Pictorial Albuquerque (1880–1910) in the Albuquerque Museum Photoarchive

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Two conflicting trends seem to have characterized Albuquerque in the thirty years or so following the coming of the railroad in 1880. Even before the rails were laid through Albuquerque, and especially after the first trains came, Anglo merchants and developers purchased land surrounding the rail line, laid out commercial and residential sites, and threw up many new buildings. These developments helped to change the outlook of Albuquerque, for the newcomers brought cultural attitudes that differed from those of earlier residents of the town.

But one can make too much of the shaping power of these innovations. While accepting some of these changes, residents of Albuquerque also retained ties to earlier institutions. Moreover, the lines of influence were not in one direction; Hispanic architecture, religious persuasions, and social customs also influenced the attitudes of newcomers. While changes and innovation were apparent during the years from 1880 to 1910, so were the influences of tradition and continuity.

Yet historians who attempt to chronicle these early years of Albuquerque may find that some business, municipal, and county records no longer exist, having been destroyed during urban renewal (circa 1955–1970) or lost earlier in the twentieth century. If many of these usual research materials are lacking, others are readily available. One such source is the photographs taken of early Albuquerque, and one of the most important of these collections is that in the Albuquerque Museum Photoarchive. In 1976 a group of volunteers began to collect negatives and photographs of local historical value. When the initial project was completed, the collectors gave the museum several hundred images, the beginning of the present photoarchive. Recognizing the value of such
materials, the museum decided to identify and preserve historic images, and a photoarchivist was eventually hired to maintain the collection, process incoming materials, and service inquiries.

Since 1976 more than 35,000 photographs have been gathered. Subjects include studio portraits of significant individuals and many photographs of buildings, social events, and businesses. Images in the collections date from the first known photograph of San Felipe de Neri Church, about 1866, to snapshots taken in the late 1950s.

Donations to the archive have come from individuals, businesses, educational institutions, and other repositories. The largest gift was the Brooks Collection, which Mr. and Mrs. Channel Graham donated. It consists of more than 20,000 negatives taken in and around Albuquerque between 1913 and 1942 and was discovered during the remodeling of the old Brooks Studio on Central Avenue. Another major collection is the Albuquerque Museum/University of New Mexico Joint Photoarchive, which contains more than 1,000 copy negatives in the UNM General Library Special Collections. The UNM library and the museum have developed a computer indexing system for photographs which is capable of generating either photographer or subject indices and which can be transformed to computer microfiche for inexpensive distribution. As soon as the system has been refined further, copies of the catalog for the archive will be distributed to regional educational institutions.

Since the creation of the photoarchive at the Albuquerque Museum, the news media, home owners restoring older dwellings, historians, and students from universities and high schools have made use of the collections. Images are still being sought to enhance the archive, and persons having photographs of local historical value are urged to lend them for copying and preservation. The photoarchive is available to the general public on an appointment basis during regular museum hours for non-profit and educational uses. A small charge is made for the reproduction of images.

The following photographs, selected from the more popular images in the archive, represent the cultural changes and continuities that characterized Albuquerque in the three decades or so following the arrival of the railroad in 1880.
77.133/1. Romero Street looking northwest, Old Town, circa 1881. Courtesy of Albuquerque Museum.

80.20/3. Railroad Avenue (now Central) looking east from approximately Fourth Street, June 1881. Courtesy of Museum of New Mexico.
77.133/1. Old Town Plaza looking northwest from the top of the Ambrosio Armijo store, circa 1883. Courtesy of Albuquerque Museum.
78.15/16. Santa Fe Railroad yards looking southwest, circa 1885. Various warehouses and wholesale establishments are visible trackside. Courtesy of Albuquerque Museum.
78.15/10. South side of Railroad Avenue (now Central) from First Street, circa 1890. Courtesy of Albuquerque Museum.
78.15/19. Wool wagons lined up along south Second Street, circa 1890. Courtesy of Albuquerque Museum.
78.50/709. Home Economics cooking class, University of New Mexico, circa 1895. Courtesy of UNM Library/Albuquerque Museum Joint Photoarchive.
72.42. Castle Huning, residence of Franz Huning, at Fifteenth Street and Railroad Avenue, 1902. The building was razed in 1955. Courtesy of Albuquerque Museum.
72.31/2. Trackside view of the Alvarado Hotel by a Detroit Photographic Company photographer, circa 1908. Courtesy of Albuquerque Museum.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO
PRESERVATION AWARDS

At a recent meeting of the Cultural Properties Review Committee, an arm of the Historical Society of New Mexico, the following persons and groups were given awards for their work in historical preservation.


Robert B. Collins: prosecution of illegal "pothunters" and contributions to historic preservation law.

University of New Mexico: efforts to preserve historic Hodgin Hall.

Spencer Wilson: preservation plan for the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, continuing liaison as New Mexico representative of the National Trust, and guidance on the Cultural Properties Review Committee.

Kaiser Steel Company: support of archaeological investigations in the York Canyon mine area.

George Clayton Pearl: ten years of service on the Cultural Properties Review Committee and contributions in preserving and restoring architectural properties.

Marc Simmons: historical publications, including *New Mexico, A Bicentennial History*, and ten years service to the Cultural Properties Review Committee.


John P. Conron: contributions to historical preservation organizations, restoration architect, editor and author of historic preservation publications, and ten years of architectural expertise on the Cultural Properties Review Committee.

Lester B. Urichell: extended efforts to rehabilitate the rolling stock on the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad.

The UNM Alumni Association: efforts to preserve historic Hodgin Hall.