

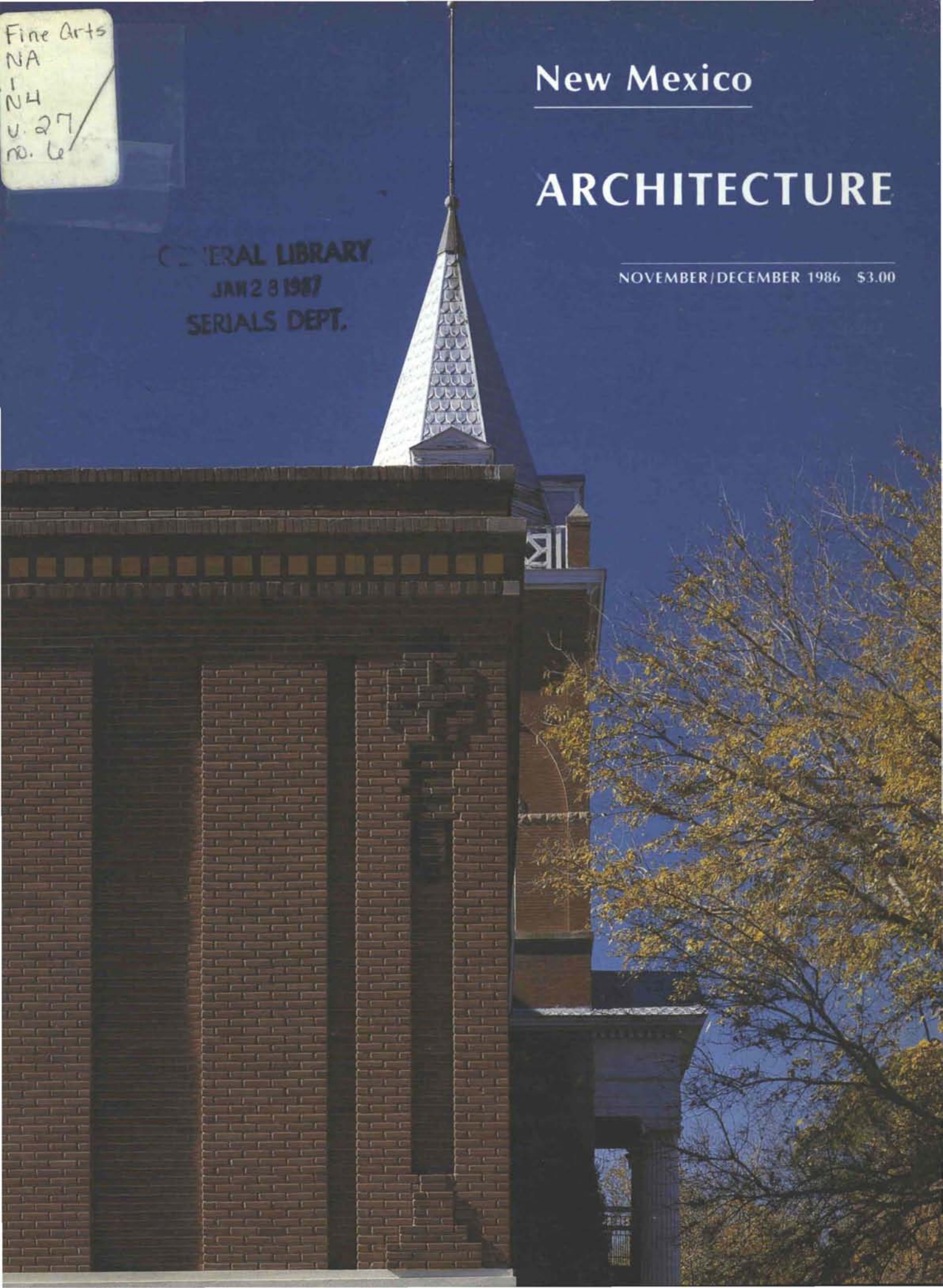
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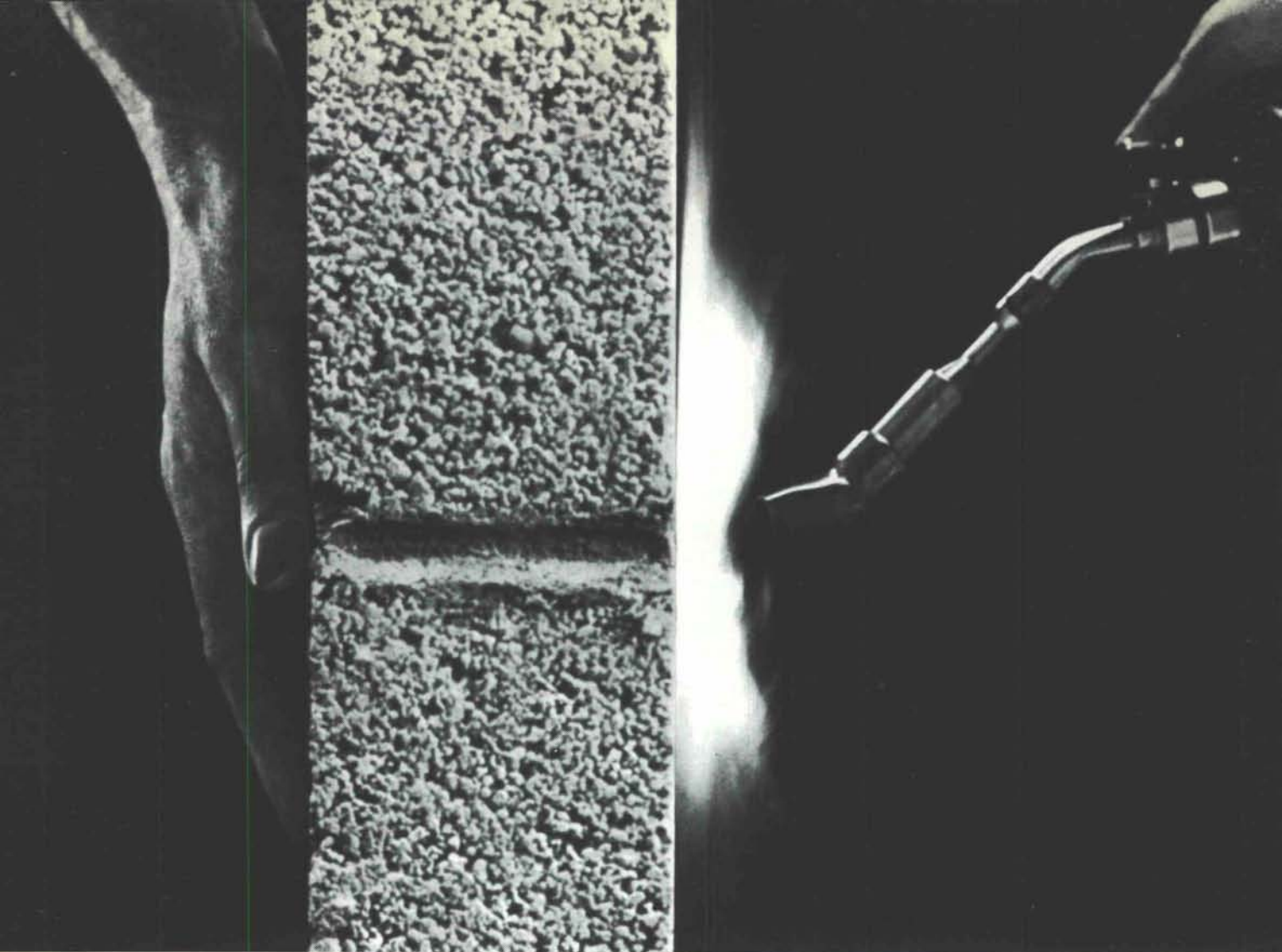
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• vol. 27 no. 6 •

nov. - dec. 1986 • new mexico architecture

In this issue,

an article on historic preservation and adaptive reuse, the Luna County Courthouse has a new entrance and additional office space. The article was prepared by William Quinn Sabatini, AIA, who is a partner in the firm of Holms, Sabatini, Smith & Eads, Architects, Albuquerque. Mr. Sabatini became involved with the Luna County Courthouse as an architectural intern in the employ of Jess Holmes, AIA. "He permitted me to take the lead in the design of the Luna County Project. The project became my Masters Thesis for the fulfillment of the requirements at the University of New Mexico for a Master of Architecture degree in 1978."

The firm received an Award of Honor from the New Mexico Cultural Properties Review Committee. The Award reads: "for the sensitive, contemporary, remodeling designs for the Luna County Courthouse to meet future and present needs."

□ □ □ □

The cover of this issue of *nma* is sponsored by Holms, Sabatini, Smith & Eads, Architects. We are pleased to thank them for their generosity. The photographer is Robt. Ames Cook, who is new to our magazine. His photographs have also been featured on the cover of our neighbor and "cousin", *Texas Architect* magazine.

JPC

□ □ □ □

We were saddened by the news that "Barbee" Kitts, wife of Robert D. Kitts, died at the much young age of 44. Bob Kitts has been a firm supporter of *New Mexico Architecture* as one of our advertisers, for which we are indebted to him. Barbara Kitts was co-founder of the family business, Kitts Enterprises Inc., and was the former arts coordinator for the Albuquerque Cultural Affairs Program. The family has asked that memorials be sent to the Friends of the KiMo Theatre or to the American Cancer Society. We express our sympathy to Bob and the family. John Conron and Carleen Lazzell.

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(Cover — Luna County Courthouse — ©Robt. Ames Cook, Photographer)

—Official Publication of the New Mexico Society of Architects, A.I.A.—

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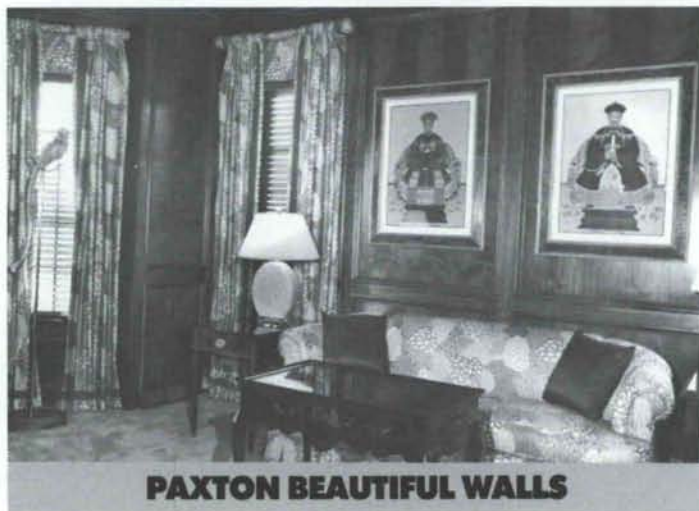
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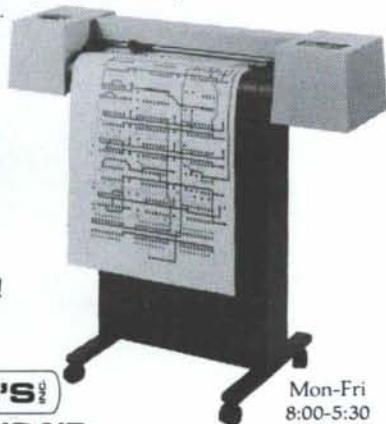
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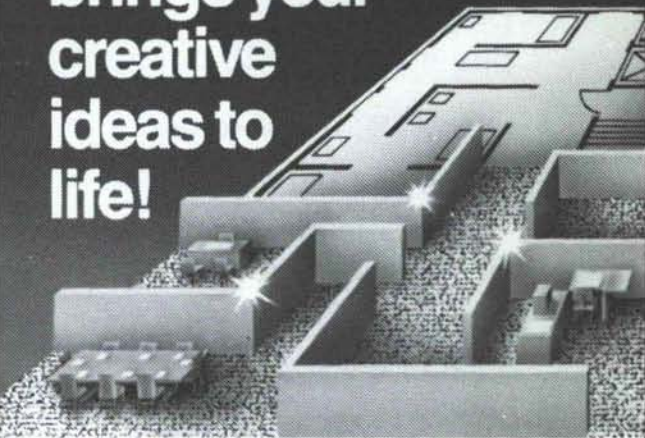
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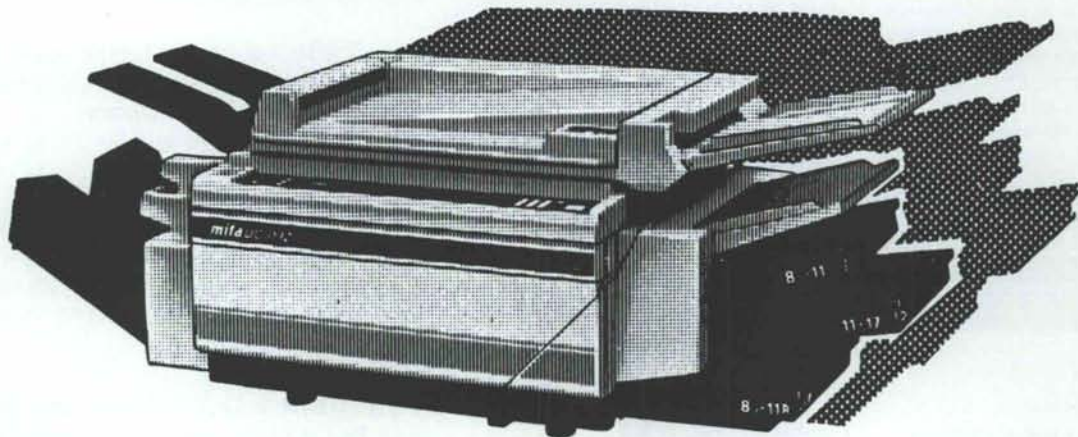


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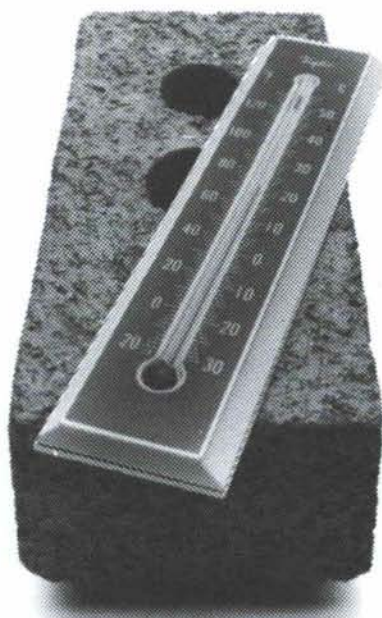
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## "BPLW, ARCHITECTS AND ENGINEERS, INC." IS FORMED

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — Two New Mexico companies have joined together to create the state's largest home-owned and operated A&E (architectural and engineering) company, it was announced today.

The new corporation — BPLW, Architects and Engineers, Inc. — was formed by the Burns/Peters Group, P.A., and Long and Waters, Architects and Engineers, P.A.

The new full service organization has a combined firm experience of 32 years in planning and design. Seventeen architects, seven engineers, four computer design technicians and a 48-employee support staff occupy the firm's new offices at American Financial Square, 2400 Louisiana Blvd., N.E., in Albuquerque.

Prior to the formation of BPLW, the two firms were joint venture partners in a major project, La Cueva High School, at the intersection of Wyoming and Wilshire Blvd., N.E., in Albuquerque. BPLW's client list, based on the past client work of the two founding firms, includes commercial, health care, educational, and in-

dustrial projects, as well as public, private and federal projects for both regional and national clients. The Burns/Peters Group, P.A., is presently designing a multi-year \$112 million renovation project of the terminal complex at Albuquerque International Airport.

The executive officers of the new corporation include President and Chief Executive Officer William L. Burns; Ronald L. Peters, secretary; Joseph D. Long, treasurer, and Chairman of the Board Bill J. Waters. Richard G. Brown is director of engineering.

According to them, BPLW was formed in response to the need for a multi-discipline, full-service architectural and engineering firm able to compete successfully with out-of-state A&E firms now getting many of the larger, increasingly more sophisticated building projects in New Mexico.

BPLW offers the services of more architects than any other architectural, or A&E firm in the state, along with an entire array of engineering services.

## THE ALBUQUERQUE FIRM OF WESTWORK ARCHITECTS, P.A. WAS FEATURED IN THE FEBRUARY 1986 ISSUE OF ARCHITECTURAL RECORD.



Included in a building types study of public buildings was the village hall and fire station for the village of Los Ranchos De Albuquerque. This 8,900 square foot facility houses public services for the village including a fire station with apparatus and training areas, a village meeting and activity hall, a police station and administrative offices for Mayor and support staff. The project was completed in early 1985 at a cost of approximately \$400,000.

## 1987 ARCHITECTURAL PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION ENTRY FORMS AVAILABLE

Entry forms for the 1987 AIA Architectural Photography Competition, organized by the St. Louis Chapter AIA in cooperation with national AIA, are now available. Deadline for entries is March 31, 1987. Winning entries will be exhibited at the 1987 AIA Convention in Orlando, and will be published in "Architecture". Images for the 1989 AIA calendar will be selected from the entries.

There will be cash prizes totaling Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars as follows: 1st prize \$1000.00, 2nd prize \$700.00, 3rd prize \$300.00 for any architectural subject or some element of the man-built environment. Photographic interpretation of the subject matter is the issue, not the architecture. There is also the Louise Bethune Award of \$500.00 for the best image of an architecture subject in the United States.

The entry fee for AIA, Associate and Prof. Affl. members is \$15.00 for one to five slides, and \$10.00 for student members. There is no limit to the number of entry fees that may be submitted by any one person. Great care will be taken with all slides submitted, but no responsibility for loss or damage during transit or any phase of the competition will be assumed by the St. Louis Chapter AIA or by the AIA.

Entrants must use the official entry form, which will appear in Jan. 1987 "Architecture" and a future issue of MEMO, or may be obtained by sending a stamped-self addressed envelope to St. Louis Chapter, AIA, 911 Washington Ave. #225, St. Louis, MO 63101-1203.

## BACZEK JOINS SOLAR INSTITUTE

LAS CRUCES, NM — Mark Baczek has joined the staff of the New Mexico Solar Energy Institute as architectural designer. Baczek will be responsible for working with industry, communities and organizations to assist them in developing energy efficient construction.

Previously Baczek has worked as project manager for architectural firms in New Mexico and Colorado. He has a background in construction and was the superintendent for several projects in Albuquerque and Ruidoso.

A native of Albuquerque, Baczek is an associate member of the American Institute of Architects and a graduate of the University of New Mexico.



# LUNA COUNTY COURTHOUSE — DEMING, N.M.

by William Q. Sabatini, AIA

## HISTORIC BACKGROUND

In an area of traditional Hispanic influence one would expect to find a building of Hispanic style. Instead, the Luna County courthouse, designed by W.B. Corwin and completed in 1910, with its tall clock tower and Greek portico, combines architectural styles similar to those used in nineteenth century public buildings in the American midwest. This apparent incongruity merely reflected the growing Anglo influence and power in the region as a result of an influx of settlers after 1900. Though permanent settlement of the region, bordering the Republic of Mexico, was minimal prior to the arrival of the railroads in the early 1880s, relations between the Mexican and United States cultures had been abrasive since U.S. occupation of New Mexico in 1846.

The situation worsened when on March 9, 1916, Mexican revolutionary guerrilla chieftain Francisco "Pancho" Villa and 500 men raided the village of Columbus, New Mexico and the adjacent U.S. Army Installation of Camp Furlong. In need of the arms, horses, and supplies in the camp and town and embittered by U.S. recognition of his arch-rival Venustiano Carranza as Provisional President of Mexico, Villa sought to resupply his troops and assuage his pride by boldly burning and looting Columbus. The pre-dawn raid met with initial success but soon after daylight the guerrillas encountered unexpectedly strong resistance from U.S. regulars and withdrew, suffering heavy casualties and abandoning much of the booty. American troops drove Villa's men back across the frontier and continued the pursuit some fifteen miles into Mexico.

Incensed by the attack, U.S. authorities ordered troops under Brigadier General John J. Pershing to invade Mexico in an attempt to seize Villa. The first detachments crossed the border on March 15 and by March 22 had reached the area near the villages of Galeana and El Valle, about 135 miles south of Columbus. Though the invaders destroyed some elements of the guerrilla commands, they failed to capture Villa. American troops remained on Mexican soil until February of 1917, restricted to a small perimeter in the north

after a battle with Carranza's forces at Carrizal in June of 1916. The expedition aroused Mexican nationalist feelings, seriously jeopardizing relations between the U.S. and Carrancista governments.

The exact circumstances surrounding the capture and treatment of Villista prisoners are both complicated and obscure. But available documents indicate that thirty-odd Mexicans held by military and civil authorities in New Mexico included three groups: eleven badly wounded men captured on American soil in the vicinity of Columbus immediately after the raid; six more, also wounded, apprehended soon afterward by the Pershing foray at San Buenaventura, a small village in Chihuahua near El Valle; and the rest, approximately twenty-one men, taken by U.S. soldiers at various locations around Babicora, Namiquipa and Ojos Azules late in May of 1916. Twenty-four prisoners were tried April 20, 1916, and August 27, 1917, in Luna County District Court for the murder of Charles D. Miller. Miller had been shot several times outside the Commercial Hotel in Columbus where he was staying.

The second group of prisoners - Eusevio Rentería, Taurino García, José Rodríguez, Francisco Alvares, José Rengel and Juan Castillo - went on trial first. On April 13, 1916, they were brought to the frontier, inspected and interviewed by prospective prosecution witnesses in an army medical tent and turned over to civilian officials. On the 15th they were indicted by the Luna County Grand Jury for Miller's murder and on the 19th, less than six weeks after the raid, the trial began with Judge E.L. Medler of Las Cruces presiding. J.S. Vaught prosecuted while Buel B. Wood of Carrizozo, appointed by the court, represented the defendants. Testimony from prosecution witnesses described the raid, established that several buildings were burned and that horses and clothing were stolen. Witnesses cited the circumstances of Miller's death but made no attempt to place responsibility directly on any of the accused. Under questioning by Attorney Wood the defendants stated they had all been subjected to various forms of impressment by Villa and served under him only



*Pancho Villa with hand in pocket.  
(Photograph - Courtesy Museum of  
New Mexico.)*



from three weeks to three months, often under surveillance. All admitted being at Columbus during the raid but most claimed they were holding horses for other raiders. Whether or not they understood their target to be an American town is unclear. José Rodríguez testified he was a Carrancista soldier captured less than a month before the raid and that he carried a rifle but had no ammunition - testimony that eventually saved his life. The jury heard closing arguments on April 20, the second day of the trial, and returned from just thirty minutes of deliberation with a verdict of murder in the first degree.

Later that day, Juan Sánchez, the first and only member of the group captured at Columbus to stand trial, received the same conviction. Of the other ten raiders seized at Columbus, two whose names are unknown, died, before any legal action was taken against them; a third, Pablo Sánchez, discovered with field glasses and a uniform concealed under **peon** garments, was bound over for trial at some future time. Though he testified in the trial of the first six guerrillas, twelve-year-old Jesús Pías eventually went free because of his age.

Fearful for the safety of the seven convicted prisoners because of the deplorable condition of the county jail and the intense hostility of the community, Luna County Sheriff W.C. Simpson arranged for their transfer to the New Mexico State Penitentiary in Santa Fe. This occurred on April 25th under heavy guard.

The case aroused considerable attention throughout the nation and resulted in letters and telegrams to New Mexico Governor William C. McDonald from groups as diverse as the White House and the Central Labor Union of Miami, Arizona. As a result, the Governor issued a twenty-one day stay of execution until June 9th for further study of the situation. Attorney Wood, now retained by the Carranza government to handle an appeal, also requested more time. During May a gallows was constructed in the adobe-walled yard of the county jail. On June 7th McDonald issued another three-week reprieve for five of the prisoners but the following day Juan Sánchez and Francisco Alvares were returned to Deming and on June 9th were executed while two National Guard companies patrolled the streets. Three weeks later the grisly business was repeated under the same conditions. The Governor commuted the sentence of José Rodríguez to life imprisonment -evidently accepting his argument of being a Carrancista soldier forced to join Villa's ranks.

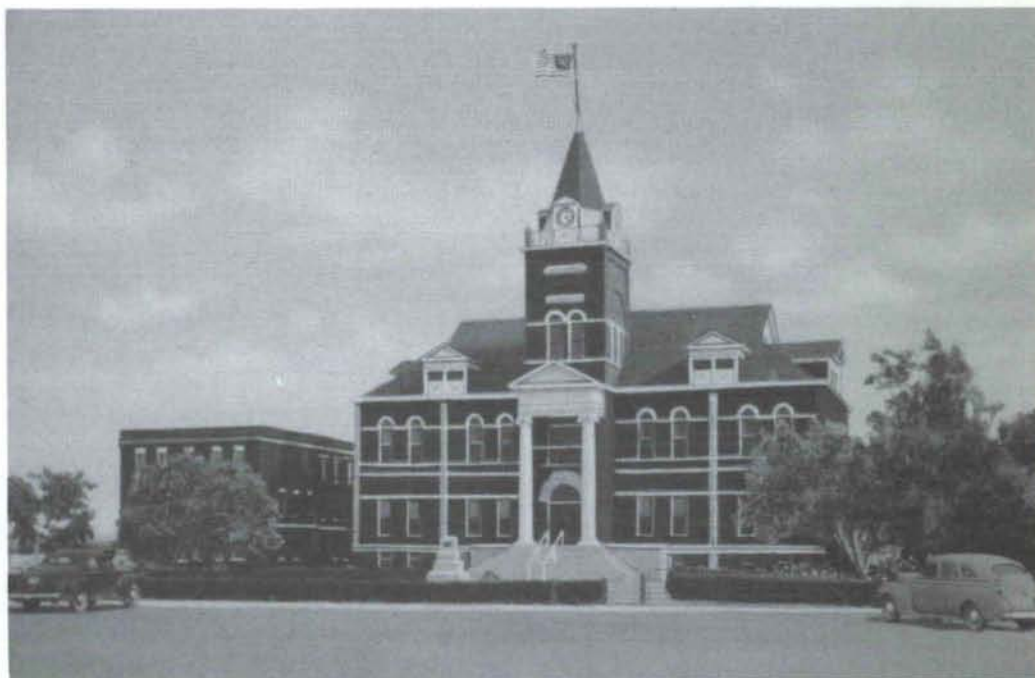
Despite criticism both in the press and from interested legal observers regarding questionable procedures followed in the first

trials, seventeen prisoners in the third group came to trial in August of 1917 for Miller's murder. Because expenses of the trials and subsequent executions severely drained Luna County resources, county officials induced the federal government to assist in caring for the later group. Held by the army in the Columbus stockade until their arraignment in February of 1917 the twenty-one Villistas were transferred to the Grant County jail in Silver City prior to their trial in Deming. During their long stay in Silver City two - Juan Meza and Francisco Herás - died. Of the remaining eighteen all but one pleaded guilty to a charge of second degree murder and Judge Raymond R. Ryan sentenced them to terms of 70 to 80 years in the penitentiary. After originally agreeing to the plea bargaining, the eighteenth - Guadalupe Chávez -changed his plea to "not guilty". This put chagrined authorities at a loss to know what to do with him since most of the military witnesses were then in France. Final disposition of the case is unclear.

The Villistas did not lack sympathizers and, during 1918 and 1919, New Mexico authorities received petitions from families and friends to secure their release. On July 1, 1919, Governor Octaviano A. Larrazolo granted a pardon to Silviano Vargas on humanitarian grounds because he was crippled. Larrazolo finally pardoned the remaining sixteen prisoners, including José Rodríguez, on November 22, 1920. Evidently one of their number - Enrique Adame - managed to escape. In a political maneuver, Lieutenant Governor Benjamin F. Pankey, briefly in charge during the Governor's absence from the state, revoked the pardon but Larrazolo immediately reinstated it on December 16, 1920.

Clearly, Villa's attack was vicious and unprovoked, but treatment of the prisoners most certainly characterized vengeance rather than justice. The temper of the time may be gauged by a letter from Defense Attorney Wood to the editor of the *Deming Graphic* written ironically on July 4, 1916, following the execution of his clients. His communication described critics of the proceedings as "chicken hearted" and expressed the widely held belief that Villistas were not only guilty but fully deserved their executions.

Because most of the prisoners were captured in Mexico by the so-called "Punitive Expedition" commanded by General Pershing and turned over to civilian officials in Luna County without extradition, the trials raised questions of international law still unanswered. The tense atmosphere surrounding the trials accentuated by incidents on both sides of the frontier since the beginning of the Mexican Revolu-



Luna County Court House. From a postcard. (John P. Conron, Collection)

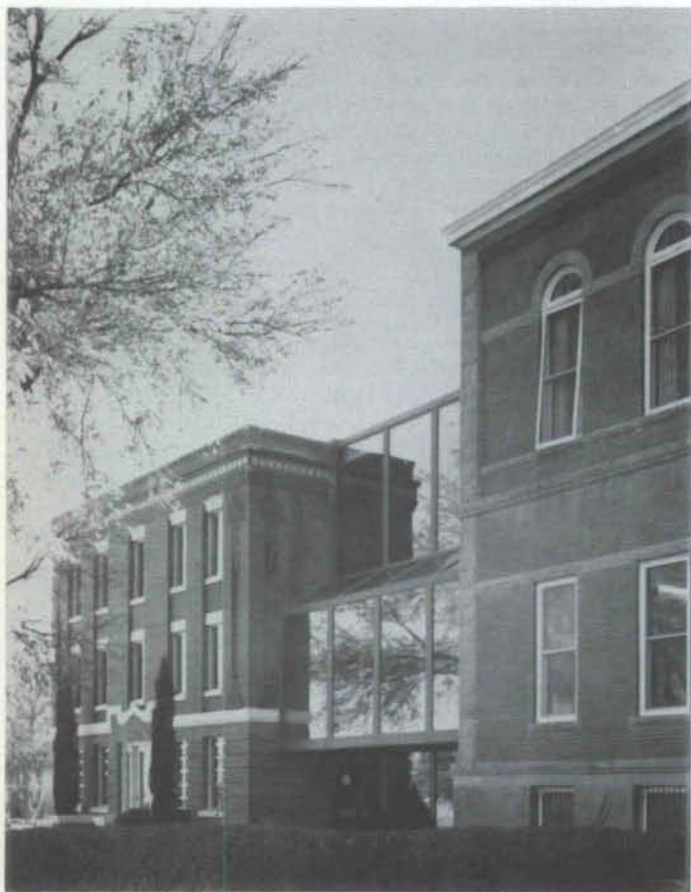


tion in 1910 provoked grave doubts as to the protection of the accused's civil rights.

Though other trials and much routine business has been conducted at the Luna County Courthouse, the significance of the Villista trials combined with its exemplary architectural character made possible its inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

### LIMITED SPACE AND FUNDS WITH HISTORIC GUIDELINES TO MEET

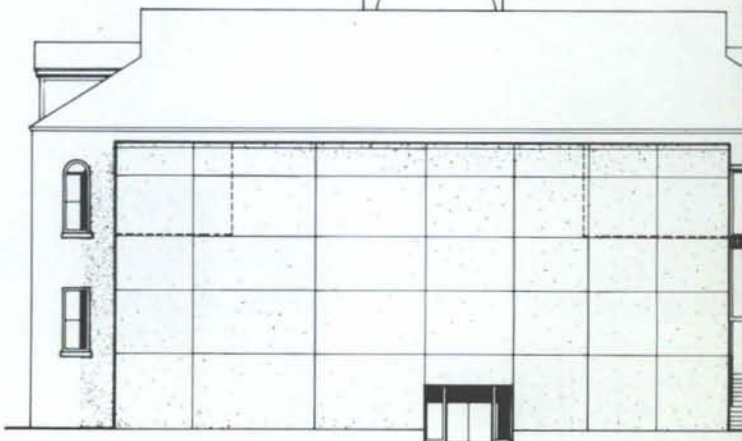
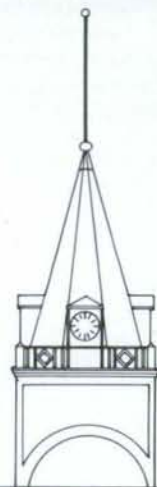
The Luna County Courthouse provided functional office space to the County government for many years, but, by the mid '70's, and in spite of an addition to the rear of the building in 1963, the government outgrew available space, restroom facilities were in-



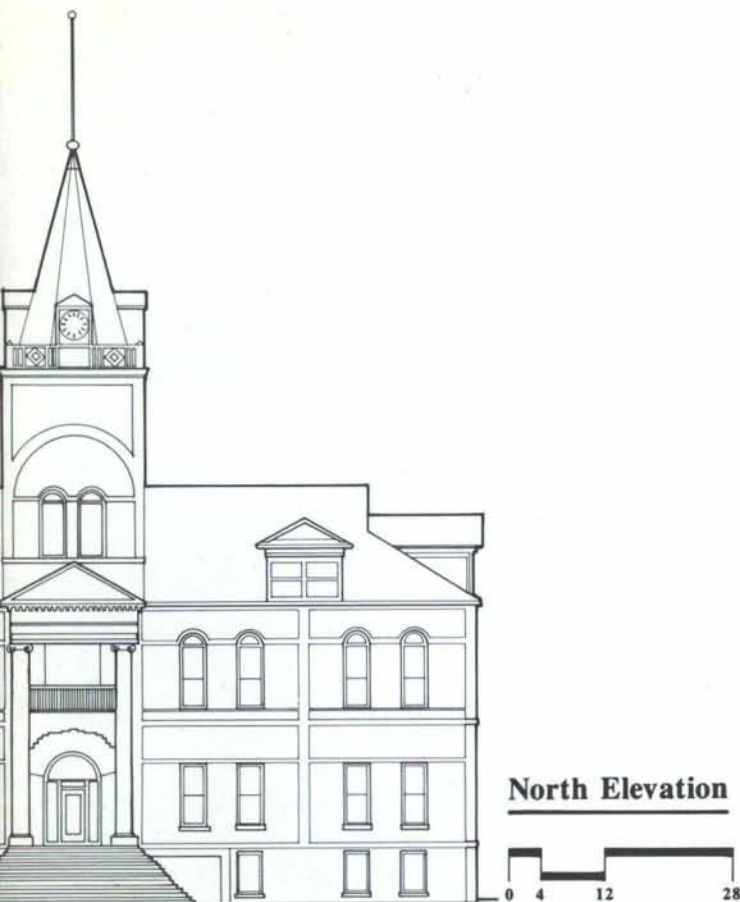
*Photograph 1: The addition, constructed within the 24 foot wide space between the Courthouse and the Jail, serves as the new main entrance to both buildings. Expressed on the north facade as a simple glass pane, it does not compete visually with the richly detailed and disparate architectural styles of either building.*

adequate and outdated, and there were no facilities for the handicapped.

Over a two year period from 1975 to 1977 various solutions to the space problem at the courthouse were offered. A proposal finally accepted by the Board of County Commissioners provided for the demolition of the abandoned, adjacent jail building, constructed in 1918, and the construction of an addition to the east end of Courthouse. A bond issue election was held to finance the project but negative public opinion concerning the demolition of the jail and the high cost of the project (\$800,000) defeated its passage.







At this same time, the Courthouse was nominated and accepted to the National Register of Historic Places. This was not only due to the controversial Villista Trials, but to the exemplary character of the Courthouse architecture. The Register status effectively placed strict architectural preservation and restoration restrictions on the Courthouse. These restrictions would change the thinking of all concerned and positively affect the future of this venerable building.

With the defeat of the bond issue to expand the Courthouse, new funding of \$500,000 was sought through an Economic Development Administration Grant. To assure adherence of any architectural proposals for expansion to State historic preservation guidelines, the EDA appointed an Advisory Committee comprised of two members of the New Mexico State Cultural Properties Review Committee — John Conron, FAIA, and George Pearl,



*Photograph 2: With limited floor to floor heights, ceiling clearances were maximized by utilizing wood tounge and grove decking on the exposed structural steel roof framing system. The same materials were used for the stairs and ramps which were hung from the roof stucture to eliminate columns. Natural light was introduced by sky-lights in the roof to illuminate and enhance the rich detail and color of the Courthouse and Jail facades. (See also photographs 4 & 5.)*

FAIA; a representative of the Luna County Government; Thomas Merlan, New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer; and a staff architect from the Economic Development Administration. The Committee's responsibilities included review of any proposal for alteration or addition to the Courthouse and notification of its approval or disapproval of the proposal. Grant approval was contingent on the Committee's recommendation.

In the summer of 1977, the Luna County Board of Commissioners contracted with the firm of Jess Holmes, AIA, of Albuquerque to resume the Courthouse work. The challenge to the



firm was unique. Solving the Courthouse problems were now not limited to just providing more space, but to design an addition which respected the historic character and quality of the Courthouse. Further complicating the situation was the meager construction budget of \$500,000.

### THE KEY WAS TO ADAPTIVELY REUSE THE JAIL

At the outset, it was apparent to the Design Team that if the adjacent jail building could be reused for office space, it could be the key to the success of the project. Using the jail building for offices would minimize new construction and save valuable funds to solve other problems. Besides, the jail was also of significant architectural merit. Constructed in 1918 from drawings prepared by the architectural firm of Braunton and Leibert of El Paso, Texas, the jail was an excellent example of Prairie School architecture made popular at the time by Frank Lloyd Wright.

In addition to being stylistically interesting, the jail was structurally sound. It was constructed of brick bearing walls supporting poured-in-place concrete floors. This was the only drawback for its reuse — the interior bearing walls were arranged to form small rooms on all three levels. The second and third levels were the most severely affected since these floors contained the jail cells which were approximately six feet square. It would be difficult if not impossible to reuse this space for modern office needs.

An analysis of the space needs of the County Government compared with what was currently available in the Courthouse revealed a shortage of roughly 6,000 square feet. This was coincidentally equal to the gross floor area of the jail. With this as further reinforcement to conserve the jail, the Team proceeded on the assumption that to reuse it, major demolition of the interior walls would be necessary — an expensive solution. But with further understanding of the problem, an interesting and fortunate coincidence was discovered. The floor areas of the existing cells on the second and third levels of the jail each equalled the floor areas required for the County Clerk's Vault and the District Court Law Library. These functions, of all the others, could be accommodated very well with the small cells left intact. This development proved to be a significant cost saving strategy that proved to be the key to saving the jail building.



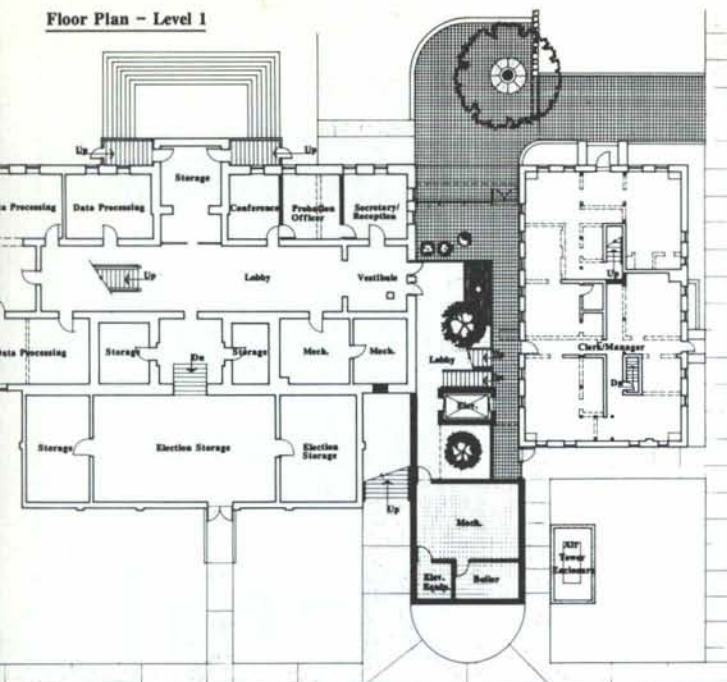
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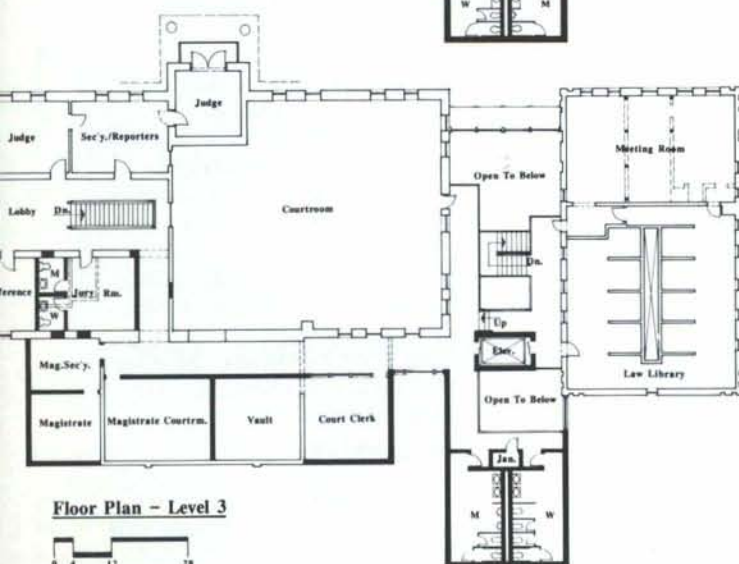
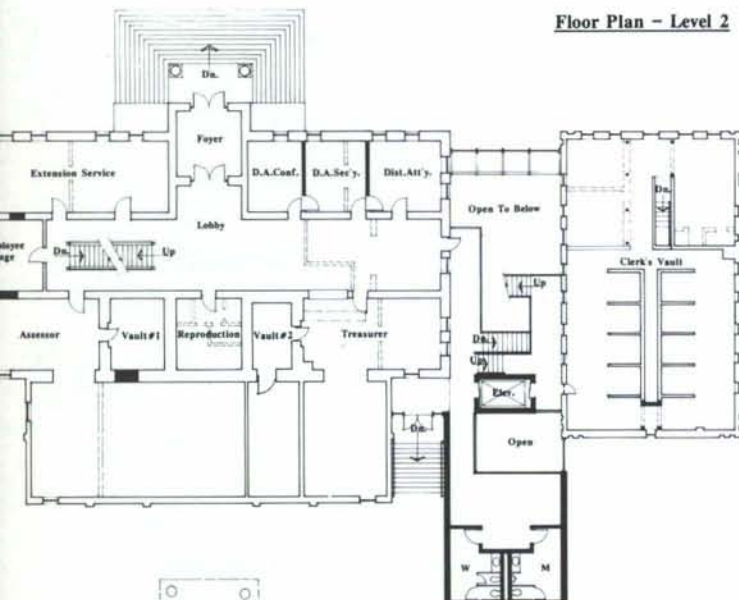
Photograph 3 (top): The completed Courthouse.  
Photographs 4 and 5 (above): The new entrance link between the Courthouse and the Jail. Since none of the three floor levels of either of the two existing buildings matched in elevation, the necessary functional connections between the two buildings were made by incorporation stairs, ramps and a six stop elevator for access by the handicapped. The design strategy created high ceilings below the ramps, stairs and roof, and resulted in unobstructed views of the dramatically lighted and richly detailed existing interior space. All of this contributed to the creation of a strong "sense of place" appropriate to the main entrance lobby of a public building such as this.



Floor Plan - Level 1



Floor Plan - Level 2



Floor Plan - Level 3

0 4 12 28

## SIMPLE FUNCTION PAYS OFF WITH DRAMATIC RESULTS

With the ability to use the Jail for needed office expansion, the "addition" to the Courthouse took on an entirely new meaning. It was now not an addition of new office space but one that would link the Courthouse offices with the new offices in the jail building. As a connection between the two existing buildings, why not use the new space as a new main entrance to the complex incorporating an elevator for the handicapped and providing new restroom facilities? By just allowing the addition to perform this basic function and not compete with the strong architectural character of the two existing buildings, this is precisely what the architects achieved...and with dramatic results. W.Q.S.

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## ARCHITECT

Jess Holmes, Architect  
Albuquerque, New Mexico

## CONSULTANTS

Robert Krause Engineering, Structural  
Coupland, Powell, and Moran, Mechanical/Electrical

## GENERAL CONTRACTOR

Mesa Construction  
Las Cruces, New Mexico

## PHOTOGRAPHER

Robt. Ames Cook

*Photograph 6: The restrictive construction budget prohibited the use of brick, an obvious material choice, to veneer the new Addition or the 1963 Addition. But by employing a simple stucco mass colored to match the stone detailing of the Courthouse and Jail, the addition was simply expressed, providing the palette of forms, materials and colors necessary to visually link all of the buildings together.*





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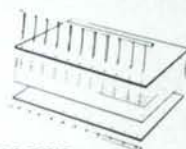
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# PIGEON'S RANCH

by Ruth W. Armstrong

Along old U.S. 85, now State Road 50, a few miles out of Santa Fe is a little known but important Civil War Battlefield. The state does nothing to protect it as an historic site or promote it as a point of interest, and until recently when historian Marc Simmons adopted it as a cause, it looked as if the ruins would sink into oblivion. They may yet. A few years ago the Daughters of the Confederacy placed a marker in Apache Canyon, a few miles from Pigeon's Ranch, but since I-25 replaced U.S. 85, few people see it.

The highway follows almost exactly the route of the Santa Fe Trail through the mountains, and it was here where the Trail swung around the southern foothills of the Sangre de Cristos that Union and Confederate soldiers fought a bloody three-day battle in 1862, part of the battle centered at Pigeon's Ranch, a way station on the Trail. Incredibly - given the fragile nature of adobe walls of several buildings and stone foundations remain. Part of the buildings were used until I-25 replaced U.S. 85, and the old timers among us remember well the signs along the highway ballyhooing "the oldest well in the USA." (See Post Card below) It wasn't that, but it was one of the most historic sites in the west. Travelers with aching backs and empty stomachs were happy to see it after the jarring 800 mile trek across the Trail. Foot-sore oxen and mules found rest and food.

Horse corrals held fresh stock if it was needed. This was the last stop before a stagecoach or wagon caravan reached Santa Fe. It was a place to put on a clean shirt, smooth back the hair, and spit on the boots. And in the summertime, surely the cold water from the stone well beside the road must have been true mountain nectar.

After autos came into use, travelers still stopped here for a bowl of chile, a cup of coffee, and roadside socializing. Walls of one room are covered with cowboy ballads; another with many historic cattle brands of the west. A post office occupied one corner for a while.

From the beginning this was a strategic location. Sometime during the 1850s a Frenchman named Alexander Valle, nicknamed Pigeon, established a stage station here on his ranch, not im-

agining that in less than a decade it would become a battleground. Little remains of what was a 23-room complex, almost too little to imagine what it was like a century and a quarter ago. New Mexico, with its predominately Hispanic and Indian population in 1862, with its isolation from the states, with its minute interest in the issue of slavery, seems an unlikely place for Civil War action, nevertheless, had the Confederates been victorious here in the Sangre de Cristos, it would have at least delayed, if not changed, the outcome of the entire war.

After American occupation many forts were built in New Mexico to protect westward moving settlers, miners and merchants. When the Civil War began many officers from these forts resigned to join the Confederate army. Southern officers thought it would be easy to capture the forts. In the New Mexico campaign Fort Union near Las Vegas was their main target, for it was the major supply post for other forts in the Southwest. If they could capture Fort Union they would have access to the gold fields of Colorado, and a base from which to push on to California with its gold fields and sea ports. It would have given them a continental sweep of the nation, gold to buy supplies and arms in Europe, and a sea coast free of the threat of blockade.

In July, 1861 Confederate troops had marched into New Mexico Territory from Texas, captured Fort Fillmore near Las Cruces, and made La Mesilla the capital of Arizona Territory which included the southern half of Arizona and New Mexico. General H. H. Sibley led 3,700 Confederate troops north on February 7, 1862, engaged in an indecisive battle near Fort Craig, continued north, capturing both Santa Fe and Albuquerque with no resistance, the Union troops having already retreated to Fort Union. Headquartered at Fort Marcy, General Sibley readied for the attack on Fort Union. Meantime the Colorado Volunteers under command of Colonel John P. Slough had made a forced march of 172 miles in five days through a spring blizzard to join the military and volunteer forces already gathered at Fort Union.

On March 26 advance troops met in Apache Canyon where Union soldiers carried that day. Next day the main body of Con-

Old Pigeon Ranch "Glorieta Pass" on Santa Fe Trail, New Mexico



Owned and Operated by Thos. L. Greer, Glorieta Pass, New Mexico

A popular post card, "OLD PIGEON RANCH" GLORIETA PASS ON SANTA FE TRAIL 20 miles and 20 minutes from Santa Fe, printed to lure tourists traveling along old U.S. 85.

(Printed on reverse side)

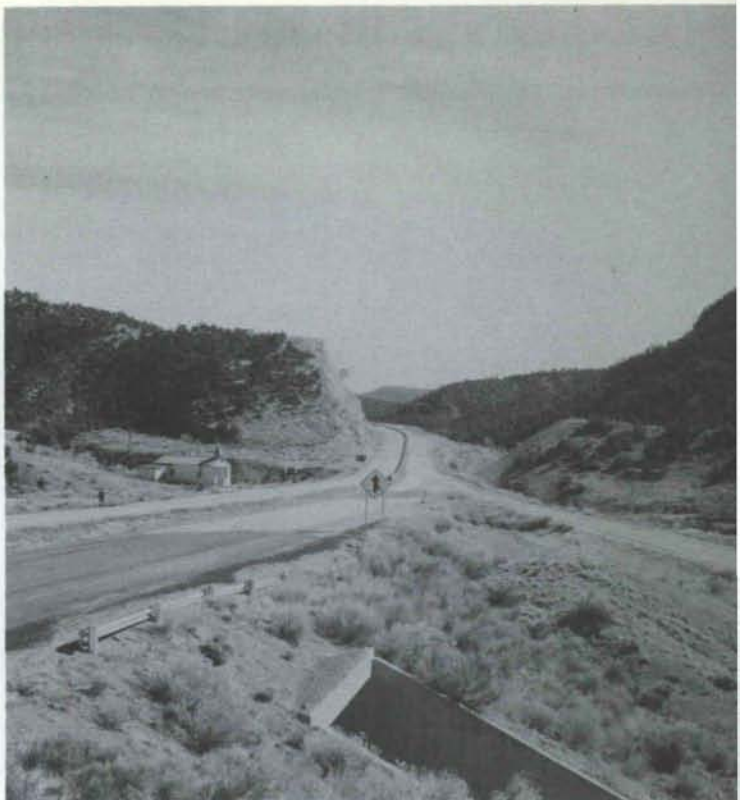
Scene of the last great battle in New Mexico between Union and Confederate Forces during the Civil War. Best explained in words of M. Valle, popularly known as "Pigeon" from his pronunciation.

"Government manns vas at my ranch and fill is cahnteen viz my visky and Goovernment manns nevaire pay me for zat viskey; and Texas manns coom oop and soor-prize zem and zey forght six hour by my watch and my vatch vas slow".

(John P. Conron Collection)

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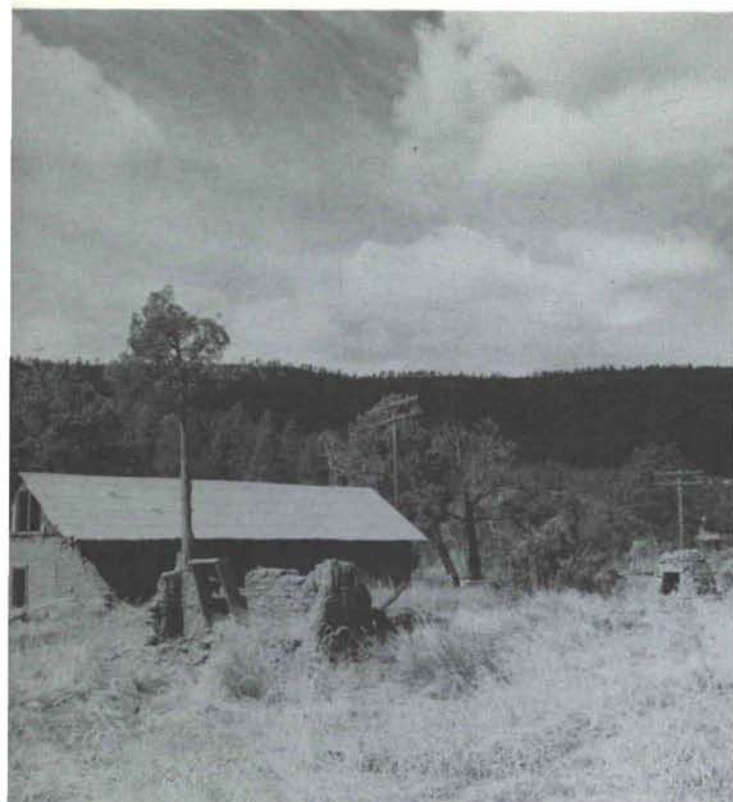
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federate soldiers reached the scene, and both sides squared off for a real fight. Next day, March 28, the battle went on for six hours at Pigeon's Ranch.

A Confederate soldier described it (quoted in *The Devil Gun* by Ed Syers): "It snowed like hell all night and with morning here comes (the Confederate main force) right over the mountains, running. Had to run or freeze. Well, we sat up there all day (27th), thawing out and looking for them Yankees to come fight, but they dug in up to Pigeon's Ranch where the pass tops in them big rocks and red cliffs, fort-like kind of place. Directly (28th) we went up and hit them, and there warn't time for no cliff-climbing, everybody just jammed in them big red rocks, slipping and sliding in the snow in one awful free-for-all. We druv them to the ranch and they purely didn't go easy. They got behind a big adobe wall and in a gully, and we jumped in the gully with them, and stayed till we was all that was left. Then there was a big rock ledge and a hill and that's where it was the worst, bashing each other with boulders, knifing, gouging, packed so close and dressed alike, you couldn't tell who was who."

Meantime Col. Chivington of the Colorado Volunteers and Colonel Manuel Chaves, leader of the New Mexico volunteers, led 400 men over the mountains, circling the pass, and attacked the rear of the Confederate army, destroying all their supplies, wagons and mules. The soldier described that attack: "They circled right over the top of them mountains...seven miles from Pigeon's Ranch where we was supposed to be winning. Burnt them wagons, bayoneted them mules. Just a hell of a mess, snow and red mud and looked like a thousand mules and a hundred wagons down in them ashes - everything we had, tents, blankets, and near every morsel of food. It was all gone."

In the holocausts of the next three years the western campaign was all but forgotten, and the fact that New Mexico supplied more volunteers to the Union cause in proportion to its population than any other state or territory, sending 6,561 out of a population of 93,000, was never recognized.

After the soldiers were gone, the signs of death and misery washed away by summer rains, the station at Pigeon's Ranch con-



tinued to serve travelers on the Santa Fe Trail, and then auto travelers on U.S. 85. Not until I-25 was built was it pushed into a forgotten backwater, to begin the relentless process of adobe melting back into the earth from which it came. Today you can walk through the silence of this mountain canyon and crumbling adobe walls, peer into the litter-filled depths of the old well and remember the history that took place here.

R.W.A.

#### Photographs — left-to-right

1. A gate (which has now disappeared) stands open to the stone corral at Pigeon Ranch where many a stage coach driver had sought refuge from attacking Comanches.

2. The Santa Fe Trail squeezed through Apache Canyon where New Mexico and Colorado Volunteers sneaked over the mountains and destroyed all the Confederate wagons, mules, ammunition, food and other supplies, ending the Confederate dream of capturing the west with its rich gold fields and Pacific ports.

3. A few crumbling adobe walls and ruins of a later building mark the site of Pigeon Ranch, a famous stage on the Santa Fe Trail and scene of a decisive battle in the Civil War.

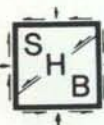
4. A stone wall encircling a deep hole is all that remains of a well that furnished cold mountain water to travellers on the Santa Fe Trail and soldiers on both sides in the Civil War.

---

Anyone interested in the preservation efforts for Pigeon's Ranch headed by Marc Simmons, can contact him at P.O. Box 51, Cerillos, N.M. 87010.



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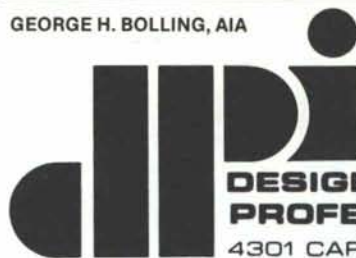
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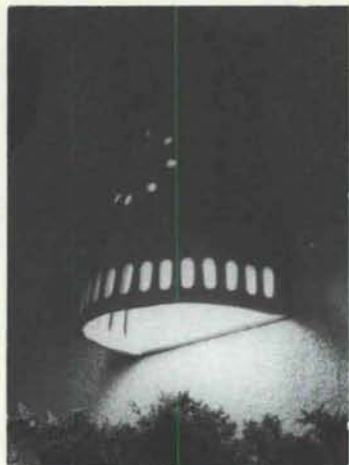


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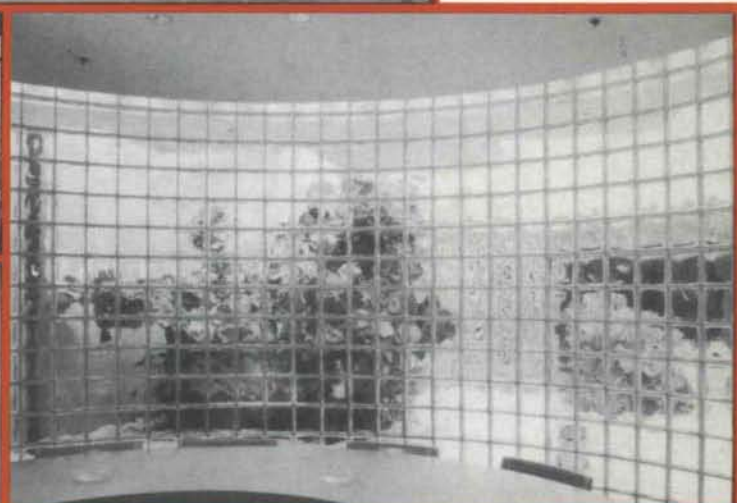
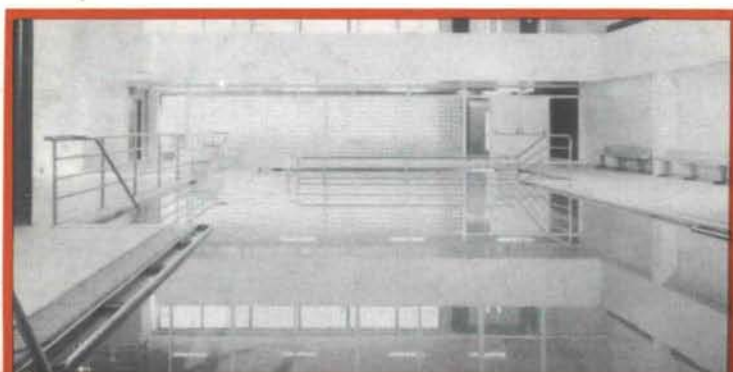
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