

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED MAR 16 1975  
DATE ENTERED MAY 29 1975

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

St. Michael's Mission

AND/OR COMMON

N. of Window Rock off AZ 264

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER T 26 N R 30 E Sec. 24 NW 4

At St. Michaels, Az, 2 mi. west of Window Rock

CITY, TOWN

Window Rock, Ariz

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

4

STATE

Arizona

CODE

04

COUNTY

Apache

CODE

001

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: Residence

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament

STREET & NUMBER

Box 130

CITY, TOWN

St. Michaels

VICINITY OF

STATE

Arizona

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Apache County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

St. Johns

STATE

AZ

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The original 240-acre site, known as Cienega, was purchased from a local rancher in 1895. Located 6 miles south of Ft. Defiance and 1/4 mile south of the then-existing reservation boundary, the building had been built by Billy Meadows for a trading post but had never been used for that purpose. In 1898 it was remodeled in preparation for the missionaries. The stone walls were plastered on the inside, chimneys were raised, and the single room was partitioned to make 6 rooms. A large room at the west end was made into a chapel and one on the east was the kitchen-dining-living-reception room. In between were 4 small bedrooms. The partitions were designed to be easily removed if the room should be needed for a classroom.

The building, which is approximately 27' x 60', extends east and west. It has a gabled cedar shingle roof and stands on a slight rise. On the north side there are 3 doors and 3 windows, on the southside there are 4 windows, and 1 each on the east and west sides.

?  
L. 1898

The first missionaries had to construct their own benches, cupboards, bookcases, and inside doorways. The chapel, which one could only reach by passing through 3 bedrooms, had small (4" x 2") wooden crosses for the Stations of the Cross and 4 kneelers of plain unfinished wood. The room was heated by a small wood stove. Music was provided by a little organ in the room next to the chapel, according to a description written in 1902.

The site (now 640 acres) is surrounded by the reservation and is owned by the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, whose financial support has been vital to the mission.

The building is now used as a residence by a Navajo family, but the mission intends to restore the interior of the building to its original condition and use it for a museum.

## 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The St. Michael's Mission, established in 1898, was the first permanent Catholic Mission to the Navajo.

During the Spanish period, the Navajo were never brought under the mission system nor were they subjugated by the military. They did, however, readily incorporate sheep and horses into their culture and eventually became a wide-ranging, nomadic people who regarded raiding as an important part of their lives.

Depredations reached a peak in the first years of the American Civil War when the federal troops were withdrawn but in 1863 a vigorous campaign under Kit Carson forced most of the Navajo into temporary captivity. On their return they scattered into the remote areas of their reservation, avoiding contact with Anglos and resisting Anglo education. The mission at St. Michael's contributed somewhat to the gradual breakdown of that resistance. The Franciscan Mission of St. Michael was the first permanent Catholic mission to the Navajo. The first mass in the chapel was said in October 1898. The following spring a log cabin was converted into a boarding school with two boy students. Through the years additional land was acquired, and an attempt was made to train Indians in farming and irrigation.

In 1902 a school was opened for 56 students. This ended the first phase of the mission. The second phase was planned as a period in which satellite missions would be established in areas where irrigated agriculture was possible. The original mission and school continued to grow and prosper.

The historical importance of St. Michael's to the Navajo people lies primarily in the numerous publications in and about the Navajo language and in the assistance rendered to the tribe in its successful attempts to acquire more land. Most active in these matters were Father Anselm Weber and Father Berard Haile. The Navajo dictionaries and grammars written by the missionaries were a notable contribution to scholarship.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Padres Trail, October-November 1973  
 Wilken, Robert L. Anselm Weber, OFM, Missionary to the Navaho, 1898-1921. Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1955.  
 Pamphlets and other information supplied by Michael J. Andrews,  
St. Michaels Historical Museum

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1 Jim OK  
HL

UTM REFERENCES

A	<u>1</u> <u>2</u>	<u>6</u> <u>7</u> <u>2</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>	<u>3</u> <u>9</u> <u>4</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Marjorie Wilson, Historian

2-26-75

ORGANIZATION

Arizona State Parks Board

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

1688 West Adams

TELEPHONE

(602) 271-4174

CITY OR TOWN

Phoenix

STATE

Arizona

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

*Dennis McCarthy*

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DENNIS McCARTHY

DATE 2-26-75

State Historic Preservation Officer

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

5/22/75

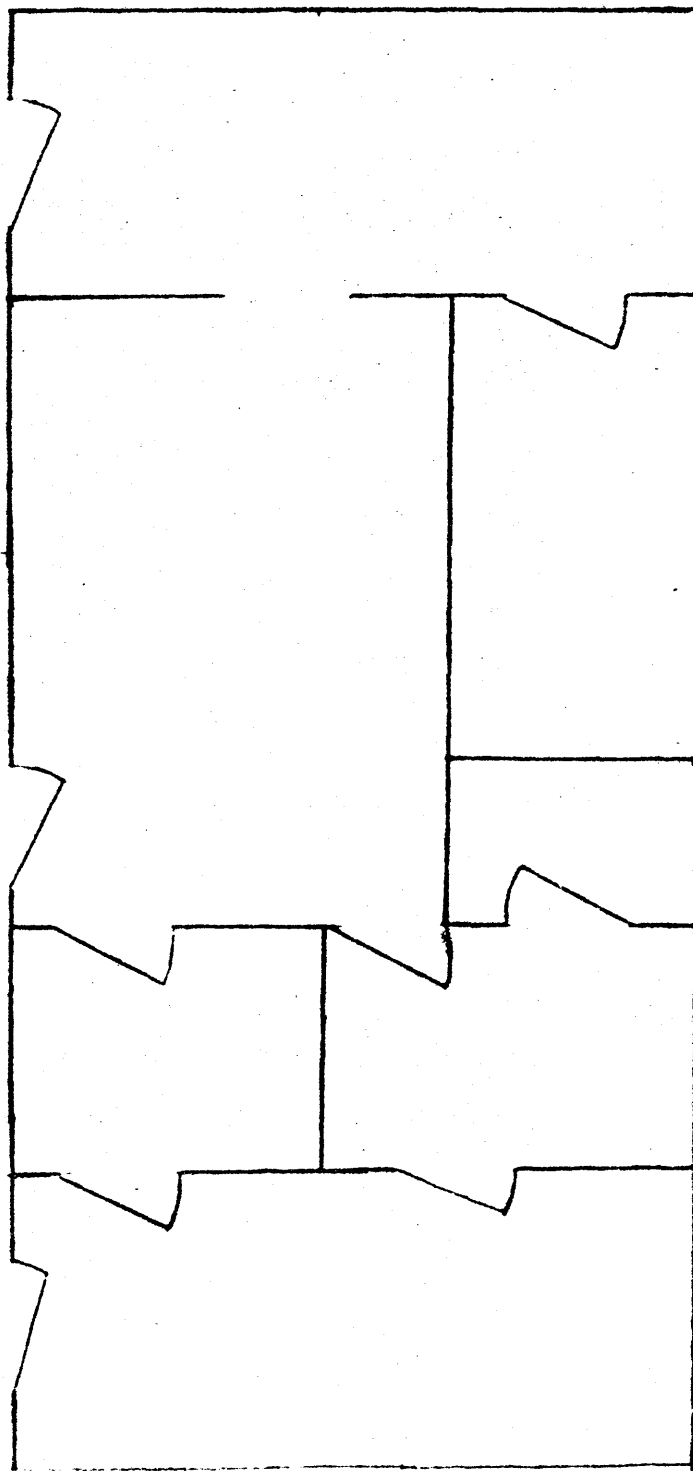
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

MAY 22 1975

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



FLOOR PLAN  
"OLD MISSION"  
ST. MICHAELS, AZ.  
(NOT TO SCALE)

← 27' →

↑ 60' ↓

