

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received AUG 21 1986

date entered

SEP 30 1986

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic National Humane Alliance Animal Fountain

and/or common Hermon Lee Ensign Fountain

2. Location

street & number 615 Virginia Ave., S.E.

not for publication

city, town Albuquerque

vicinity of

state New Mexico

code 35

county Bernalillo

code 001

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status N/A	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input 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	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Decorative

4. Owner of Property

name Albuquerque Humane Association (also see continuation sheet)

street & number 615 Virginia Ave., S.E.

city, town Albuquerque

vicinity of

state N.M. 87110

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. unable to locate

street & number

city, town

state

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historic Landmarks Survey of Albuq. has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date May, 1985 federal state county local

depository for survey records Municipal Development Department, Redevelopment Division

city, town Albuquerque

state N.M.

7. Description

Condition
 excellent deteriorated
 good ruins
 fair unexposed

Check one
 unaltered
 altered

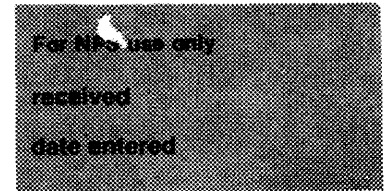
Check one
 original site
 moved date 1927, 1950's and November 1975

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The National Humane Alliance animal fountain (built in 1907) stands six and a half feet high and is made of polished gray Maine granite, originally trimmed with bronze. Its present location is on the lawn in front of Albuquerque's Animal Humane Association building (built circa 1950), 615 Virginia SE, a residential street in the city's southeast heights near the entrance to Sandia Laboratories. Designed as an animal drinking fountain, the Humane Alliance fountain's major element is a large (6' diameter) heavy bowl placed at four feet above the ground to allow horses to drink from it; at ground level, at the base of the supporting pillar for the large bowl, are four small water bowls for dogs, cats and other small animals. Rising from the large bowl is a square pillar displaying on its four sides, three lion heads (one to a side) and a commemorative plaque.

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The base pillar is 18" high and 30" square with an arched niche cut into each face and an engaged column at each corner. On the upper surface of the three and one-half foot square plinth of the pillar are four small cup-like hollows, one below each niche, into which water flows to serve smaller animals.

The upper pillar is topped by a simple molded cornice. The original lions' heads on its sides were bronze; these were stolen and were replaced with reproductions (based on early photographs) by local sculptor Richard Hicks, who fashioned them out of a synthetic bronze-colored material. The bronze tablet on the fourth side reads: "1907 - Presented by the National Humane Alliance, Hermon Lee Ensign Founder." Topping the upper pillar is a bronze tripod made up in a scroll and leaf design; for years this supported a bronze columnar light standard which held a plain glass globe. This fixture may not have been part of the fountain given by the Humane Alliance, since a newspaper article notes that the light was a gift of a local doctor. The fountain weighs five tons and can be divided into four parts for moving.

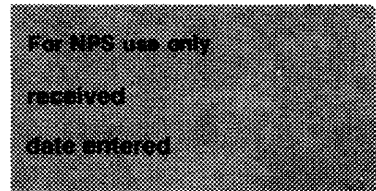
The fountain was originally located in the middle of the intersection of Broadway and Railroad (now Central) Avenue on the eastern edge of Albuquerque's downtown. Since it connected the Old and New Towns and was a route to Tijeras Pass in the Sandia Mountains on the east, Railroad Avenue was the more important street of the two in 1908 when the fountain was installed. At that time Broadway led only to residential districts on the north and south. The only major building at the intersection was the Occidental Building at the southwest corner.

The fountain was moved in 1927 to make room for a bus route on Central. The new location was two blocks north in a similar situation at the intersection of Broadway and Tijeras Road; neither street was a major street, but the fountain was located close enough to Central to still be easily accessible.

In the 1950's, with the increase in automobile traffic and disappearance of horse-drawn vehicles, the fountain was moved five and one-half miles to the San Pedro Street entrance of the New Mexico state fairgrounds, where it served as the focus for a water pool and flower display. In 1975 it was dismantled and put in storage to make way for a Bicentennial display of a replica of the Liberty Bell.

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In November of that year it was moved another two miles to the Animal Humane Association's headquarters on Virginia SE which is located approximately 7 1/2 miles from its original location. It is used here as a decorative object, since it is no longer plumbed or wired.

In its travels, the drinking fountain has lost its light standard and globe and the original lion heads. The original structure is intact and the granite has been cleaned. The lion heads have been replicated in synthetic material and placed where the originals were attached.

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 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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1907 **Builder/Architect** Designer: Hermon Lee Ensign

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Humane Alliance animal drinking fountain is significant in Albuquerque and in Albuquerque history since it is a rare early local public facility associated with significant work and cultural patterns in Albuquerque during the first half of the 20th century. In evaluating the significance of the fountain, one must address the short-lived nature of its purpose as set forth by its donor, the National Humane Alliance. This purpose was to provide water for domestic animals in an urban setting. As the use became obsolete, the fountain became an impediment rather than a valuable and significant part of the Albuquerque environment and its removal was inevitable. However, its function and purpose are still evident in its relatively unaltered configuration and from the Humane Alliance plaque still present on its upper section. Its location in front of the Animal Humane Association's headquarters, although it is a setting quite different from its original setting at a busy downtown intersection, underscores its history as an early attempt to better the condition of domestic animals.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Albuquerque East

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	3	3	5	8	4	4	0	3	8	8	1	3	9	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

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D

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property is located on Tract A, Animal Humane Association Sub Division - Virginia St., S.E., Albuquerque, N.M. (Albuquerque City Zone Map L-19-2).

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mary P. Davis, Planner - Preservation; Pat Venable (volunteer)

organization City of Albuquerque date Sept. 6, 1985

street & number P.O. Box 1293 telephone (505) 766-4720

city or town Albuquerque state N.M.

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature [Signature]

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 8-7-86

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

[Signature] Beth Givens date 9/30/86
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____
Chief of Registration

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The Ensign fountain was a frequently-used watering trough, since public watering places were few and far between in Albuquerque in the early 1900's. At that time and for several decades of this century, Albuquerque was a small city surrounded by rural land uses; north and south of downtown was farmland in the river valley, on the still-empty mesas (now covered with subdivisions) were grazing lands for sheep and cattle, and in the Sandia mountains to the east local inhabitants could cut firewood and collect pinon nuts and bring them into town to sell. Because of this rural/agrarian setting, many families used horses for transportation well into the mid-20th century. The Ensign fountain was an important source of water during the period in which it stood in the public right-of-way. It was used especially by the Spanish wood-cutters who provided fuel for much of the town, by the Indians who came into the city in their wagons from the nearby pueblos to shop in the downtown area, and by Hispanic and Anglo farmers who came to downtown Albuquerque to sell their crops or shop for clothing.

Albuquerque was one of over 100 cities offered the fountain (in a standard design) by Hermon Lee Ensign, a writer and advertising specialist who founded the Humane Alliance in 1896 with the goal of distributing animal drinking fountains to cities across the country. Ensign had also been a Congregational minister and manager of a weekly journal call "The Alliance." According to contemporary newspaper articles, his fame stemmed from his invention of "a stereotype plate with a removable base," while his fortune came from his advertising business. He founded the Humane Alliance "to carry out his ideas for the welfare of animals." When he died in 1899, he left his considerable wealth to the Alliance to complete his work.

That is just what the Alliance did, offering cities an animal drinking fountain, free of charge, if the city would find a suitable site, pay for installation and provision of water, and maintain the fountain. Cities which took advantage of the offer included Albany, Buffalo, Des Moines, Rochester, Milwaukee, Mexico City, Pasadena, Denver, Moline, Ill. and Newark, New Jersey. Even as late as 1913, the president of the Alliance, Mrs. Harrison Grey Fiske, stated that "a sufficient number of applications have been received to engage the possibilities of our output for years to come." (Schoen, p. 12) Horses were soon replaced by horseless carriages, however, and the demand for the fountains disappeared. The existing fountains faced possible demolition as they stood in the way of street car lines and increased automobile traffic.

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The Albuquerque Ensign fountain was accepted gladly by Albuquerque in 1907. Its sponsor was a prominent local educator, polar explorer, astronomer and president of the local humane society, R. W. D. Bryan, who had served as superintendent of the Albuquerque Indian School for many years. The City Council appointed a committee to discuss a likely site, "where it can be approached from all sides."

The matter of the site became a major issue, since the Alvarado Hotel objected strongly to the proposal that the fountain be placed near the hotel on Railroad Avenue (Albuquerque's main street, later called Central Avenue). The hotel's fear was that "the dog nuisance, already intolerable, would be aggravated with a drinking fountain." The newspaper reports of the fountain controversy noted that "the marshall promised to take up the dog nuisance vigorously and we believe that objection can be met."

However, the hotel's objections were not met and after languishing on a siding in the Santa Fe railroad yards, the drinking fountain was finally erected in the middle of the intersection of Broadway and Railroad Avenues, which was still relatively undeveloped but was on the major route from the mountains and close to downtown. Several hundred people attended the dedication ceremony held in April 1908, nearly a year after it was first offered to the city. After a speech on "Humanitarian Instincts" by Professor A. B. Stroup, acting city Mayor T. N. Wilkerson made an impassioned plea for kindness toward "Man's Best Friends." According to the newspaper report, Wilkerson "dwelt upon the debasing effects upon the moral and spiritual being of acts of cruelty towards dependent ones and condemned the man who used the power of a higher intelligence to abuse and torture these faithful and honest servitors who were devoted even when cruelly used." Mr. Bryan presented the fountain, saying that the Ensign fountains "eloquently proclaim his thought for the comfort and refreshment of those domestic animals who we have just been eloquently told are the best friends of man."

The fountain remained at Central and Broadway until 1927 when the establishment of a bus line route on Central necessitated its removal a few blocks north to the intersection of Broadway and Tijeras Avenue. During its tenure at these two intersections, the fountain was a regular stop for the woodcutters whose horses would speed up as they neared the fountain in expectation of water after the long haul of huge loads of wood down from the Sandia Mountains. Other uses, too, are recalled by long time residents of Albuquerque. One

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remembers seeing Indian mothers bathing their babies in the fountain, while another recalled that her mother "would always park her little horse and wagon right on Central and Broadway. They had a great big old huge fountain, where the horses would be tied up and they would have water to drink and she would park the horse there and the buggy." The fountain was not a fashionable meeting place, but rather part of the life of the rural working people of the area.

In the 1950's with the increase in automobile traffic and the disappearance of horse-drawn vehicles, although they were still used in the valley as late as the '50's, the fountain was moved to the state fairgrounds. In 1975 it was dismantled and stored. The Animal Humane Association was alerted by Walter Bambrook, director of the Fair's art galley, who was worried that the fountain would disappear forever once consigned to storage. The AHA arranged for it to be moved, which required the services of a derrick and a flat bed trailer; the fountain weighs nearly five tons and the AHA had originally planned to move it with a hand dolly and a pickup truck! After the fountain was installed in its present location in front of the Humane Association building, Association members cleaned it and a local artist replicated the missing lion heads, using information from early photographs.

As one of over 100 such fountains distributed nationwide by Mr. Ensign, the fountain may have some national significance as a relatively unaltered survivor, but we have not been able to verify how many of these fountains are left intact. If only a few of these fountains have survived, the little-altered Albuquerque fountain could be of value for historians of fountain architecture and as an extant example of early public response to the needs of horse-drawn transportation and of the goals and activities of the animal humane movement in this country.

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References

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Albuquerque Morning Journal, issues of May 17, August 6, 1907,
December 17, 1907, April 20, 1908.

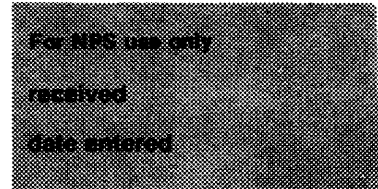
Evans, Edmund J. "Kindness Maintained," unpublished, Albuquerque, 1976.

Schoen, Eileen. "Drinking Fountains Revisited," The National Humane Review,
July-August 1963. pp. 12-13.

Unpublished transcripts of interviews with Nell McConnell,
Josefina Chavez Turrietta, Albuquerque Museum, 1983.

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The Ensign Fountain was given to the City in 1907; in 1975 it was entrusted to the Animal Humane Association by the State Fair Board who had received the fountain from the city in the 1950's.

PHOTOGRAPH OF INTERSECTION OF BROADWAY AND CENTRAL, taken circa 1922
taken facing southwest
taken by Milner Studio
Current address: 3600 San Mateo NE
Albuquerque, NM 87110

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L. Davis
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