Annual Membership Meeting Attendees Treated to Fascinating Presentation

The Governor and his wife were arrested by Inquisition officials on charges of blasphemy, heresy and “Judaizing.” In all, 26 people testified against Doña Teresa; charges included not responding to pious greetings, bathing on Fridays with too much ceremony, changing bed and table linens on Fridays, and laughing while reading books.

The Governor and his wife were removed to an Inquisition prison in Mexico City. Gov. Mendizábal died in September 1664 before his case went to trial. Doña Teresa’s trial began four days after her husband’s death. She was not allowed to view or hear the charges against her, but Doña Teresa prepared a lengthy written defense. In seven pages, Doña Teresa described the social landscape of Santa Fe and identified those who might have testified against her to protect their own reputations and to cement their own alliances. That year, the Inquisition lost its zeal and Doña Teresa’s case was suspended in December.

Doña Teresa was released, and never returned to New Mexico. She died in 1680 in Mexico; her heirs donated her remaining assets to the Catholic Church.