



# new mexico architecture

july-august

1971

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In This Issue  
Hobbs Public  
Library  
and  
Loretto Academy  
—an historical  
record

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*Loretto Academy in 1885*

# nma

*vol. 13 • nos. 7 and 8 • july-august 1971 • new mexico architecture*

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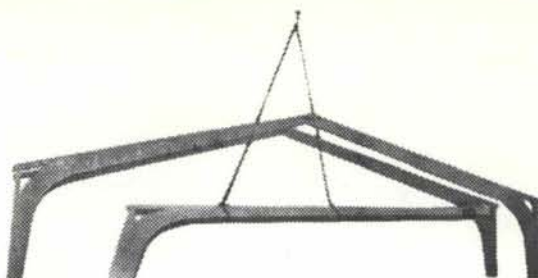
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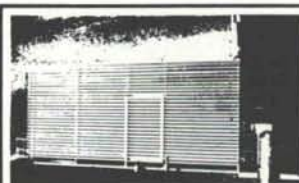
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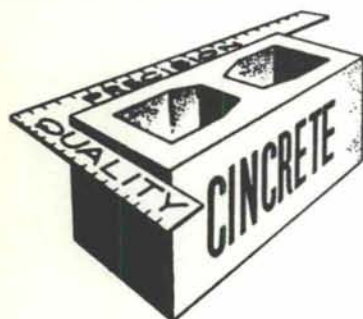


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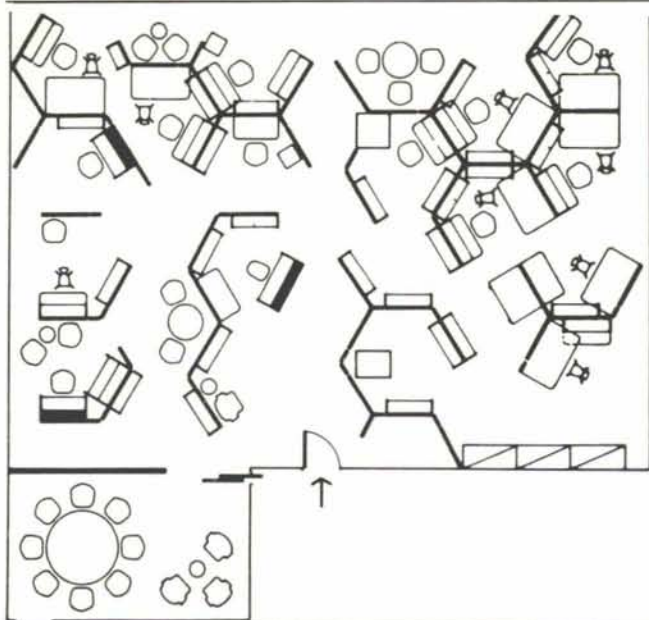
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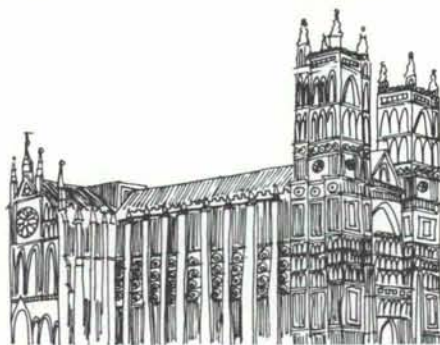
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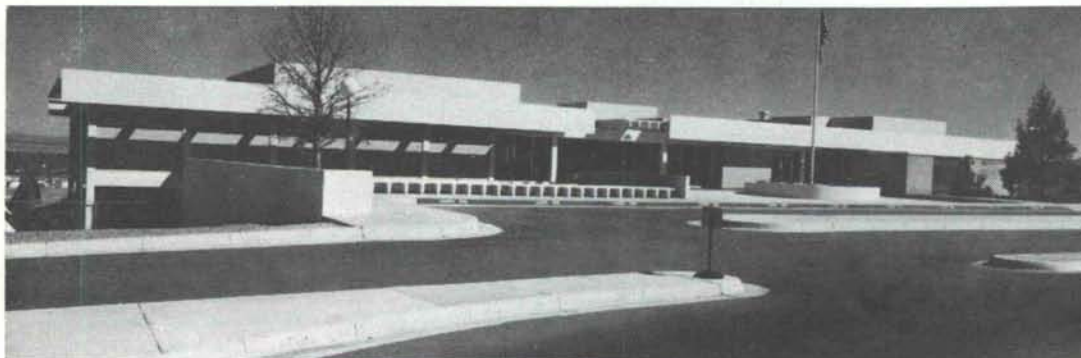
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## "PEOPLE" AWARDS ARE ANNOUNCED

The New Mexico Society of Architects has announced the first in a bi-annual awards program. Alternating with the previously established awards for outstanding completed architectural commissions (see NMA November-December, 1970), the new program is designed to recognize dedication and service to the improvement of the environment of man. These awards will be presented for the first time at this year's annual meeting. Outlined below are the categories under which the Awards Committee will accept nominations.

### I. Awards to members of the New Mexico Society of Architects:

#### a) Service to the Society or its Components

The Society and its constituent organizations are maintained and made effective by the continuous services freely given by devoted members. Improvements in the methods of architectural practice and an increase in the effectiveness of the Society and its chapters constitute a real service to the profession. Such services should have been rendered so as to merit widespread recognition and provide new impetus to the progress of the Society.

#### b) Service to the Public

Leadership in the development of civic improvements and needed governmental projects, the conservation and beautification of communities, the improvement of transportation, and the renewal of blighted areas all offer exceptional opportunities for the architect to earn distinction. This effort should have been sustained over a period of time, have gained more than usual recognition by his co-workers, public officials involved, and fellow citizens, and have clearly influenced progress.

#### c) Education

Many architects render their principal service in education by teaching, administration, research, or writing. Some are engaged in developing new methods of instruction which will enable students and practitioners to cope with the rapid changes and advances in programming, analysis, design, and construction. Others are bringing to the students an awareness of the responsibility of the architect to social, economic, and political developments. When these efforts are outstanding and have had a single and lasting influence beyond the normal routines expected of the teaching process, they are worthy of recognition.

#### d) Historic Preservation

The conservation of natural environments, the measuring and recording of existing buildings, the careful and knowledgeable restoration of blighted structures and the successful integration of historic architecture into the continuing development of cities and towns is adding to the cultural wealth of our nation. Research into former building materials and techniques, by-gone customs affecting design, and unusual solutions to everyday living problems are increasing the understanding of our past. The accomplishments of an architect engaged in historic preservation should have been of such a distinguished nature as to have widespread recognition.

### e) Literature

Architects who have the talent for expressing themselves in written form may make a particular contribution to the advancement of the profession by conveying to the reading public the meaning, purpose, and significance of architecture. Books and articles which explain and interpret architecture and the allied arts in terms of past and present cultures enhance the general appreciation of accomplishments in these fields. The level of public and private taste and understanding may be raised by the discriminating and knowledgeable work of accomplished architectural critics who merit professional distinction.

### II. Awards to other individuals, agencies, or organizations.

#### a) Fine Arts

An award to any person in recognition of distinguished achievement in the fine arts related to architecture, including such areas as painting, mural painting, and sculpture.

#### b) Allied Professions

The Allied Professions Award is presented by the Society to recognize achievements in the design professions related to architecture, including landscape architecture, planning, and engineering (structural, civil, mechanical, acoustical, electrical, etc.), and interior design.

#### c) Craftsmanship

An award to an individual craftsman for distinguished creative design and execution where design and hand-craftsmanship are inseparable. The crafts included in the scope of this award are: furniture, metal work, wood-carving, pottery, glassware, textiles, stained glass, and ceramics. Industrial arts are not included. See below.

#### d) Industrial Arts

This award is given in recognition of design for execution by machine, in such fields as furniture, textiles, typography, building products and equipment, and consumer products.

#### e) Architectural Photography

This award is presented to any person in recognition of distinguished achievement in architectural photography.

#### f) Collaborative Achievement in Architecture

This award is given to that project which best exemplifies the results of outstanding collaboration between practitioners of the building arts including architecture and at least three of the following categories: engineering, murals, sculpture, landscape architecture, craftsmanship, and interior design.

#### g) Citation of an Organization

A Citation of an Organization is presented by the Society to a governmental or any other organization, excepting an architectural organization, for achievement in any field related to architecture or planning.

#### h) Literature and/or Criticism

This award is to recognize contributions to the advancement of the profession by conveying to the reading public the meaning, purpose, and significance of architecture. Books and articles which explain and interpret architecture and the allied arts in terms of past and present cultures enhance the general appreciation of accomplishments in these fields. The level of public and private taste and understanding may be raised by the discriminating and knowledgeable work of accomplished architectural critics who merit professional distinction.

Nominations in any or all of the above categories will be accepted by any member of the Awards Committee any time from

now until September 15, 1971. All nominations must be accompanied with significant documentation to give the committee thorough knowledge of the nominee's qualifications to justify consideration for award. Nominations can be made in one or more applicable categories. All nominations under all categories must be signed by three corporate members in good standing of the A.I.A.

While the list for awards might seem to be lengthy or even burdensome, it is the intent of the committee to suggest areas for consideration, wherein all aspects of service to the total environment can be acknowledged by the Society. The committee feels that it is a privilege and a duty for the New Mexico Society of Architects to recognize distinguished service to the society of man by its own members. But it is also incumbent upon the New Mexico Society of Architects to bring to public attention other persons, agencies, or organizations who have likewise distinguished themselves by services affecting both the field of architecture and the world of man.

It must be understood that the Awards Committee, acting as jurors, is instructed by the Board of Directors of the New Mexico Society of Architects to place a high value on each award, and therefore, to make awards only in those categories in which the nominees have demonstrated outstanding and distinguished performance.

Nominations will be accepted by any member of the Awards Committee.

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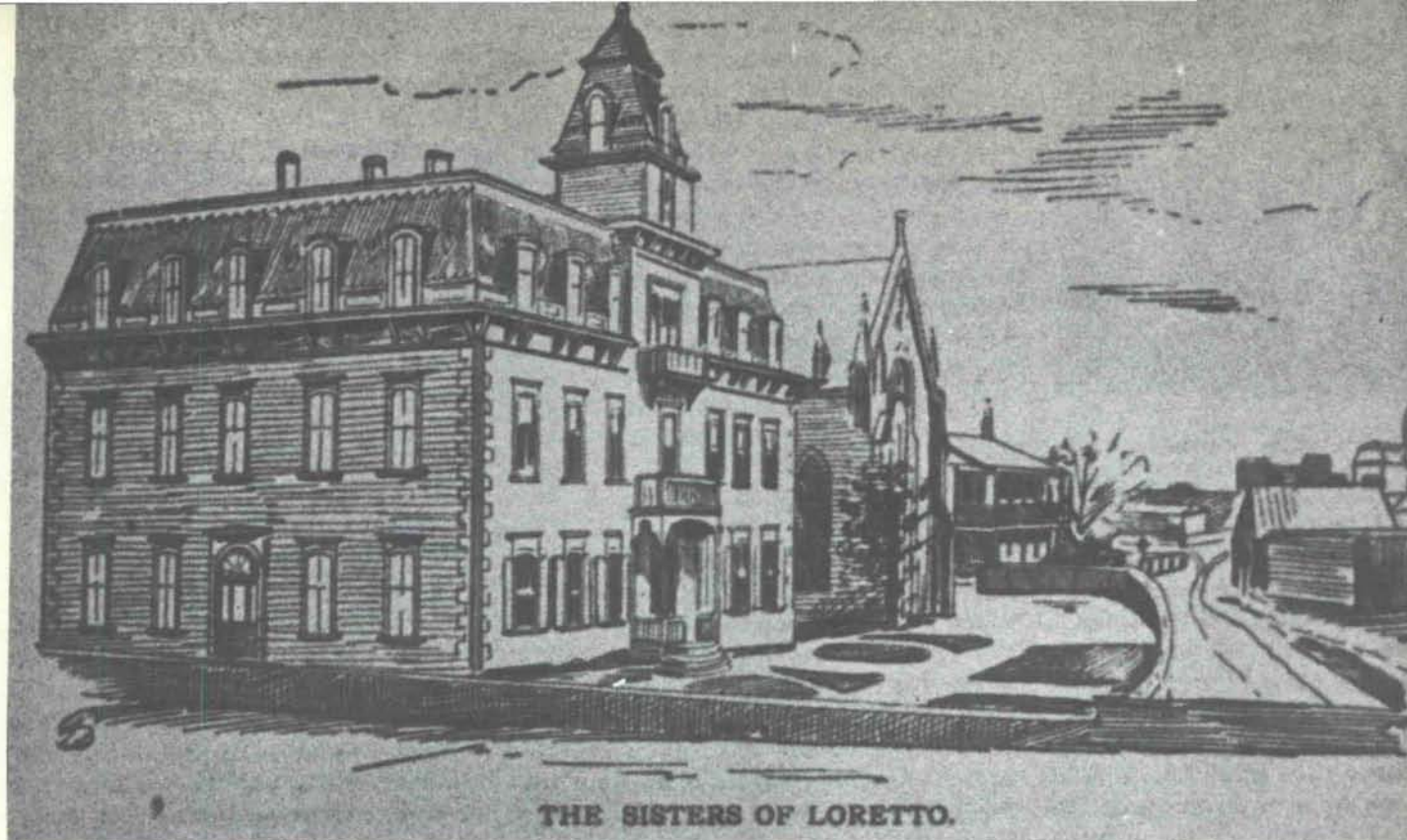
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more news page 19 





*Loretto Academy as it looked at the turn of the century  
—from the the Santa Fe New Mexican of June 5, 1900 . . . .*

*. . . . and as it looked in 1971*





# Once an Educational Oasis: Loretto Academy in Santa Fe

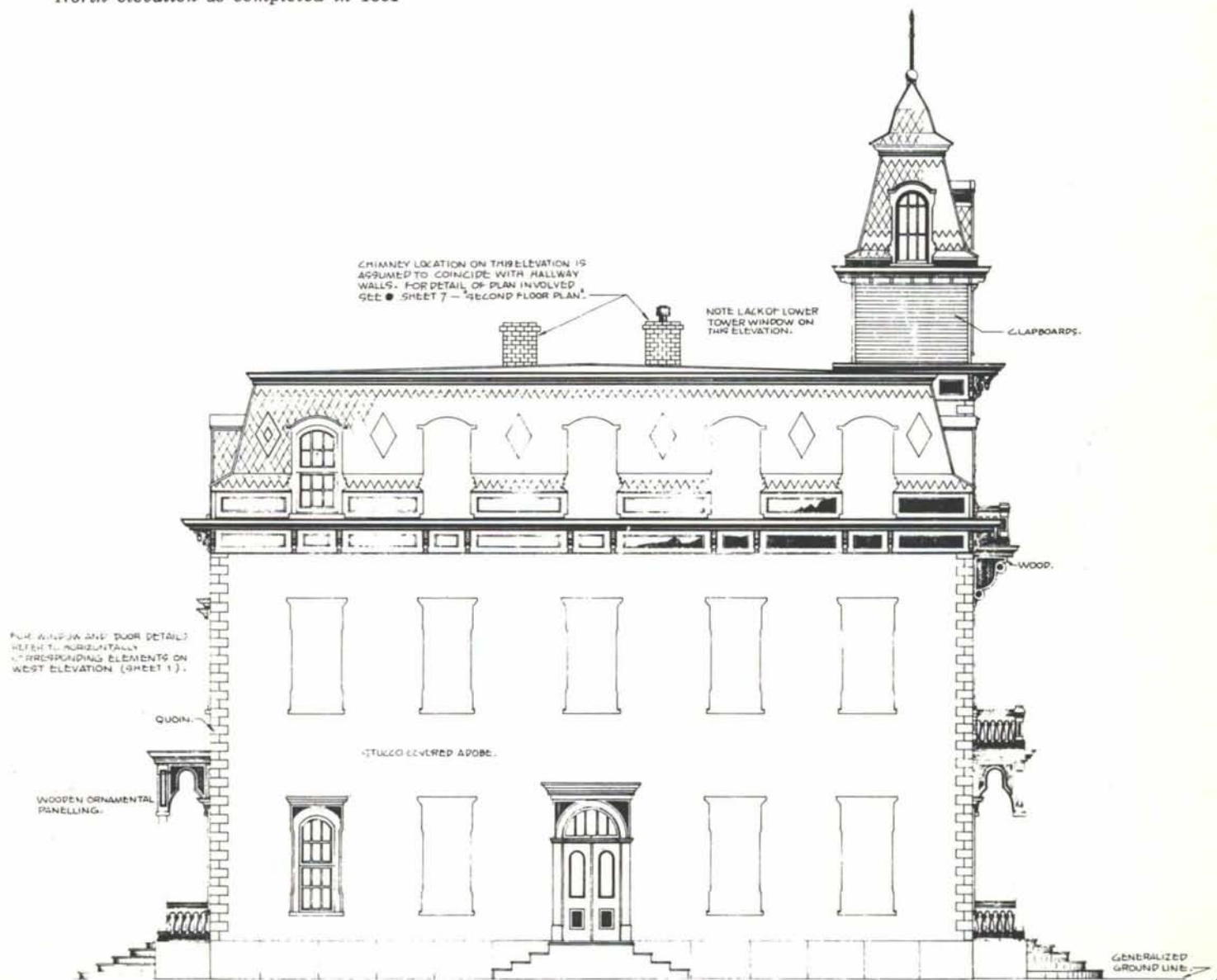
—by: Barbara Jo Cekosh and David E. Ferro

"As the source of evil here is the profound ignorance of the people, the first remedy must be instruction, and for this we need Christian schools for youth . . ." This plea was expressed in 1852 by Father Joseph Machebeuf in a letter to his sister in Peña Blanca. The answer, the teaching center of the Sisters of Loretto stands today at trails' end, across narrow Alameda Street from the famed La Fonda Hotel in old Santa Fe.

In 1812, the Sisters of Loretto, a teaching order of the Catholic Church, was organized in honor of

Our Lady, in Louisville, Kentucky by Father Charles Nerinckx, a French missionary priest. During the years between 1812 and 1824 the teaching centers of the Sisters sprang up throughout the West. Their mission was the education of the people in the still untamed frontier. The original Sisters (Mary Magdeline Hayden, Monica Bailey, Roberta Brown, Rosanna Dant, and Catherine Mahoney) were warmly greeted by the local populace upon their arrival at Santa Fe on September 26, 1852. Early in 1853 the Sisters founded their teaching community. Their

*North elevation as completed in 1881*



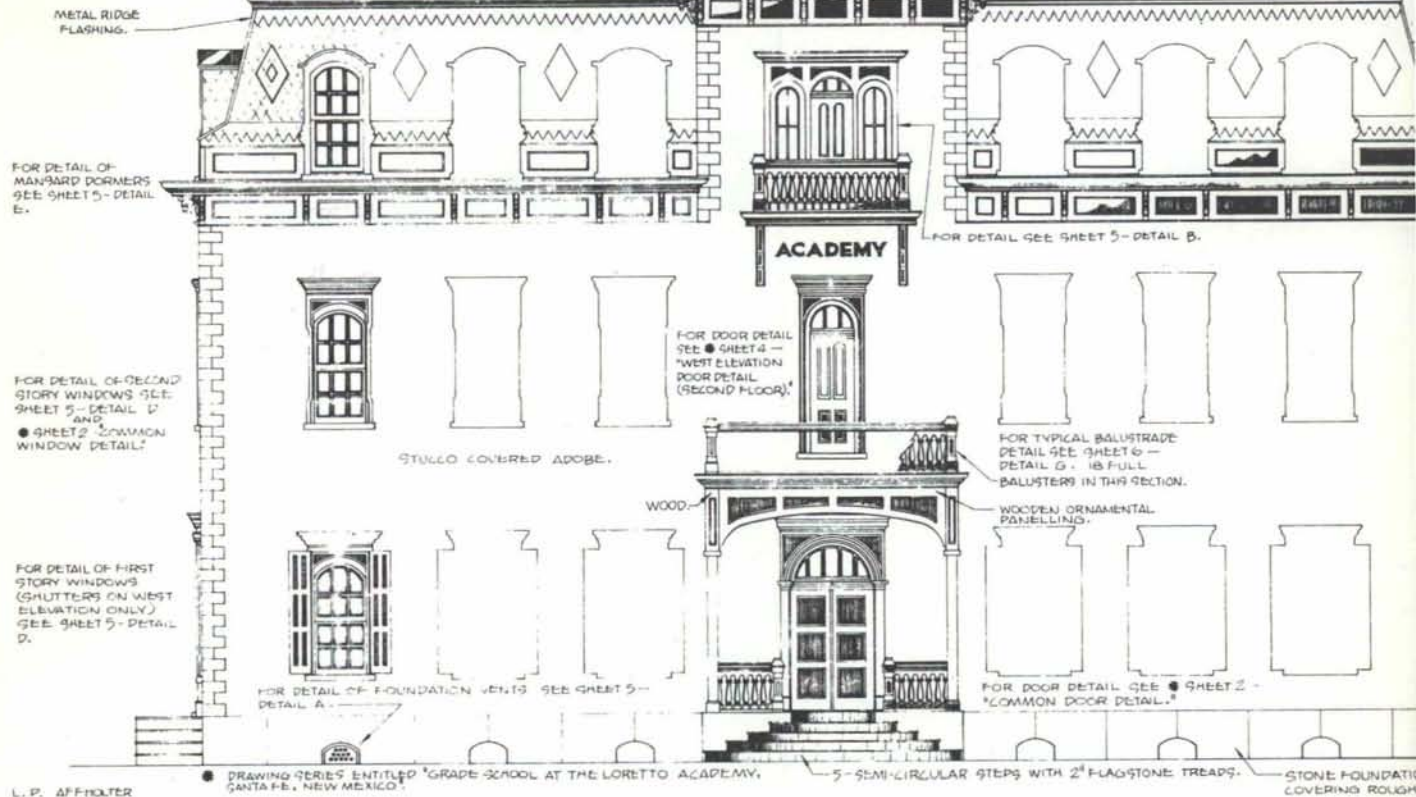
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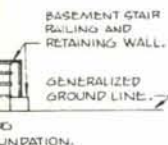
THE LORETTO ACADEMY WAS COMPLETED IN THE SECOND MAJOR STRUCTURE AT THE TEACHING CENTER OF THE SISTERS OF LORETTO, IN SANTA FE. THE BUILDING'S ORIGINAL CONFIGURATION IN A THIRD STORY (AS RECONSTRUCTED HERE), WAS REMOVED IN 1948 DUE TO INCREASED OF STRUCTURAL FAILURE. THE THIRD STORY PROVIDED BY A MANSARD ROOFING SYSTEM. SINCE IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE TO MEASURE, NOR ANY RECORDS (STATISTICALLY ACCURATE) OF THE MANSARD SYSTEM FOUND, IT WAS RECONSTRUCTED PHOTOGRAPHS AND DRAWINGS OF THE PERIOD 1910 (THESE DISCOVERED IN THE FILES OF THE MUSEUM OF NEW MEXICO, IN SANTA FE). DIMENSIONS SUCH AS OVERALL LENGTHS AND HEIGHT, WINDOW AND PLACEMENT, ETC., FOR STORIES ONE AND TWO, WERE OBTAINED BY ACTUAL MEASUREMENT OF THE 9 AS OF 20 NOVEMBER, 1969 (RECORDED IN DRAWING SERIES ENTITLED "GRADE SCHOOL AT THE LORETTO ACADEMY, SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO").





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*The front (west)  
 elevation as completed  
 in 1881 . . . .*

*. . . . and as remodeled  
 in 1948.*

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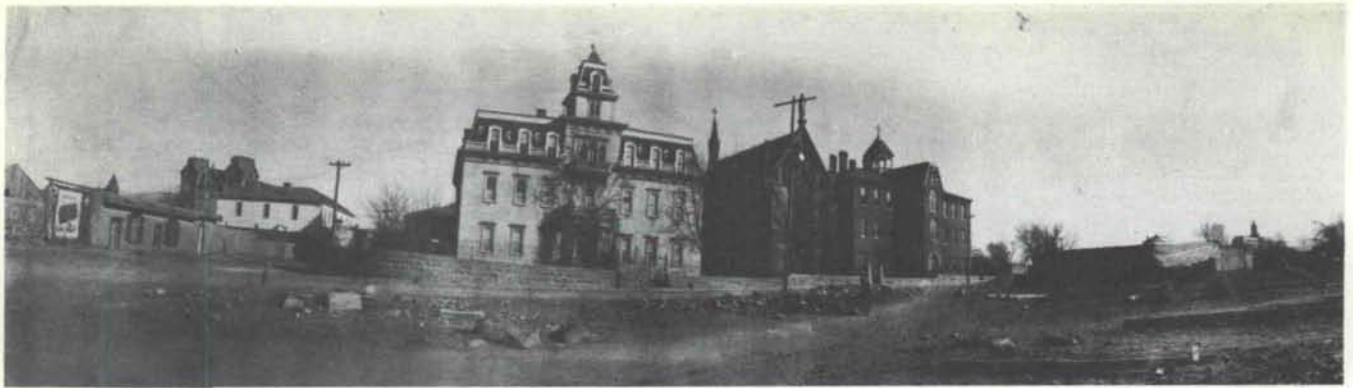
FIRE ESCAPE STEPS  
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school, "Our Lady of Light Academy," was the fulfillment of a long time dream of the Right Reverend J. B. Lamy, then Bishop of Santa Fe. Bishop Lamy gave his quarters over to the Sisters in 1855. The Sisters' new home, "La Casa Americana," had the distinction of being described by contemporary accounts as the "best looking house in town."<sup>2</sup>

Soon after the completion of the magnificent Gothic chapel of "Our Lady of Light" in 1878, an expansion of the center was deemed necessary. This was due to the increased enrollment and insufficient accommodations for boarders and day pupils. The result of this need was the Academy structure. It was originally planned as a two-story adobe structure, but was finished with a mansard roofed third floor, as suggested by the contractor. The new structure was to serve a multitude of uses during its history, including such things as an industrial school, classroom facility, dormitory, music school and auditorium. It often served a multitude of duties simultaneously.

Many considered the task of constructing such a structure to be next to impossible. Admittedly, the order was a difficult one to fill and was complicated by the fact that many of the materials called for were unavailable in Santa Fe. What threatened to be an even greater complication was the meager funds that the Sisters were able to amass. Even problems of this magnitude were little match for the faith and determination of Mother Magdeline and the Sisters, who saw first and foremost the desperate need for providing the best educational opportunities possible. Mother Magdeline's enthusiasm and endless energy gave the project the boost it needed. Her enthusiasm soon spread to the local populace, whose generosity of time and hard labor insured the success of the project. The words of Mother Magdeline attest to the extent of this enthusiasm as she says in 1880, "We started our own brickyard and opened our own quarry, had our own lime burnt to order and our own lumber sawn by our own natives . . ."<sup>3</sup> However, not all the problems could be overcome by the enthusiasm and determination of the people. The original covering for the mansard roof was to be of corrugated iron, but when the shipment arrived, after a year's freighting across the country from Chicago, it could not be used. This made it necessary for Mother Magdeline to go to St. Louis to obtain a satisfactory roofing material. The answer found there was slate, and with the recruitment of Mr. Burke, a slate expert, Mother escorted the shipment to its destination—the first slate roof in the territory!<sup>4</sup>

As the structure grew, so did the pessimism concerning its structural stability. Some people asked, "How can a building sixty feet high, and a cupola on top of that, stand? . . . the first wind will blow it down." The very existence of the structure, from such meager finances, could not be comprehended by many.<sup>5</sup> When the Academy was completed in



Academy of the Sisters of Loretto—photograph c. 1890's.

1881 with all its "modern conveniences," it was a far cry from the primitive flat-topped buildings of the area. The miracle of the Sisters' success had a great impact on the community as can be felt in this statement by one of the community leaders, "If those Sisters, who had no cash to build, succeeded in putting up the finest building in the territory, why cannot we, who have money, build our own homes?"<sup>6</sup>

Historically, the Loretto Academy building represents an important period in the development of Santa Fe. That the Academy building was a marvel of contemporary construction can be discerned from the following newspaper description, dated June 5, 1900:

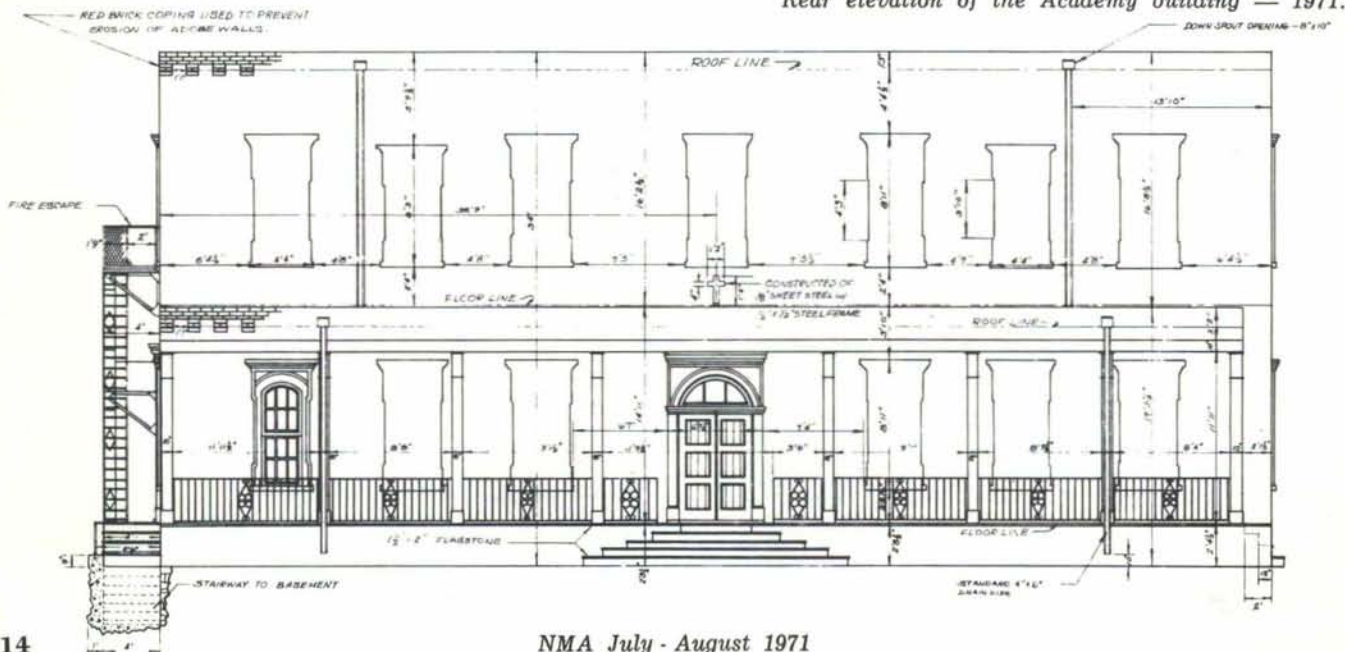
Loretto Academy is large and perfectly ventilated. Spacious and well equipped classrooms, separated by corridors, afford the best facilities for the maintenance of order and proper attention to study and recitation, while the extensive and beautiful surrounding grounds furnish ample space for out-door exercise and amusement. The buildings are heated throughout with steam and lighted by electricity. Hot and cold water are among the comforts enjoyed by the pupils. Special

attention is given to young ladies whose education has been neglected or whose delicate health does not permit them rigidly to follow the regular regime of the institution. All these considerations, along with the fact that Santa Fe has no climatic rivals, should induce parents to place their daughters in this excellent institution, where they may enjoy the best educational advantages, ever surrounded by pure and inspiring influences and carefully guarded against all forms of evil, and at the same time regain health, which less favored sections have impaired. The course of study embraces all the branches taught in the best modern academies, besides music, drawing, painting in water colors and oils, plain and ornamental needle work, typewriting and stenography.<sup>7</sup>

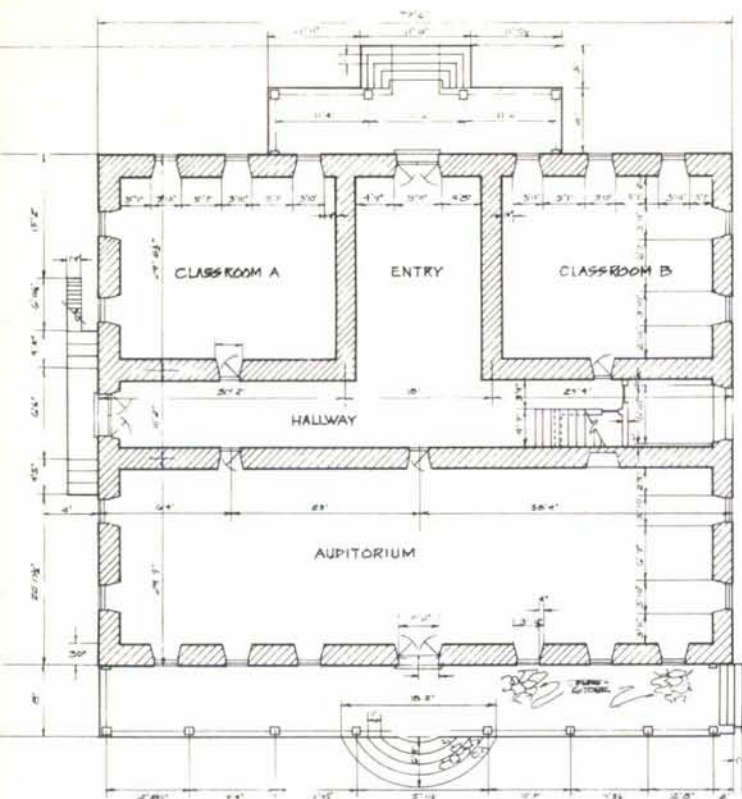
In 1893 a new convent building was erected directly south of the chapel on the site of "La Casa Americana," where it stands today. In 1928, a brick high school facility completed the \$60,000.00 teaching center.

The Academy building remained essentially unchanged until 1948 when the mansard roof and third story were removed due to their structural

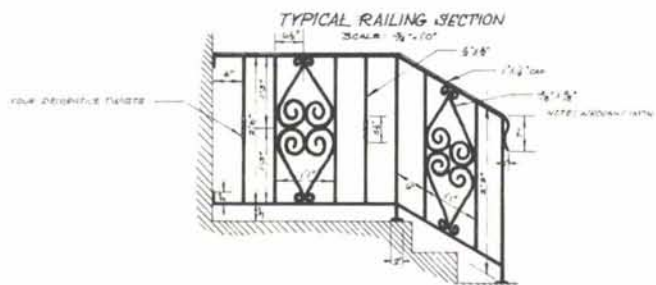
Rear elevation of the Academy building — 1971.



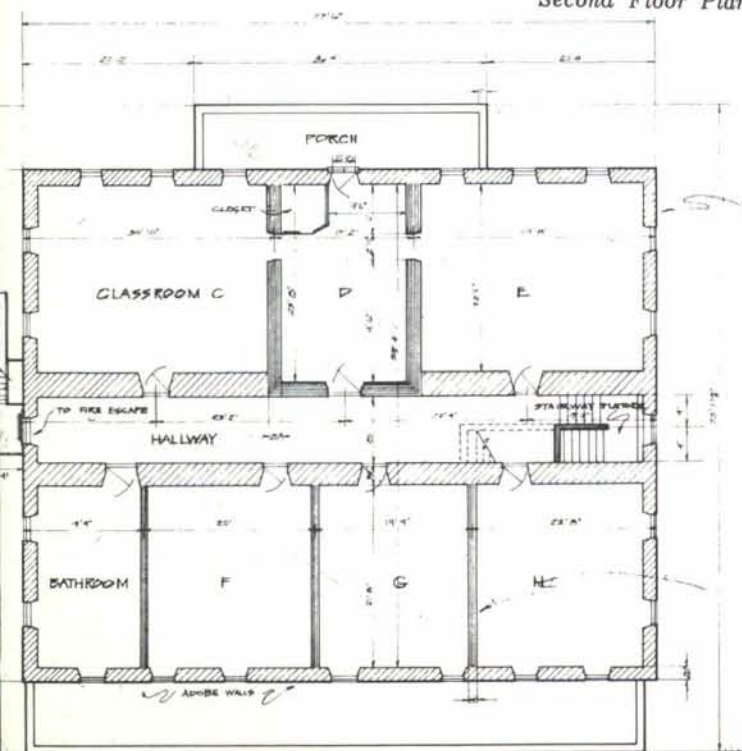




First Floor Plan



Second Floor Plan



deterioration. At that time, the remaining two-story structure was remodeled into a more "Santa Fe" style, with portals across the front and back.

It is often difficult to reconstruct the spatial personality of an extensively renovated building. This is especially true of the Academy. The deep shelved closets, niches, cracked plaster outlines, changing ceiling and floor levels, and a strange mixture of old and not-so-old moldings and details are the scars which evidence the Academy's adaptation to the varied functional requirements of its proud history. The present long portals on the east and west facades, and the well worn, semi-circular, flagstone steps are among the buildings more interesting exterior features.

In 1968, the center, with its colorful history behind it, succumbed to those same financial woes which, almost a century earlier, had threatened its very inception. In July of 1971 the wrecking crews began its demolition. Only the chapel will be spared the wreckers ax. A new hotel and convention center will occupy the remainder of the site.

## NEWS FLASH

Loretto Chapel has been turned over to the Historic Santa Fe Foundation, who will continue to maintain the chapel as one of New Mexico's major historic properties. Further, the present owner, Mr. James Kirkpatrick, has provided the Foundation with financial assistance to insure that adequate funds are available for the preservation of the structure.

### NOTES:

<sup>1</sup>Howlett, W. J., Rev., *The Life of the Right Reverend Joseph P. Machebeuf, D.D.*, (Pueblo, Colorado, The Franklin Press Co., 1908), p. 181.

<sup>2</sup>Soran, M. Rose Teresa, Sister, "Loretine Educational History in New Mexico," (unpublished Master's thesis, the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 1949), p. 73.

<sup>3</sup>Segale, Blandina, Sister, *At the End of the Santa Fe Trail*, (Milwaukee, Bruce, 1948), p. 158.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.* (p. 159).

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.* (p. 157).

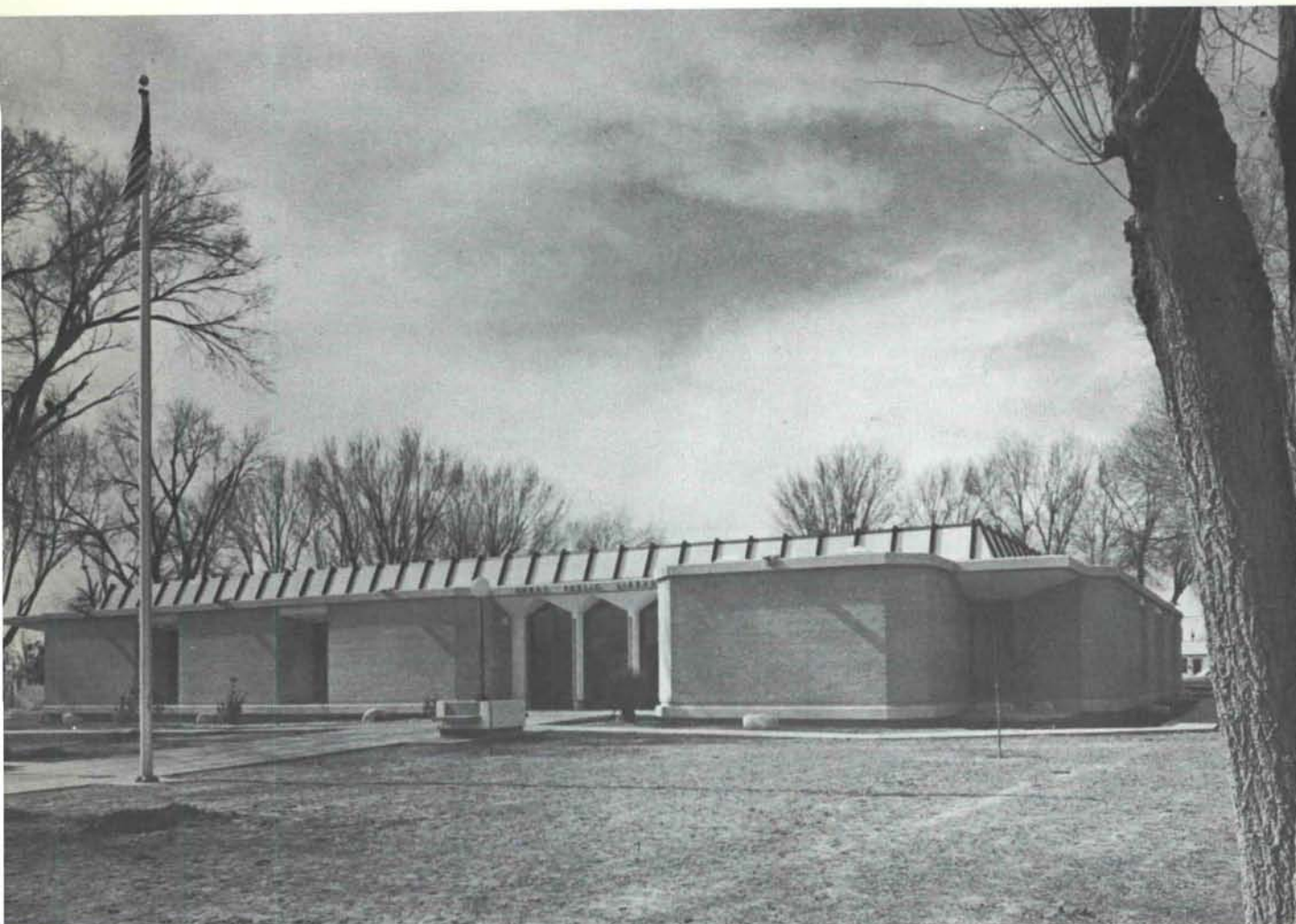
<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.* (p. 159).

<sup>7</sup>Santa Fe Daily New Mexican, (June 5, 1900), p. 5.

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1. Barbour, Richard Marie, Sister, *Light in Yucca Land*, Santa Fe, Schifani Brothers Printing Company, Inc., 1952.
2. Maes, Camillas, Rev., *The Life of Reverend Charles Nerinckx*, Cincinnati, Robert Clark and Company, 1888.
3. Old photographs courtesy of the Museum of New Mexico, and Lee Patrick Affholter. Newspaper sketches and articles courtesy of the Library of Santa Fe.





**Hartger and Harris**  
**Architects**  
**Hobbs, New Mexico**

*From the small building in the photograph below grew the expanded and handsome library structure pictured above.*

We are particularly proud of the new Hobbs Public Library. The design of this building is the result of very close cooperation between the Library Board of Trustees, the library staff, and Hartger and Harris, Architects.

As the first step, the program of library needs was written, and this was then interpreted in schematic line form, which was in turn reviewed by the Board of Trustees and the State Library Commission. A number of preliminary studies were weighed to find how each satisfied the program needs, and best incorporated parts of the then-existing library building. The final preliminary design resulted from this, and after the passage of the city bond issue, final working drawings were prepared.

The exterior form and appearance, as well as





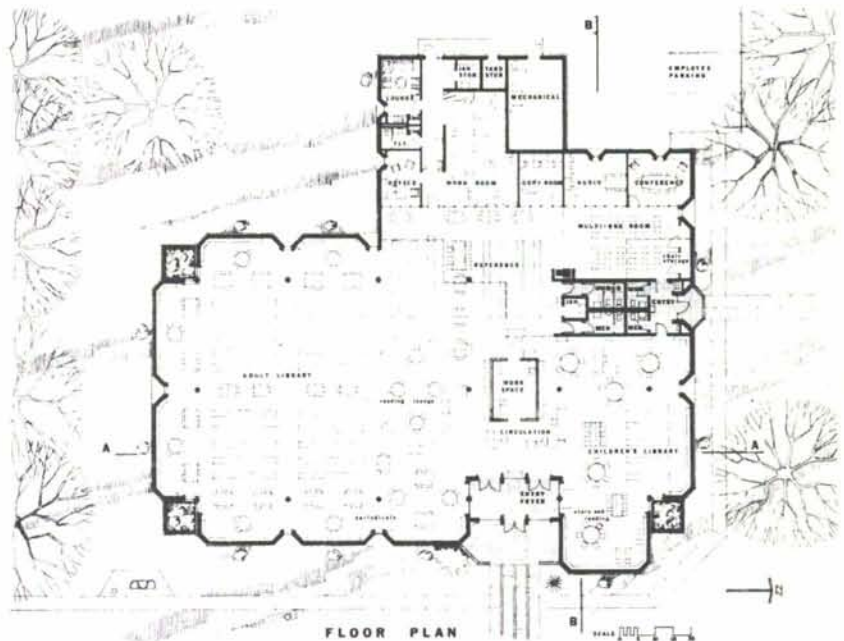
# New Library for Hobbs, New Mexico



SECTION A A

the interior spaces, are a result of the program needs — such as the several individual alcoves for special use—Petroleum Section; Southwest Collection; Children's Reading and story areas, etc. The windows are needed, we believe, to allow patrons to relate with the lovely park outside; they are quite narrow and glazed with bronze solar-type glass to control the amount of sun and heat which enters the building.

The interior public space is divided into an adult area and a children's area, with the circulation desk and front work area between. There is a sense of separation immediately apparent, but we believe the transition from the children's area to the adult area will be a natural and easy one for our



FLOOR PLAN



SECTION B B

SCALE 0 5 10 15 20

children to make as they grow. The total separation of "big people" and "little people" has been carefully and conscientiously avoided . . . we *want* them to see the adults, and of course we believe the adults should see the children.

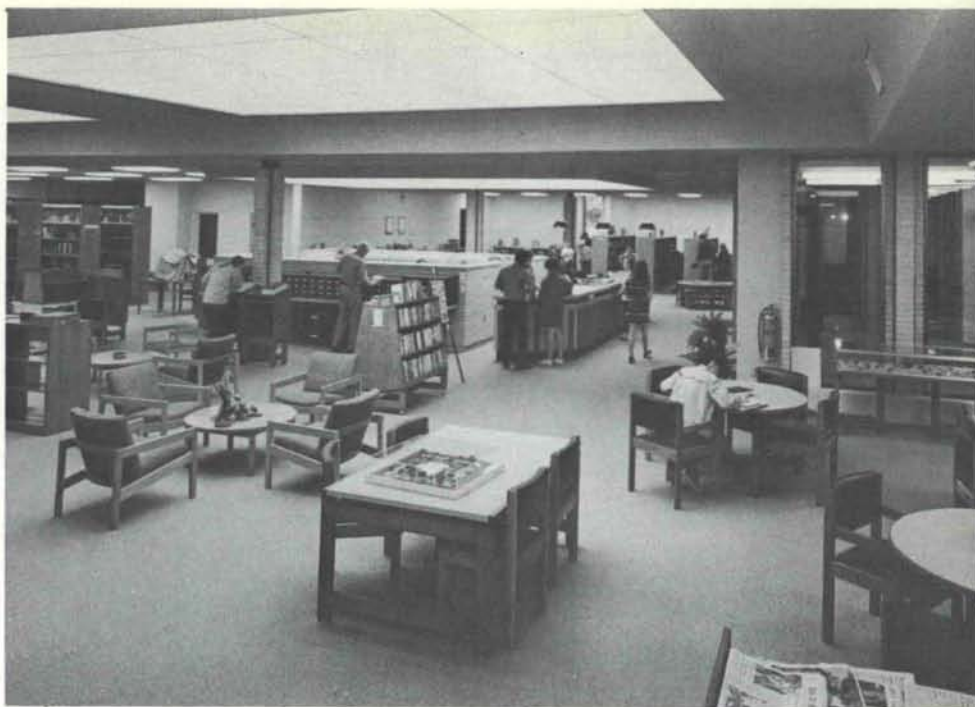
The height and character of the ceiling was designed to designate areas, and to relate to the particular needs of the areas; for an example, the ceiling height at the perimeter of the building is ten feet, and over the tall stacks is twelve feet. We desired more than a large well-lighted "supermarket" appearance — and we believe that the design solution is successful. Picture moulding is an integral part of the walls, to allow the easy hanging of appropriate paintings.

The style of architecture is contemporary, with no conscious borrowing of ideas from any architectural period. We have endeavored to design a library which will serve the needs of this community functionally and aesthetically for many generations.

W. A. Jourdan, Inc., and their many sub-contractors, have also worked very hard and well in the construction of the building which, hopefully, all of the citizens of Hobbs and the surrounding area, will use and enjoy to the fullest.

—Will Harris, AIA  
for Hartger and Harris,  
Architects

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ONE OF THE ADULT READING SECTIONS (Main entrance directly in front of charging desk—to right in picture)

CHILDREN'S SECTION (served by lowered section of charging desk)





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STILL STANDING!**

Mr. Alfred Schwartzman,  
Chairman  
State Highway Commission  
Post Office Box 2227  
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Dear Mr. Schwartzman:

According to a story which appeared in the ALBUQUERQUE JOURNAL dated May 19 concerning a meeting of the State Highway Commission, the agreement with the federal billboard control was discussed. It was apparent that opinions were received only from people who are in the billboard business or use billboards to advertise their businesses.

As President of the Albuquerque Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, I would like to point out to you that both this Chapter and the New Mexico Society of Architects, through its magazine NEW MEXICO ARCHITECTURE, have always taken a strong stand against desecration of the natural beauty of our state by the enormous, poorly - designed billboards which clutter our main highways. Several years ago, an article in NEW MEXICO ARCHITECTURE pointed out not only

the way that billboards on I-25 prevent the passing motorists from viewing the surrounding scenery, but also the fact that so many of the billboards have been partly destroyed by the elements and are just left in the state of disrepair for long periods of time.

We do not believe that the use of billboards as presently conceived is absolutely necessary for the edification of the passing motorist and the consequent business of roadside establishments. Fewer, smaller signs carefully designed can certainly achieve the same purposes.

New Mexico itself would gain far more publicity were it to regulate the billboards as the State of Vermont has done than to be known throughout the West as the state of the big billboards. I have heard people from out of state mention the one fact that remained in their memory about New Mexico was the huge, unsightly billboards along Highway 66.

We strongly urge you to adopt the necessary measures which would conform to the provisions of the Highway Beautification Act.

Yours sincerely,  
John Peter Varsa, AIA, President  
Albuquerque Chapter  
American Institute of Architects

**MORE FUNDS NEEDED  
FOR ENVIRONMENTAL  
EDUCATION**

The Enironmental Quality Education Act of 1970 seeks to increase the public's awareness of the value of environmental quality and offers support for specific educational programs, curriculum development and community environmental awareness activities. The bill authorized \$5 million for programs in fiscal 1971 and \$15 million for 1972. Since the legislation did not become law until midway through the current fiscal year, only \$2.5 million was available for 1971 operations.

During consideration of the 1972 Education Appropriations Act, the House of Representatives granted the program only \$2 million for the coming year, less than is available in the current fiscal year. The Senate increased the figure to \$5 million. This difference, along with others in the Education Appropriations Act, will be ironed out in the very near future during a conference between the members of the Education Subcommittees of the House and Senate Appropriations Committee.

Action needed: Contact your Congressman or Senator *now* and urge him to support the Senate figure of \$5 million for environmental education.  
—JPC

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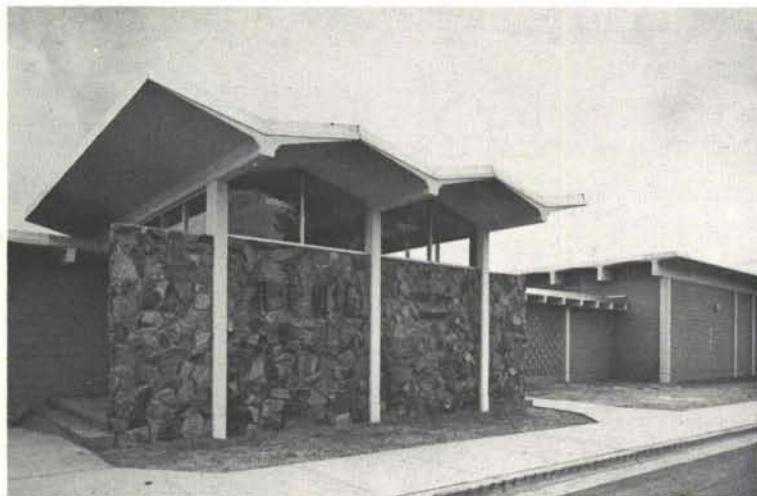
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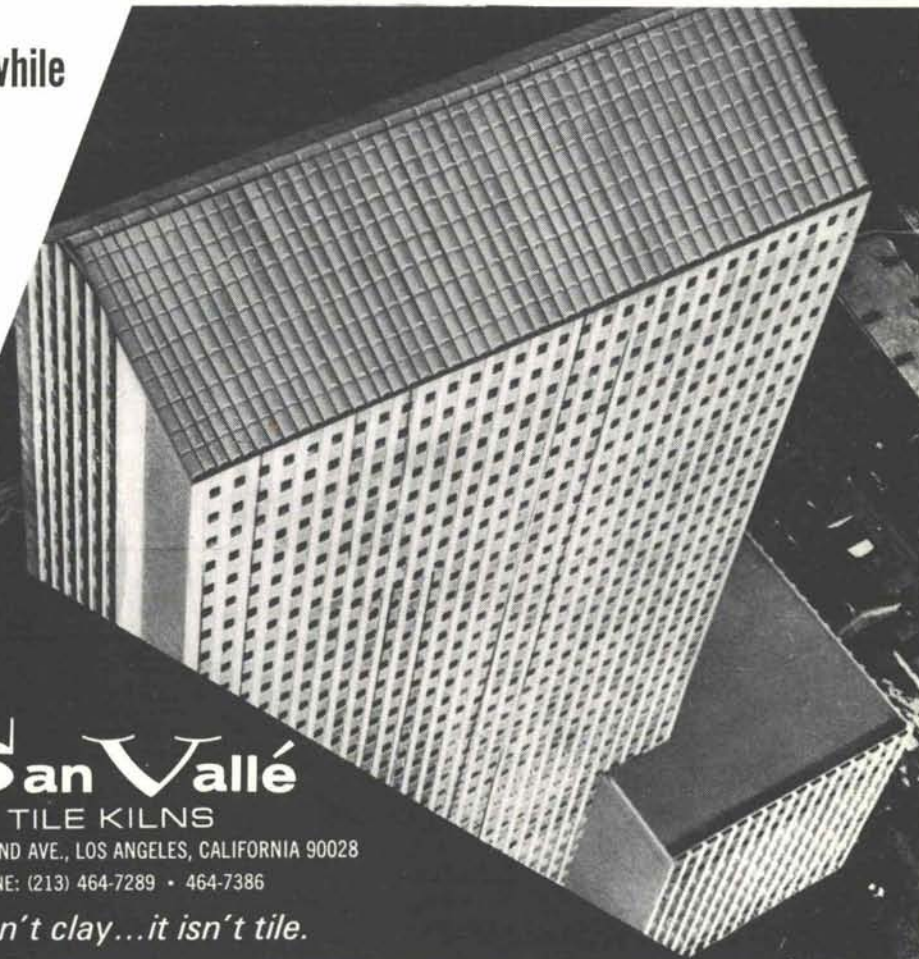
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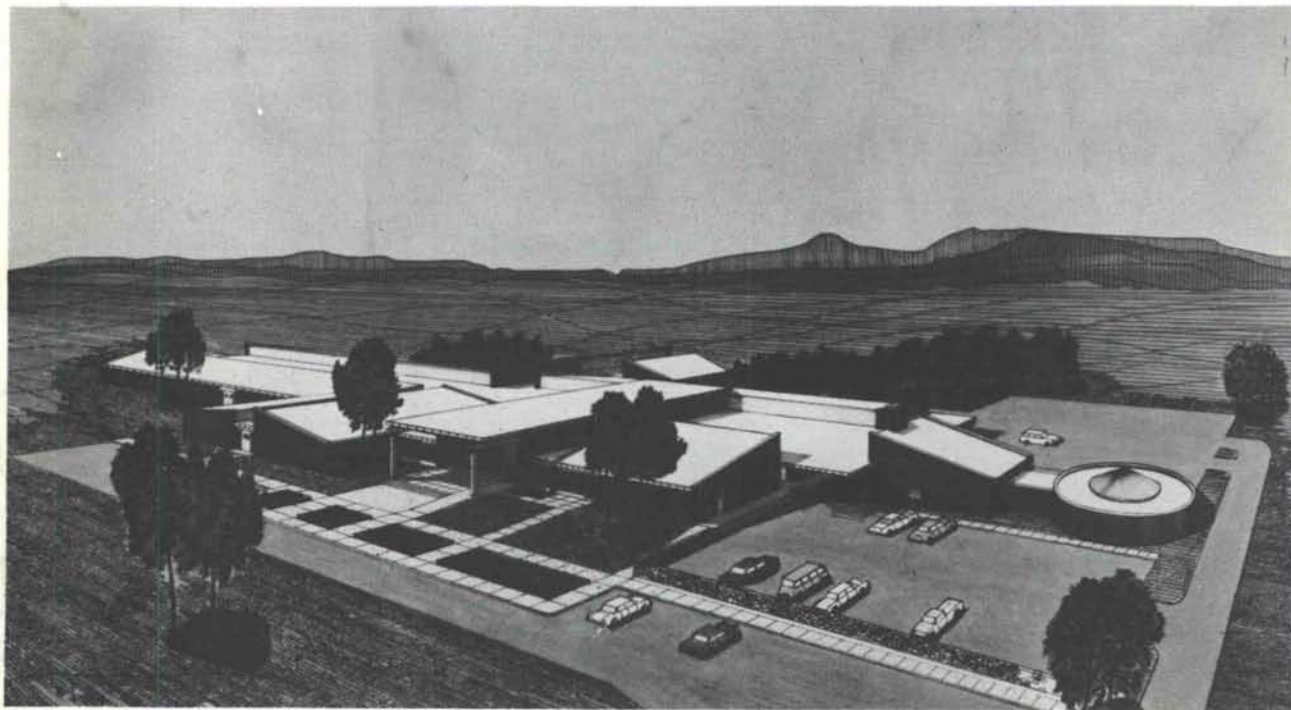


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