON  
PLAZA  
SHEBLY  
CLARE HOTEL  
BARACKS  
PALACE  
SAN FRANCISCO  
AV. LINCOLN  
AV. WATER  
DON GASPAR  
STRAUB BROS  
MOTLEY'S Opera Ho  
TIZ  
BURRO ALLEY



210 Don Gaspar

Sunborn

1898

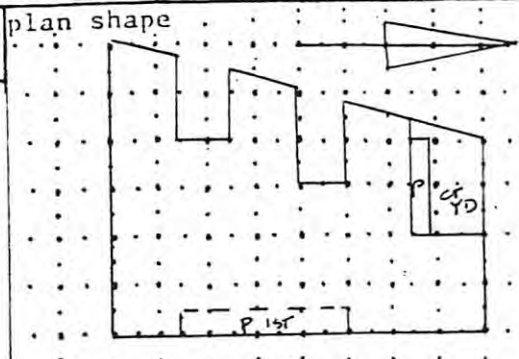


Scale of Feet

210 Don Gaspar

1840 Sanborn

Is building threatened? yes	surveyed date 12/15/84 by HMW	county SANTA FE	ID no. 051610317
field map SFHD # 1	number 317	UTM reference easting zone 12 13	northing
location description		city/town SANTA FE	
210 DON GASPAR		<del>land grant/reservation</del>	
SW CORNER @ WATER.			
building name DE VALLAS HOTEL.	legal description tnspl N S range E W sec $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{2}$		
film roll by HMW no. SFHD # 19	negative nos. 11	loc. of neg. HPB	plan shape



date of construction 1921.30 estimate actual source SANB.

use present residential other HOTEL historic residential other HOTEL

condition  excellent  good  fair  deteriorating

degree of remodeling  minor  moderate  major describe:

style MISSION REV.

foundation material CONC.

wall material/surface BRK / STUCCO

architectural features SHIPPED RES. NV FOR PLAN.; LONG EAVE. 3 HORIZ TIER ORG: 1ST & 3RD HAVE SEMI CURV ARCHES W/ RECF. WINDS IN THEM, 2ND HAS STRAIGHT LINTELS. 3RD FLR: 4/4 WD. CASM'T WINDS; 2ND 3/3 WD CASM'TS, PRONI & PART OF SIDES W/ SMALL WDW LEDGE W/ WI ORALL. 1ST FLR: 4/4 WD CASM'TS; EXCEPT 3RD FLOOR FRONTS @ N END: 56 LF 56 LIGHT DOORS W/ LARGE SOL DISPLAYS W/ SOL TRANSOMS, COMMENTS ONE WDW HAS A LEADED GLASS TRANSOM. 2 REAR LIGHTWELLS / LOADING & SERVICE AREAS. 2 SETS OF DAL DOORS W/ SOL LIGHTS @ REAR. OWNER'S APT: NW CORNER OF BLDG, 6/1, 10/1 D.H. WD WINDS, OVERLOOKS CITY ON N W/ FRAME PORCH.

surroundings CALUM relationship to surroundings  similar  not similar

district potential  yes  no

significance  eligible  of  none interest if eligible, why? PRIMARY, TYPE, INTEG.

associated buildings?  yes what type?

if inventoried, list ID nos.

see back?  yes

COMMENTS:

~~DESCRIPTION~~

DR. DIAZ HAD SANATORIUM IN N WING OF BLDG RACING WATER.  
W.G. SARGENT TOOK THIS OVER IN 1925 & BUILT 3 S PORTION &  
REMODELING DIAZ'S BLDG.

THE BLDG HAS A CLASSICAL/RENAISSANCE FEEL IN ITS 3 TIER  
HIERARCHY & SEMI-CIRC ARCHES, BUT QUALIFIES AS MISSION REV.  
AS SEMI-CIRC ARCHES DEFINE THIS TYPE AS WELL.

A SCHEME SIMILAR TO THIS WAS PUBLISHED AROUND 1911 IN THE  
NEW MEXICAN, WITH A NEW LUXURY HOTEL IDEA FIRST SURFACED.

EVENTUALLY LA FONDA WAS BUILT AS THE LUXURY HOTEL, IN SPAN, &  
& THIS FOLLOWED 5 YRS LATER, IT WOULD SEEM RECYCLING THE  
EARLIER SCHEME.

EXC. INTEG, GOOD CONDITION.

INT. LOBBY INTEREST.

PLANNED TRX ART PROJECT IN 1985.

ADDRESS: 210 Don Gaspar

HIST. SURVEY #: 317

(OD = Out of District; M = Moved  
DEM = Demolished; N/A = not a building)

NAME: De Vargas Hotel

### CITY SURVEY

Area #: 1                      Signif. Status: S

(S = Significant; C = Contributing; NC = Noncontributing)

### REGISTER STATUS (Individual Nominations)

National: N                      State: N                      State #: N/A

HSFF: N                      HABS: N

(OSFT = To be in forthcoming 4th edition of Old Santa Fe Today.  
Not covered by a more detailed Bulletin article.)

### DOCUMENTATION

SFHS Inventory: Y

NR Nomination: N/A                      SR Nomination: N/A

HSFF Bulletin: N/A                      HABS Data: N/A

Historic Photos: Y                      Museum: 1                      Archives:

Modern Photos:                      MNM:                      SRC:

Surveys:                      Floor Plans:                      Elevations:

Other: SF Rep. 8/4/1982. AT 11/5/1984

Bibliography:

Comments: HPD File: Architectural drawings.

The lobby of the soon-to-be St. Francis Hotel.

SFNM 7/24/1986

Sydney Brink/ The New Mexican

# Return of the St. Francis

## A refurbished hotel that almost never was is back on track

By ROBERT STOREY  
The New Mexican Staff

Like a phoenix rising from the ashes, Santa Fe's downtown St. Francis Hotel renovation has been revived and will begin construction Monday.

The \$6 million historic renovation of the old DeVargas Hotel, at 210 Don Gaspar, now features new investment partners and an 80-year lease, instead of a 40-year lease, with the two Albuquerque families that own the property, said managing partner Mike Cerletti.

On July 2, Cerletti, one of the city's most experienced hotel operators, announced that plans had been scrapped to remodel the 62-year-old, 90-room hotel into an updated 85-room, mid-range hotel.

For more than a year an investor group, DeVargas Associates, including Cerletti, Don Salazar, a Santa Fe lawyer and Fred Port, of Laguna Beach, Calif., had unsuccessfully tried to complete final financing arrangements.

Last year, the partnership announced it had negotiated a long-term, 40-year lease with two families, the heirs of the hotel's original owners Pat Vigil and David Armijo Sr.

"We have rearranged the investor partnership and negotiated a longer term lease to clear the last hurdle to getting

**'We will keep the hotel the way it was as much as possible. We're doing the hotel as a federal historical preservation project to qualify for investor tax credits,' partner Mike Cerletti said Wednesday.**

our financing," Cerletti said Wednesday.

The new partnership, which has yet to be named, now includes Goodwin Taylor, of McLean, Va., Preston Caruthers, of Alexandria, Va., and Cerletti.

Salazar and Port are still associated with the project, but in lesser roles, Cerletti said.

On July 28, the Stan Davis Construction Co. will begin extensive renovation of the hotel, which, like similar 1920's style institutions, has communal bathrooms down the hall separate from most guest rooms.

When the \$3.2 million construction part of the project is completed, the St. Francis Hotel will have some suites and all rooms will have separate bathrooms.

"We will keep the hotel the way it was as much as possible. We're doing the hotel as a federal historical preservation project to qualify for investor tax credits. Part of the requirements is restoring the exterior of the building to its original look," Cerletti said.

The main part of the hotel was built in 1924, but some parts on the northeast corner have been traced back as far as 1888, he said.

When the project is done, the old hotel, once one of the city's most fashionable gathering places and was very close to the Legislature and capitol, will have ground-floor residences with a separate garden. There will also be a full-service restaurant and bar, plus parking for more than 40 vehicles.

A secluded patio area on the Water Street side of the hotel will be converted into an outdoor dining area to accompany the restaurant that will be located on the northeast corner of the building, at Water and Don Gaspar Streets.

"We intend for our lounge to serve local, year-round residents, as well as our guests," Cerletti said.

Cerletti said he expected the St. Francis' room rates to range from \$49 to \$130 a night, with the average about \$67 a night.

centage of people who in the past thought it was acceptable," said chairman Julian Grace. "Your car is not a bar. It's not a place to drink in."

Under the proposed law, violators could be jailed for two days, fined up to \$100, or both. Under the current law, a judge can only levy one or the other.

The recommendation also would make it illegal to have open or partially-full alcoholic beverage containers in glove

## City gets more during two

By HARRISON FLETCHER  
The New Mexican Staff

More than \$15,000 confiscated during drug arrests was added to city coffers this week, and officials say they're working to get more.

District Court judges last week awarded the city \$14,420 found in a during a cocaine arrest involving Betty Jane Salas in April, and \$710 found confiscated during a marijuana bust of Gilbert Joe Rivera last year. The amount was the largest awarded to the city from drug busts.

According to Gail Roach, an assistant to the city attorney, "we're going to pursue more."

Roach said city attorneys are trying to get \$699 found in the Cerrillos Road apartment of Anthony Guy Garcia in May and \$975 from a heroin bust April 1984. Attorneys have filed a

## AREA DIGEST

### Stop! New lights soon to blink

Those new traffic signals that have sprouted throughout town will be in operation in the next two to six weeks.

The two lights on Agua Fria at Siler Road and Osage Avenue have been installed by the State Highway Department and are expected to be in operation in the next two to four weeks.

Camino Alire and Alameda Street; Cordova Road and Don Diego Avenue; and Cordova Road and Old Pecos Trail.

The state also has plans for a light at Old Pecos Trail and Rodeo Road.

### Deal close for Valdes Park

Even if there are a half dozen amendments

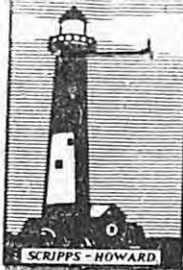
interest to encourage economic development.

Attorney John Patterson, who is working on the park deal for the city said 75 percent of appraised value would not be considered a donation. The group's offer is about 85 percent of the appraised value, although several city councilors have questioned the appraisal because it was on 63.49 acres rather than the full 104 acres in the park.

The city fire veteran because factory work promoted from shake-up of the City Hall admin

### City quiet

Santa Fe



# The Albuquerque Tribune

Final  
Closing Stocks

Albuquerque, New Mexico, Monday, November 5, 1984

25 CENTS

## Old Santa Fe DeVargas Hotel will get \$2.7 million facelift

By KEITH RAETHER  
Tribune arts editor

SANTA FE — The sign — “DeVargas Hotel, Popular Rates” — probably will go, but the building will stay.

And as long as Celine Vigil is alive, the DeVargas will remain a hotel.

Drawings of a renovated DeVargas, scheduled to reopen next fall, were released today to *The Tribune* by DeVargas Associates Ltd., the partnership behind the project. The group was scheduled to meet today with project

architect Stevens, Mallory, Pearl & Campbell to review the plans that will restore the old hotel to its original California Mission Revival splendor.

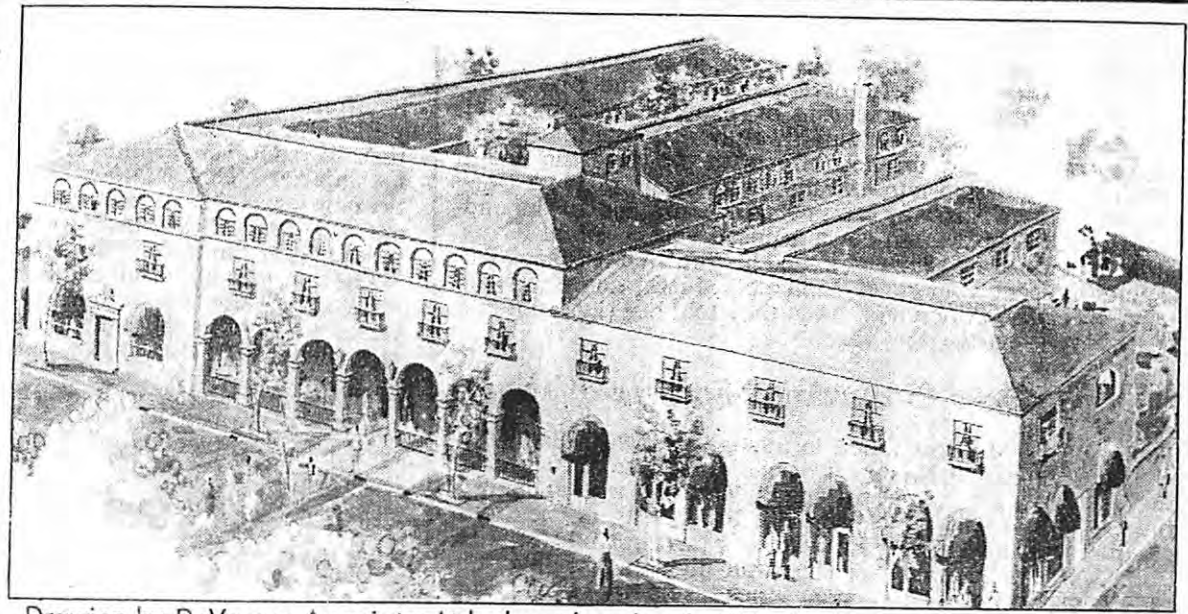
“I said I would never sign this place away,” said Vigil, who with her late husband, Pat, has owned and operated the DeVargas since 1947. “And you see, I didn’t.”

Instead, she has leased it for 40 years to DeVargas Associates, a partnership of Michael Cerletti, part-owner of the newly renovated La Posada de Albuquerque and part-owner of La Posada de

Santa Fe; Don Salazar, a Santa Fe lawyer and part-owner of La Posada de Santa Fe, and Frederick Port, of Laguna Beach, Calif.

“I’ll be very happy to see the hotel renovated as long as they do what they say they’re going to do,” said Vigil. “We could have sold it many times, and it would have become offices or condominiums. But my husband always wanted it to be a hotel, and that’s what it will be as long as I’m alive.”

Please see RENOVATION A-4



Drawing by DeVargas Associates Ltd. shows how hotel will look when it reopens in late 1985

Final  
Closing Stocks  
25 CENTS

# Renovation Planned for DeVargas

Continued from Page A-1

Cerletti estimates renovation of the building will cost \$2.7 million and puts the price of the total project at \$5 million.

Last week DeVargas Associates received preliminary approvals from the city and the state Industrial and Agricultural Finance Authority for \$4.5 million in industrial revenue bonds. The partnership will have two weeks to decide which agency it will get its bonds from.

"Obviously it makes economic sense to renovate the hotel, or we wouldn't be involved," said Cerletti. "But beyond that, the DeVargas is a lovely old building that should be preserved. I think all of us in the project have a strong feeling for the history of Santa Fe."

Because the DeVargas, 210 Don Gaspar Ave., is a designated historic building, it will qualify for tax credits that will total 25 percent of allowable construction costs.

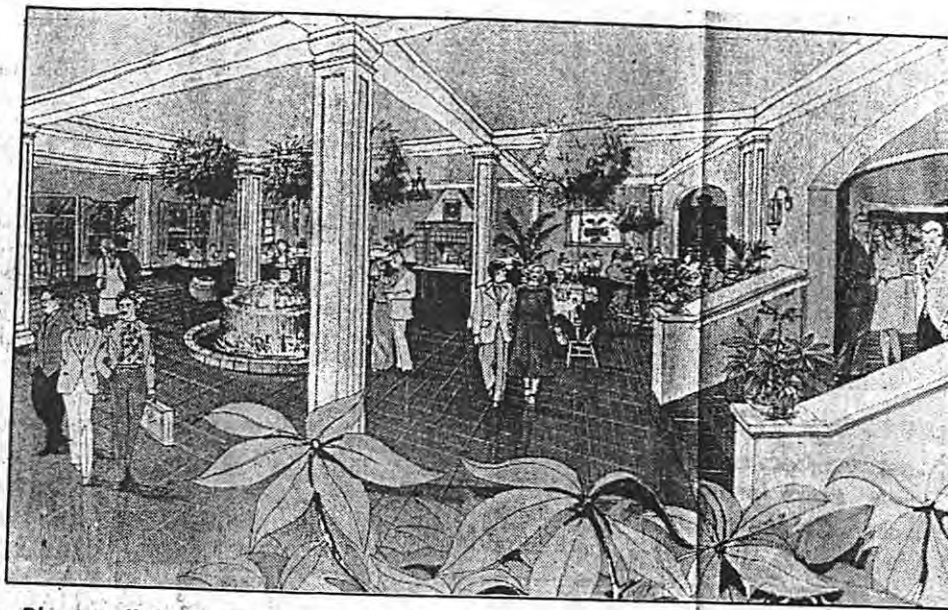
A contract with Bradbury & Stamm Construction Co. is expected to be signed this month, and renovation will begin early in December.

George Pearl, project designer for the renovation, calls the hotel "the finest example of the first wave of California Mission Revival architecture in Santa Fe."

"We're restoring it to its original condition as much as is feasible and desirable," said Pearl, sitting in the lobby of the hotel. "We've made decisions on every door, ceiling, wall and window."

Pearl says the wing of the DeVargas now occupied by the Steaksmith will become part of the lobby again. The quarry tile floor and as much of the furniture as is "historically significant" will be kept. Exterior walls will be restored to their original adobe color.

A large fountain will be erected in the



Plans call for restoring the DeVargas Hotel's lobby to its earlier grandeur

center of the lobby. Deciduous trees will line the sidewalks leading to the hotel, and awnings will accent all exterior windows.

Vigil's apartment in the hotel, now filled with antique oak furniture, silver sets, porcelain miniatures and her glass menagerie, probably will be converted to the kitchen of a dining room, and she will move to the third floor. The dining room will open to the courtyard.

Some of the guest rooms will be enlarged to accommodate bathrooms. Stairways will be added to comply with fire code.

"It's an endearing building," said Pearl. "I suppose I like it doubly for its colorful history."

The DeVargas was built in 1924 by William Sargent, Santa Fe's mayor from 1914 to 1918, as the successor to the DeVargas hotel on Marcy Street that went up in flames on Jan. 22, 1922.

In those days the Capitol was one block south of the DeVargas, thus its reputation as a recovery room for the state's political warriors after a long day's battle in the statehouse.

Until El Fidel and the Montezuma hotels were built, La Fonda was the DeVargas' only competition downtown. La Fonda was the place to be seen; the DeVargas was the place to be heard. It was the bullring for politicians who didn't know how to separate church from state.

"You never met anybody anywhere

except at the La Fonda," Ernie Pyle once wrote, comparing the hotels as they were in the '30s. "You never took anybody to lunch anywhere else. I could not see how some of the struggling geniuses afforded it. I stayed at the DeVargas."

And because he did, Pyle heard election results and World Series scores long before the rest of the world got the news.

Sargent sold the DeVargas in 1947 to Pat Vigil, whom Sargent described as "not a big spender but a good business man," and David Armijo, not a big spender but a prominent rancher.

Pat and Celine Vigil ran the hotel until Pat's death in April 1981. When they weren't moderating political debates they were making sure the linens were fresh in each of the hotel's 90 rooms.

Celine Vigil likes to remember the days when Santa Fe was "a little town" and the water company was still a pueblo-style building across Don Gaspar from the DeVargas. She doesn't remember the politicians as much as the two women from Memphis who've stayed in Room 235 every summer since 1948.

"The first year they came here they took the bus up from Albuquerque," said Vigil. "They didn't know where the DeVargas was, of course, so when they got to the depot they asked for a taxi. Instead of telling them the hotel was right next door, the driver took them there in the taxi. And he charged them."

SF Reporter 8/4/1982

New Mexico Press Clipping Bureau  
Albuquerque, N. M.

# 50 Years of Memories of a Working Man's Hotel

The headlines the next day—Jan. 5, 1922—called it "The Biggest Fire in the History of the City." When it was over, all that was left of the De Vargas Hotel on Marcy Street in Santa Fe was one tall brick chimney.

Fortunately, the hotel's 50 to 75 guests and 10 to 15 permanent residents were unharmed. A handful of businessmen even insisted on checking into the hotel while it was burning, news accounts said.

But the \$125,000 conflagration was total in its destruction. It was quite a setback for William G. Sargent, the owner of the hotel, but the same news accounts said he seemed to take it in stride. In fact, scarcely was the rubble cleared when the former Santa Fe mayor (1914-1918) started making plans for a new hotel, to be called by the same name.

Just like the old De Vargas, this one, to be built a few blocks away on Don Gaspar Avenue, was going to be three stories high. The only difference was that instead of wood this one was going to be built with masonry. Sargent had apparently had it with fires.

Wally Sargent, who is now a Santa Fe developer, was a young child when his grandfather built and then ran the hotel. He remembers both his grandparents running the place, which then had a large dining room and a bar that was a favorite of statewide political representatives when they were in town for a legislative session.

"It was a family thing, I remember it quite well," Sargent said. "In the summer I helped run the

telephone switchboard and the elevator. In those days it was one of the few elevators in town."

"It was the hotel in the capital," according to Romualdo "Cuate" Chavez, the Santa Fe municipal judge for the past 26 years.

"It was a first-class hotel with a wonderful dining room — waitresses in uniform and bellhops," he said. In the spacious lobby were men in top hats and coats and women in full-length dresses, he recalled.

Things were a bit more subdued back then than they are these days, Chavez recalled, noting that hotel guests had to show a marriage license just to get a room with their wife. And house detectives made sure guests stayed in their own rooms, "which had no air-conditioning, radio or television," he said.

But perhaps the most active area in the hotel was in the bar, where probably as many unofficial political caucuses were held as there were official ones down the street in the capitol building, Chavez said.

Chavez said it wasn't long after the hotel was built (in about 1928) that politicians began flocking to its bar, run by Ben Jaffa.

La Fonda in those days was owned and operated by railroad magnate Fred Harvey, and got a lot of tourists and artists, many of whom were driven in from the railroad station at Lamy, Chavez said. Working-class people and politicians stayed at the De Vargas, he added.

Newspaper columnist Ernie Pyle, in his book "Home Country," noting the contrast between the hotels, wrote that at La Fonda in the 1930s "You could go there any time of day and see a few artists in the bar, or an Indian that some white woman loved, or a goateed nobleman from Austria, or a maharaja from India, or a New York broker, or an archaeologist, or some local light in overalls and cowboy boots. You never met anybody anywhere except at the La Fonda. You never took anybody to lunch anywhere else. I couldn't see how some of the struggling geniuses afforded it. I stayed at the De Vargas."

But Chavez said that anyone wanting to meet almost any high-level politician could probably find him at the was De Vargas Hotel bar, in the 1930s and '40s.

Two times of the year when the bar was sure to be jammed, he said, were when election results came in and when the baseball World Series was being played.

The reason, he said, was because the bar had a large blackboard in view of all the patrons, and on it the election and baseball results were posted. It was one of the first places, he said, to find out who won the local elections.

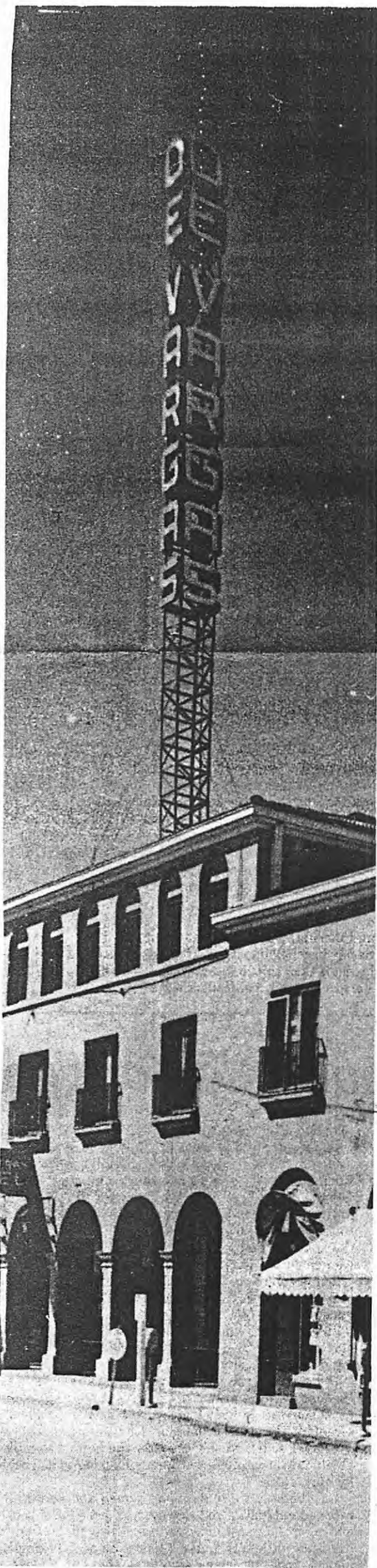
During the World Series, before radio broadcasts became commonplace, the game was called in by wire, player-by-player, with scoring inning-by-inning, Chavez

[Continued on page 4]

"It's very basic: a bed and a sink and a bathroom down the hall."

# Memories of a Working Man's Hotel

Photo by Tyler Dingee, courtesy of Museum of New Mexico, Negative No. 74106



57

[Continued from page 3]

recalled.

The judge, then a St. Louis Cardinal fan, recalled one World Series the Cards played against the New York Yankees. Small bets, often for beers, were the rule of the night, as the fans wagered over whether Yankee slugger Babe Ruth would hit a home run or Cardinal "Dizzy" Dean would strike out another batter, Chavez reminisced.

The judge recalled at one time or another seeing at the bar or in the hotel lobby, every governor of New Mexico from James F. Hinkle, who was the chief executive in 1923-24 to Clyde Tingley, who headed the government from 1935 to 1938.

In 1937 William Sargent died, "sitting on the bank of the Pecos River with a fishing pole in his hand," according to his grandson Wally, who added that for another decade his grandmother kept living at the hotel and running it.

But in the late 1940s "she was getting along in years" and none of the children was willing to take over running the hotel permanently, Sargent said. So in 1947 the hotel was sold to Pat Vigil of Santa Fe, described by Chavez as "not a big spender but a good businessman," and David Armijo of Albuquerque, described by his wife, Cora, as "a prominent rancher."

Sargent, who was 12 at the time of the sale, said the selling price was in the neighborhood of \$500,000.

Chavez said that after World War II, Santa Fe changed from a small town to a small city, and the De Vargas seemed to lose its splendor. The dining room and bar closed; to be followed by a series of restaurants. The current one, the Steaksmith, has been located there for several years.

Celina Vigil, who managed the hotel with her husband until Easter 1981, when he died, and has been managing it herself ever since, said politicians continued to stay at the hotel through the 1950s.

It wasn't until the early 1960s, when, as she said, more and more politicians were lawyers rather than people who worked with their hands, that they began deserting the De Vargas, opting instead for modern inns that were built nearby.

"Years ago it was for politicians, but now it's just a working man's hotel," said 77-year-old Santa Fe native Jose Ronquillo, who more often than not can be found hanging around La Fonda wearing a cowboy hat with a silver hatband.

Ronquillo remembers when there were good Mexican-food restaurants on Don Gaspar Avenue, as well as a swimming pool and two other older hotels not unlike the De Vargas: The El Fidel and The Montezuma, which were smaller but also inexpensive.

"That De Vargas, it's the only one left. The way prices are at hotels, it's ridiculous. But that place is still good for poorer people," Ronquillo said.

The De Vargas also holds a soft spot in the heart of Phillip Binaco, a staff member of the Sangre De Cristo Community Mental Health Center, who has placed hundreds of people at the hotel when they had nowhere else to go.

For more than six years, Binaco said, the De Vargas has been taking the clinic's downtrodden at cut-rate prices, creating the last haven for the poor in the downtown area.

"It's very basic: a bed and a sink and a bathroom down the hall. There's maid service, but that's it," he said. "But their basic needs are met, the guests are warm and dry and safe."

Fewer people are placed at the De Vargas these days, because of federal cutbacks at the health agency (which pays \$16 a day for each person who is lodged there), Binaco said. But it is still the only hotel downtown where the clinic's ill, or just the poor, can stay.

Moreover, Binaco said, plenty of Santa Feans now living all over the city probably once stayed at the De Vargas while they were looking for a home and could not afford the other hotels in town.

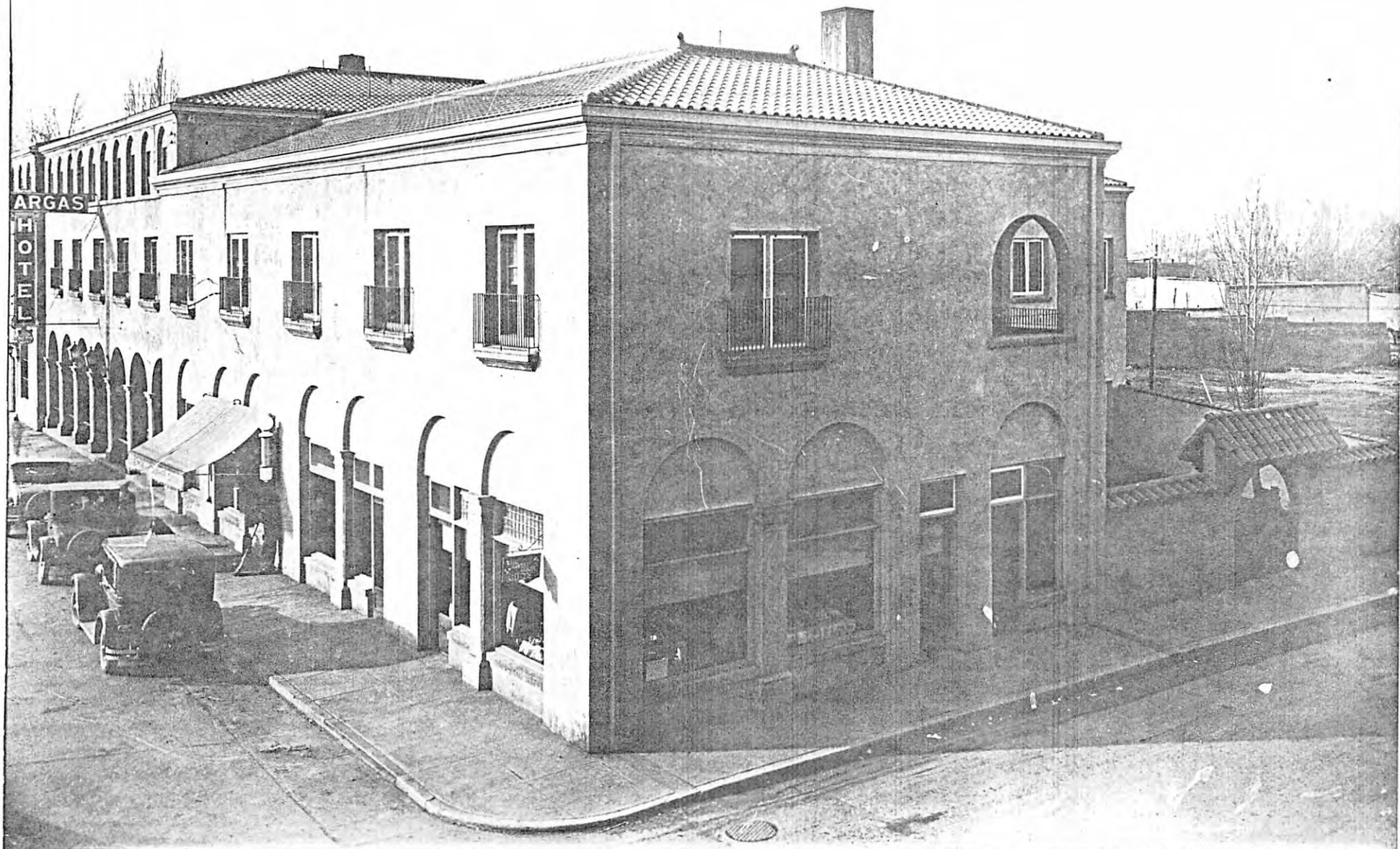
Today the De Vargas is not what it used to be. It is clean and quiet and safe; the outside looks pretty much like it always has (although a new sign was put up in 1965), and the lobby is still spacious. The same telephone switchboard Sargent operated as a boy still lights up and buzzes.

But the crowds are gone. More often than not the lobby is empty, except for a handful of persons sitting around the off-color television set. Tourists with strange accents sometimes can be overheard checking in and out.

"Obviously it has deteriorated some," Binaco said. "But in a town where there is no YMCA with cheap rooms and no temporary shelters, it has always been the De Vargas. It has helped a lot of people."

Circa 1955; A metal tower spreads the word

—KAHN



Mxm 10785 De Vargas Hotel N.D. C. 4to 19205