

HISTORIA DE LA FIESTA DE SANTA ROSA

By Charlotte Valdez

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La Fiesta de Santa Rosa started in the 1940's when a group of musicians and *maromeros* were traveling through Dixon on their way to Abiquiu and their truck broke down. Because a mechanic was not readily available to fix their vehicle they decided to have a fiesta here. The townspeople were happy to have a fiesta and that is how the first Fiesta de Santa Rosa started.

In the early 1950's Onesimo Lujan (El Negro) and wife Lupe ran part of the fiesta at la **Sala Filantropica**. This sala was the main place for the Fiesta de Santa Rosa and dancing started early in the afternoon. There was music, clowns, *maromeros* (trapeze acts) and some food vendors. Music was provided by local musicians. One popular band was Mano Luz, from Penasco. The music played and in the middle of the dance the music would stop and a lady would go and collect \$.10 cents from each couple. So, for a \$1.00 a person would be able to dance 10 times. This was a way for the musicians to get paid.

In a big building by Tony Vigil's property there was another dance hall. This was owned by Jacinta Lujan, who was the widow of JP Lujan. At this hall there were early afternoon dances and since both of these halls were in the center of town they were easily accessible to many people. Small carnivals used to come to the fiestas which made it even more enjoyable for the children and everyone in town had a good time

At night there was dancing at **LAS TRES PALOMAS**, a dance hall which was managed by Filigonio Sanchez, Gonito's father. Las Tres Palomas was a dance hall located where the fire department is now situated. Bands from the surrounding areas came and played for the young people's dancing pleasure. These dances were at night so many young people went to the dances to meet potential boyfriends/girlfriends.

In the early 1980's, the American Legion which consisted of members Silvano Romero, Ernest Atencio, Clovis Romero, Porfirio Rivera, Benito Lucero, Pete Garcia, Arthur Estrada, and Emilio Griego reactivated the Fiestas de Santa Rosa. This took place in Pete Garcia's property and some of the young girls were selected as Junior Queens. Irene Gurule was in charge of the Junior Queens and walked them through the coronation process. The Junior Queens, during those years, had princesses who accompanied them. Some of the Junior Queens during this era were Carrie Sanchez, Wanda Atencio and Frances Archuleta. It was a fun time as there was music, food vendors, and a little house which served as a bar.

Circa 1986 the fiesta was moved to El Quinto Sol for a few years because Pete Garcia was charging rent to hold the fiestas in his property. After a couple of years the fiestas became inactive.

In circa 2008, local Radio Station KLDK DJs Clark Case, Archie Tafoya, and Linda Griffith reactivated the Fiestas de Santa Rosa. The first fiesta featured Tobias Rene, Sorela, the Pathetics, Los Coyotes, the late Willie Duran, and Linda and Archie sang. The fiestas were held at the library grounds. Los Coyotes, a local band, were part of the fiestas for many years. Sadly, Linda Griffith passed away shortly after joining the fiesta committee. Shortly afterwards, Clarence Medina, Evila Rendon, Javier Arellano, and Elena Arellano joined the committee. Putting up the fiestas takes a lot of work and we have been lucky to have successful fiestas. Roberta Scott joined soon after that and now the committee consists of Roberta, Ramona Gonzales, Clarence Medina, Michelle Medina, Charlotte Valdez, Glenda Martinez, Adriana Martinez, and Skyler Leyba.

In 1956 when Ben and I got married and I came to Dixon for the first time there was a dance at Sala Filantropica. We attended and a new band called Al Hurricane was playing. Alfonso Sanchez and brother Mauricio Sanchez (Tiny Morrie) were the leaders and singers of the band. Their music was really good and who knew that Al Hurricane would become famous and be called the Godfather of New Mexico music. Al Hurricane was born at the Brooklyn Cottage Hospital in Dixon, which is now the manse, and the family lived in Ojo Sarco.

Charlotte Valdez

Doc:Fiesta Beginnings