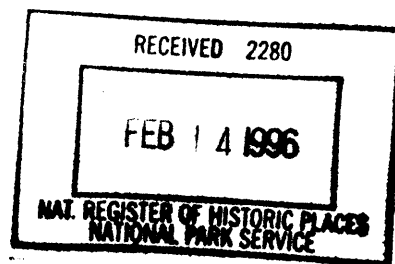


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Amistad Gymnasium  
other names/site number Amistad School

2. Location

street & number 0.5 mi. E of NM 402, 35 mi. S of Clayton, NM  not for publication  
city or town Amistad  vicinity  
state New Mexico code NM county Union code 059 zip code 88410

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 2/7/96  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
New Mexico SHPO  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that the property is:  
 entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Edson A. Beall 3/15/96  
Signature of the Keeper Entered in the National Register Date of Action

Amistad Gymnasium

Union, NM

Name of Property

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

in (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Hist. & Arch. Resources of the New Deal: NM

Number of contributing resources previously listed the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Recreation and Culture: gymnasium/auditorium

Recreation and Culture: gymnasium/auditorium

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education/school

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Spanish-Pueblo Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls stucco

roof metal

other concrete

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Amistad School  
Name of Property

Union, NM  
County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey  
Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering  
Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

social history  
 entertainment/architecture  
 architecture  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1937-1943  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1937  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

J.R. Islar  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Amistad Gymnasium  
Name of Property

Union, NM  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property 1

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

- 1. 113 1666590 3976450
- 2. 111 11111111 11111111
- 3. 111 11111111 11111111
- 4. 111 11111111 11111111

See continuation sheet.

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title David Kammer, Ph.D  
organization contract historian date Sept. 30, 1995  
street & number 521 Aliso Dr. NE telephone (505) 266-0586  
city or town Albuquerque state NM zip code 87108

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic district and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white** photographs of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name \_\_\_\_\_  
street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1

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Amistad Gymnasium  
Union County, NM

Description

Amistad Gymnasium is a rectilinear, one-story gymnasium/auditorium with a partial basement, cement stucco-covered walls, and a barrel vault roof with a sheet metal covering. The facade is symmetrical with two recessed entries with double doors flanked by paired windows. The interior consists of a gymnasium with a hardwood floor and a stage with a basement located beneath it. The gymnasium is located in the middle of Amistad, a community consisting of approximately two dozen buildings. Alterations include a small concrete block storage room behind the building and a locker room at the rear northwest corner. In 1955 a classroom wing, extended in 1965, was added to the east side, adjoined to the gymnasium by a corridor. These additions, however, do not detract from its appearance and feeling as a New Deal project. The building is in excellent condition, and local citizens have sought to protect the gymnasium by adding a sheet metal roof over the original asphalt roof.

The building has a concrete foundation and a reinforced concrete frame with a steel frame supporting the barrel vault roof. The walls, framed by concrete piers and capped by a slight parapet, are dried adobe bricks with a beige, cement stucco covering. The combination of the earth-toned stucco coating and parapet with the vertical piers creates a hybridized stylistic appearance blending the Spanish-Pueblo Revival and Art Deco Styles, the latter also apparent in the stylized Zia suns on the facade bearing the building's construction date of 1937.

The gymnasium has 9/9/9 triple-hung wood sash windows with concrete sills. The two main entries are recessed with double wood doors opening onto low concrete porches. The interior consists of an oak floor flanked by three tiers of wooden bleachers and a stage framed by corbelled brackets. A dressing room and the building's mechanical room are behind the stage.

The main entry of the classroom wing is also a recessed double door, and the windows are metal casement and aluminum hopper. The classroom wing is perpendicular to the gymnasium, connected to it by a corridor with double doors. Set well back on

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7, 8 Page 2

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Amistad Gymnasium  
Union County, NM

Description (continued)

the east side of the gymnasium, the classroom wing is landscaped with evergreens and intrudes only slightly on the historic appearance of the gymnasium facade.

Statement of Significance

Funded as a WPA project in 1935 but not constructed until 1937, Amistad's gymnasium/auditorium is a well-preserved example of the many rural gymnasium/auditorium projects New Deal programs carried out in New Mexico. Designed, in part, to relieve unemployment in Union County and, in part, to offer local residents a gathering place for recreation, the Amistad gymnasium/auditorium is significant under Criterion A as a reminder of how the New Deal's efforts to construct community recreational facilities affected Amistad's social history and leisure activities. The building is also eligible under Criterion C as a good example of the plans, methods of construction, materials and workmanship New Deal projects employed in carrying out numerous recreational facility projects in New Mexico.

Located in the northeast corner of New Mexico, Union County lay near the heart of the dust bowl of the southern High Plains, and its small ranching and farming communities, homesteaded less than three decades earlier, were devastated by the drought of the early 1930s. Amistad, in the southern part of the county, was particularly hard hit, and as the WPA got under way in 1935, road improvement and construction projects were funded to create work relief jobs for the area's residents. In October, 1935 the WPA authorized \$15,000 for the construction of a gymnasium/auditorium, a project that officials estimated would create almost fifty jobs.

Delays postponed the construction project for a year; and it wasn't until January, 1937 that the WPA's district engineer, J.R. Islar, drew plans for the gym. As the project that included the installation of a modern steam heating plant and over-sized windows to supply light and ventilation got under way, the

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Continuation Sheet

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Amistad Gymnasium  
Union County, NM

Statement of Significance (continued)

Clayton News described it as one "that would be a credit for a town ten times the size of Amistad." Using a reinforced concrete frame for the building, workers constructed thousands of dried adobe bricks for the non-load bearing walls. This effort to combine modern building techniques with local materials and building practices typified rural WPA projects throughout New Mexico.

By August, most of the project had been completed, and a dance featuring the Rhythm Kings was held to raise money to install the lighting system. Notices for similar dances, roller skating parties and basketball tournaments appear in the Clayton News during the years leading to World War II, suggesting that the gymnasium project succeeded in its goal of providing the sparsely populated area with a gathering place for socializing and recreating. Even after a school wing was added in the 1950s, the gymnasium continued to serve not only as Amistad's school athletic facility but as a community gathering place. Residents intent upon preserving the gym raise funds through sponsoring an annual basketball tournament, using last year's proceeds to add the sheet metal roof above the original one.

Bibliography

Clayton News. Various issues, 1935-1941.

Shields, Ruth, Amistad teacher. Interview with David Kammer, March, 1995.

Verbal Boundary Description

Located on Block 12 Smith's First Addition

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with Amistad Gymnasium and the adjoining school.