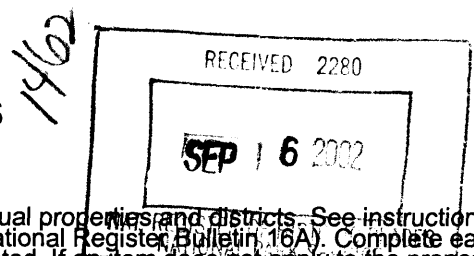


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determination for individual properties and districts. See instruction 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 an 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 Smiley Junior High School

other names/site number Smiley Building / 5LP1411.56

2. Location

street & number 1309 East 3rd Avenue [N/A] not for publication

city or town Durango [N/A] vicinity

state Colorado code CO county La Plata code 067 zip code 81301

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] 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 [ X ] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [ ] nationally [ ] statewide [X] locally. ([ ] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title: [Signature] State Historic Preservation Officer Date: August 27, 2002

Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Colorado Historical Society
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:

- [X] 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 [ ] See continuation sheet.

Signature of the Keeper: [Signature] Date of Action: 11/27/02

Smiley Junior High School  
Name of Property

La Plata County, Colorado  
County/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 count previously listed resources.)

Contributing

Noncontributing

<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing.**

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

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Function**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education/school  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education/school  
Commerce/professional  
Recreation And Culture/theater  
Recreation And Culture/sports facility  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Mission Revival  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete  
walls Brick  
\_\_\_\_\_  
roof Rubber; Asphalt  
other \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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

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Smiley Junior High School  
La Plata County, CO

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**DESCRIPTION**

**General Site Description**

The Smiley Junior High School is located at the northwest corner of 13<sup>th</sup> Street and East Third Avenue, and is within the boundaries of The Boulevard/East Third Avenue National Register Historic District. The historic district is a residential neighborhood aligned along either side of a tree-lined boulevard with a wide landscaped median.

Residential structures are located to the north and east of the school site. A large residence that now functions as a mortuary is located to the south of the school. The former Mason Elementary School, which has been converted to a City of Durango youth center, is located across the boulevard and to the southeast. The historic Durango High School (which is a recently listed National Register property) is located to the southwest of the Smiley School across the abandoned 13<sup>th</sup> Street right-of-way. East Second Avenue borders the west side of the school property, but is located down slope from and out of sight of the school building.

The building is set back from East Third Avenue behind a large landscaped lawn. Concrete sidewalks connect the building's east entries with the sidewalk along the street. The south end of the property includes one-half of the former 13<sup>th</sup> Street right-of-way, which maintains the accouterments of the original street with head-in parking along a raised curb, and a wide sidewalk. A narrow lawn and flower garden are located between the sidewalk and the building. A raised curb and sidewalk extend across the right-of-way to prevent through automobile traffic. The primary entrance to the building faces south toward the former 13<sup>th</sup> Street, which was vacated by the City of Durango during the school's tenure to allow the junior high to use the street as the bus drop off and pick up area. To the west a large flat lawn bordered by trees and a concrete parking lot cover the area that once served as a play field for the school. A paved plaza, located between the school building and the field has recently been re-landscaped. The property originally sloped down to the west, but the lot was filled and leveled as part of the construction of the school. The north end of the building is very close to the property line. A row of young juniper trees defining the property line is located within five feet of the north wall of the building. A concrete block garden shed with a pottery kiln has recently been constructed (post-2000) to the northwest of the building, on the rear of the lot.

**General Building Description**

The building is constructed in the Mission Revival style. It is a modified T shape with a north-south classrooms axis and an east-west oriented gymnasium/theater cross axis on the south end. Most of the building is three stories tall. A small one-story flat roof addition, completed two years after the original building, extends north and west of the original structure. The school and addition are constructed of a smooth buff colored brick laid in a common bond pattern on a concrete foundation. The building has a brick water table. Square buttresses with sloped shoulders are used frequently to divide the facades into sections and to define the corners and entries. The main classroom axis has a parapet capped with a

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soldier course of brick set at an angle back from the front façade. The cross axis wing originally had the same design but the cap was altered some time after 1980. This wing's parapet is now capped with concrete that looks similar to terra cotta tiles. The building has a flat rubber membrane roof, except for a pitched asphalt shingle roof that is located over parts of the theater and gym. The pitched roof is not visible from the street level. Main entries are located on the east and south facades. The theater entry is on the east façade. Each of the main entries is located within a projected façade that has a curvilinear parapet with a centered round arch. The individual details of these entries are described in the following more detailed discussions of each façade.

The windows have recently been restored under the Colorado Historical Society State Historical Fund grant program. The building incorporates both wood frame and steel frame windows, with most of the wood windows located in the main classroom axis, and most of the steel windows on the theater and gymnasium wings. Steel frame windows are used for all basement level windows. The steel frame windows are fixed sash, but many of the larger steel windows have operable awning openings within the center windowpanes. The wood frame windows are double hung.

The building is in good condition. It has maintained a high degree of historic integrity. Very few changes have occurred to the exterior of the Smiley Junior High School since its construction. The building has retained its original design, materials, setting, workmanship, feeling and association.

**East Side of the Building**

The east side of the building faces East Third Avenue. It consists of the ninety-five foot long main classroom section, a small one-story (1939) addition to the north end and an east projecting theater wing at the south end.

The classroom facade is divided into three sections by two wall buttresses. Each of the three sections contains three pairs of windows on each of the three floors. The windows, have brick sills, are wood frame and are double hung with a nine over one light configuration. Three small square vents are symmetrically spaced across the façade above the third floor windows.

The one-story addition extends 25 feet from the north end of the main building. The addition repeats the window pattern used on the main classroom axis, with three pairs of windows. The addition has a flat roof with metal flashing.

The north and south ends of the main classroom section each have east-projecting facades with matching curvilinear parapets with centered round arches. Centered within each projecting façade are pairs of wood frame windows on the second and third floors. These windows match the others on the façade.

The first floor of the projecting façade at the north end of the main building has a recessed entry, outlined with decorative brickwork. The original doors were replaced, during the school's tenure, with

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two aluminum framed glass doors. The three original 9-lite wood-framed transoms remain above the doors. The original concrete steps to the entry remain, but they are partially obscured by a concrete ramp that has been poured over the central portion of the steps.

The first floor of the projecting façade at the south end of the main building originally had an entry accessed via an arcade that extends eastward from the building, along the north wall of the theater. The arcade remains, but the arched openings have been filled in, obscuring the entry. The one-story arcade has five round arches on the north side and one arch on the east side. Each arch opening has been filled in by placing a wall at the back (interior) side of the arch and finishing the wall with stucco, creating recessed panels at each arch. This infill occurred in 1976. The western-most arch has a solid metal door in the panel. The recessed panel on the east side has a *trompe l'oeil* mural recreating the view of the interior of the arcade, had it not been filled in. The concrete steps providing access to the east arch remain. The arcade's coping matches the soldier course on the main classroom building. The northeast corner of the arcade terminates in a series of four beveled brick edges.

The arcade is located against the north wall of the theater wing, which extends to the east from the main building. The visible portion of the north wall above the arcade is divided into three sections by two buttresses. Four steel framed 20-light windows are located in the easternmost two of the three wall sections. A belt course located above the windows extends around the north, east and south walls of the theater.

The east side of the theater wing served as the public exterior access to the theater. It has a centered entry recessed under a compound arch. The entry contains elaborately carved wood double doors accessed by five concrete steps. A nine light round window is located above the entry. The glass in the window has been opaqued. Square buttresses flanked by ornamental iron grilles are located on either side of the entry. A curvilinear parapet and centered round arch matching the design of the other parapets on the east façade is located above this entry.

### **South Side of the Building**

The south façade of the building faces the former 13<sup>th</sup> Street right of way. This elevation is 170 feet long and contains a main entry flanked by the theater on the east side and the gymnasium on the west side. Five concrete steps lead to the entry, which is located in a façade that projects from the south wall of the building. The entry has a square buttress on each side of the doors. The original entryway is unaltered but the original three doors and transoms were replaced during the school's tenure with three metal doors with glass in the top half of each and three metal frame fixed transoms. An engraved rectangular stone nameplate stating "Emory E. Smiley Junior High School" is located above the transoms. A large 45 light steel window is located above the nameplate. A curvilinear parapet is located above this entry.

The east wall of the entry projection has nine-light steel frame windows at the first and second floor level. To the east of the entry is the theater wing. It is set back from the entry and is separated by a half

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buttness at the corner. Four buttnesses divide the south façade of this wing into five sections. The two eastern most sections have smooth brick walls. The two central sections have steel frame windows with brick sills. The ground floor windows have 12 lights and the second floor windows have 20 lights. At the ground level, there are three windows and one historic opening for a door that now has a replacement metal door. There are four windows at the second floor level. The western most wall section has one 20-light steel window and one 12 light steel window at the second floor level. Two small square vents are located above the second floor windows, near the parapet edge.

The gymnasium and a raised basement are located west of the entry. Three buttnesses divide the south façade of this wing into four sections. A fourth buttness is located close to the corner of the building at the west end of the façade. Two small square vents are located above the second floor windows, near the parapet edge. Three windows are evenly spaced within each of the sections on the main and second floors. All of these windows have steel frames and brick sills. The top floor windows each have sixteen lights while the main floor windows have eight lights. The basement windows are also steel frame, with eight lights each. The basement windows all have window wells and concrete sills. There are three basement windows in each of the wall sections except the westernmost basement section contains two windows and a metal door, which is located in an original doorway.

**West Side of the Building**

The west elevation of the building faces toward the school's former athletic field. The west facade consists of the main classroom section, a one-story addition at the north end and a west projecting gymnasium wing at the south end. Three buttnesses divide the classroom building façade into four sections. The two center sections contain three pairs of windows on each of the three floors. The windows match the east façade windows and are wood frame and double hung with a nine over one light configuration and brick sills. Four small square vents are located above the windows, near the parapet edge. The north and south sections of the classroom axis façade contain entries and stairwells. The entryways at the ground floor on the north and south sections are identical. They contain recessed aluminum framed glass double doors with single paned fixed glass sidelights and a single pane transom. At the south entry, a pair of two six-over-one wood framed double hung windows is located at the ground floor entry level. Above this level are two pairs of nine-over-one windows matching those in the center sections of the façade. Two rows consisting of two pairs of six-over-one wood windows are located above the nine-over-one windows. The top row of windows aligns with the windows in the central two sections of the façade. The north end of the classroom axis includes a pair of six-over-one wood windows at the first floor level. Two pairs of nine-over-one wood windows and a pair of six-over-one windows are located in the north section.

The one story addition extends to the north and west of the classroom section. It continues the pattern and type of nine-over-one wood frame double hung windows used in the center sections of the classroom axis. Two pairs of windows are on the addition's south wall and three pairs of windows are on the west wall. A six light steel frame window is located at the basement level on the south side of the addition.

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A wood single car width overhead-opening garage door (still functioning) is located at the basement level on the west wall of the addition. The garage is accessed by a concrete ramp.

The wing containing the gymnasium extends to the west from the south end of the building. The west wall roofline of the gym has a single-stepped parapet. A rectangular vent is centered under the step of the parapet. Two buttresses divide the west wall of the gym into three sections. Buttresses are also located near the north and south corners of the façade. The central section of the west façade has three basement windows, and is smooth brick on the main and second floors. The north and south sections of the wall each have three steel framed eight light windows with brick sills on the first floor. On the second floor, the north section has two windows and a filled in doorway (stucco) that once served as the fire escape access. The south section has three windows on the second floor. All of the second floor windows are steel framed with 16 lights and brick sills. At the basement level, the south section has one window and two recessed panels that are the same size and shape as the other basement windows. The brickwork continues through these panels, and no window wells were excavated below these panels, leading to the conclusion that these are not infilled windows, but were part of the original design. The north section basement has one window, a recessed brick panel and an opening with a small vent that is similar to the vent located under the parapet near the top of the building. All of the basement windows are 8-light with steel frames and concrete sills.

The north side of the gymnasium's west wing is divided into three sections by two buttresses. A third buttress is located close to the west corner of the wing. Two small square vents are located below the parapet, above the top floor windows. The façade has three steel framed fixed windows in each section on the second and third floors, and three steel framed windows at the basement level on the west and center sections. The east section has two windows and a single metal door at the basement level. The door is accessed via a concrete stairway. The concrete foundation of the building is visible in the stairwell. The basement and first floor windows have 8 lights, and the second floor windows have 16 lights.

**North End of the Building**

This side of the building is difficult to see, because it is very close to a single-family residence and detached garage that are located on the adjacent lot. The north wall of the one-story north addition contains a row of nine-over-one wood frame double hung windows that match the windows in the classroom axis. Eight pairs of windows and one set of three windows make up the north wall. Three windows are at the basement level near the west end of the addition. Two of these windows are eight light steel frame, and the third is eight block glass block. Above and behind the addition, three pairs of wood frame windows are visible on the north wall of the classroom axis.

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**Interior**

The owners of the building have the original approved plans for the building. The original design placed the boys and girls locker rooms in the basement. On the first floor were the gymnasium, the theater, five classrooms, and separate boys and girls toilets. The second floor had the balcony for the theater, a clinic, separate women and men teachers' lounges, the business classroom and the typewriting classroom. The third floor was devoted to science classes, complete with a greenhouse, and classrooms. "Manual arts" were in the 1939 addition on the north side of the building.

The interior has experienced minimal changes to the original layout, with most of the changes occurring in partitioning a few of the classrooms and converting the locker rooms to workshop space. The hallways have painted plaster walls except where the lockers were removed leaving exposed red brick. The original painted plaster ceilings have been covered over in the hallways with one-foot square acoustic tiles. The original maple floors remain in the gym, the theater and the classrooms. Most of the original fixtures have been replaced. The theater has retained the original seating and balcony, as well as some detailing such as decorative grilles on either side of the stage. Community groups, charter schools and the dance company that is housed in the building use the gymnasium and theater regularly. The classrooms are used as offices, studios and classrooms.

**Alterations**

The Smiley Junior High School exhibits a high degree of historic integrity. None of the changes to the building have seriously diminished the structure's historic integrity. The only significant changes to the building are a small one-story addition that was constructed two years after the completion of the original building, and the infill of the arches in the arcade along the north wall of the theater. The addition is a compatible and appropriate expansion that uses bricks and windows that match the original building. It is a small-scale extension to the rear and side of the main structure without affecting the original design. The original shape and detailing of the arcade is still clearly visible. The arches were filled with a plastered wall that is set back behind the brickwork, without obscuring any of the exterior details.

While some of the doors were replaced during the school's tenure, the original entryways remain, leaving the size and shape of these openings clearly evident and contributing to the building's overall design. Less than half of the coping on the parapet has been altered from the original design, and the parapet shape remains unchanged.



**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 all 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 age or 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
- # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record
- # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education

Architecture

**Periods of Significance**

1937 - 1952

**Significant Dates**

1937

1939

**Significant Person(s)**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above).

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Thomas, Charles (architect)

Scheide, E. F. (brickwork)

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Colorado Historical Society

Smiley Building Offices, Room 35

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**SIGNIFICANCE**

Smiley Junior High School is eligible under criterion A for its educational significance. It was Durango's first building solely dedicated to junior high school classes, and was the city's only junior high school from its construction in 1937 until a second junior high school opened in 1961. The building served the Durango 9R School District for 56 years, from 1937 to 1993. Despite its distinction of being the only junior high school in Durango until 1961, the period of significance ends in 1952 in order to comply with the National Register's fifty year rule.

Smiley Junior High School is also eligible under criterion C for its architectural significance. The building was the community's largest Federally-funded Depression-era project and the only public building constructed in the Mission Revival Style. The school characterizes the Mission Revival style with its curvilinear parapets, wall buttresses, arched entrance and niches, and decorative grilles. The Mission Revival Style is not well represented in Durango. The only other non-residential application of the style is the Durango Light and Power Plant (5LP.1146), an industrial building constructed in 1893 that is also listed in the National Register. The school also represents the work of prominent Colorado Springs architect Charles Thomas, and is the only solo example of his work in Durango.

**Historical Background**

Located along the Animas River at the base of the mineral rich San Juan Mountains of Southwest Colorado, the city of Durango owes its origin to the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad (D&RG). In 1880 the D&RG extended a railroad line west from Alamosa, Colorado through Chama, New Mexico en route to the mines of the San Juans. Drawing on their past successes in creating towns along the route of the railroad, the D&RG developed a new community along the Animas River to be named Durango. William A. Bell of the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad arranged for several individuals to file land claims and subsequently sell the land to a real estate subsidiary of the railroad company known as the Durango Trust. The Trust platted the town site in 1880. The railroad reached Durango in 1881 and Silverton in 1882.

The Trust placed Durango's depot and the commercial/wholesale district along Main Avenue. Slightly upslope from Main Avenue, East Second Avenue was planned as the street for professional offices, government buildings and some commercial uses. The next street to the east was "The Boulevard", a wide street divided by a tree lined median and developed as the locale for the premiere homes and churches of the more prosperous Durango residents. Additional residential streets were platted to the east.

The city boomed from the start. The 1885 Colorado State Census counted 2,254 people. In 1890 the Rio Grande Southern Railroad arrived, providing a connection to the west and to the mines above Rico, Telluride and Ridgeway. By 1892, Durango had two smelters, a streetcar line, electrical power, a water system, an ore sampling works, flour mills, foundries, lumber and brickyards, a brewery, a hospital and a

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brand new county courthouse. Promotional brochures touted this civilized and progressive community in Southwest Colorado.

Schools were an important part of the community's quest for respectability. The Durango School District was created early in 1881 and began classes with one teacher in a rented space at the Episcopal Church. By 1887, classes up to the eighth grade were taught in two school buildings. One year later the district offered its first high school curriculum. With children crowding into the two school buildings, the District had to rent additional space until a new building was constructed in 1893 at the corner of 12<sup>th</sup> Street and East Third Avenue. The new school's population and grade levels were based on the status of the other buildings in the district. True to its chameleon-like nature, the school had an assortment of names. At various times it was called the "High School", the "Junior High School", "Central Elementary School" and the "Central School". A new high school was constructed in 1917, leaving space available at the Central school for first through eighth grades. The Colorado Springs architectural partnership of Thomas MacLaren and Charles Thomas designed the new high school (which is now the School District Administration Building and a recently listed National Register property).

In 1935, the student population at the Central school was 522, well over the designed capacity of the building of 350. The school board members initiated negotiations with the property owners of land near the high school building to see if land would be available to construct a new school in convenient proximity to the high school and the Central school. With commitments from the property owners, the school board proposed a bond for the first Durango school building to be designed and constructed specifically for a junior high school curriculum. The community passed a \$97,000 bond to fund the new school, to be supplemented by an \$86,198 grant from the Federal Government. All plans were reviewed and approved by the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works. With such a large contribution from the Federal Government, the new school was the largest public works funded project in Durango. Residents looked forward to the new building and to the construction jobs the project would create for the Depression-era stressed workforce. Much of the support for the building can be attributed to "cost-savings" campaigns by Superintendent Smiley and the school board. In letters published in the Durango newspapers in October just before the bond vote, the Superintendent stressed the planned cost cutting measures, including connecting the new building to the heating system at the nearby high school, and other cuts adding up to \$8000 in savings.

The School Board selected renowned Colorado Springs architect Charles Thomas to design the structure. The Durango community was familiar with Thomas from his design and his construction management of the Durango High School while in partnership with Thomas MacLaren.

Charles Thomas was born in Columbus, Ohio in 1876, but moved to Denver with his family when he was five years old. Thomas worked for and learned the architectural profession from Colorado practitioners Dick Phillips, Frank E. Kidder and Robert Roeschlaub. The young architect then worked under Thomas MacLaren including a year of study in Boston and New York in 1904, and most of 1909 in Europe studying classical architecture. Thomas served as the mayor of Colorado Springs, beginning

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in 1917, and was a long time member of the Colorado Board of Architectural Examiners (1914, 1926-1946) including 6 years as president. He lived until 1957. Thomas is well known throughout Colorado but is particularly associated with Colorado Springs where his individual projects included the Will Rogers Shrine (aka Shrine of the Sun) on Cheyenne Mountain, the Penrose Stadium, and the Holy Rosary Chapel in Cascade.

Thomas returned to Durango with a Classical Revival style building design for the new Junior High School that would have clearly complemented the adjacent high school building. Apparently the Durango School Board preferred an alternative proposed in the Mission Style, which was impressive, but did not include as much ornate decoration as the originally proposed design-- possibly a choice reflecting the lean times of the Depression. (Plans of the original Classical Revival and the Mission Revival alternative have survived, illustrating the changes made to the building's design.)

The Lions Club proposed naming the school for Superintendent Emory E. Smiley, a proposal that was heartily embraced by the community over the sincere protestations of their revered superintendent. The construction contract was awarded to Raymond C. Whitlock and a separate brickwork contract went to E.F. Scheide. Ground was broken in late 1935 and the school opened in January of 1937. A small one-story "manual arts" addition on the north side was funded in 1937 with \$11,000 from the School District and \$9,000 from a Federal grant. Construction on the addition was completed in 1939. A former industrial arts teacher, Don Johnson, recalled that although Smiley was "not mechanically inclined", the Superintendent took the manual training courses and taught them the first year while he searched for a teacher for the program.

The school served many community functions. The school district board meetings were held at Smiley, making a move to a much more public arena than the previous meeting location which had been the law office of the board member who served as the board secretary. Soon after the building's completion, the School Board regularly approved use of the theater for public activities such as practice sessions and concerts for the town's community band, and "moving picture shows" for kids, put on by two local priests.

The old multi-purpose Central school was again transformed, this time into an elementary school, and renamed The Central Elementary School in 1936. Sadly, the building burned down in the 1950s and was replaced by Mason Elementary School.

Smiley was Durango's sole junior high school from 1937 until 1961, when a second junior high school was constructed in town. With the conversion to a "middle school" curriculum and the construction of a new middle school in the 1990s, the School Board decided to dispose of the building. The property was sold by the School District to the current owners in 1997 and is now used as a community center for performing arts, arts-related activities, community workshops and offices for community organizations. The original classrooms, theater and gymnasium remain. Charter schools join other community groups in using the theater and gymnasium. The building continues to serve the community.

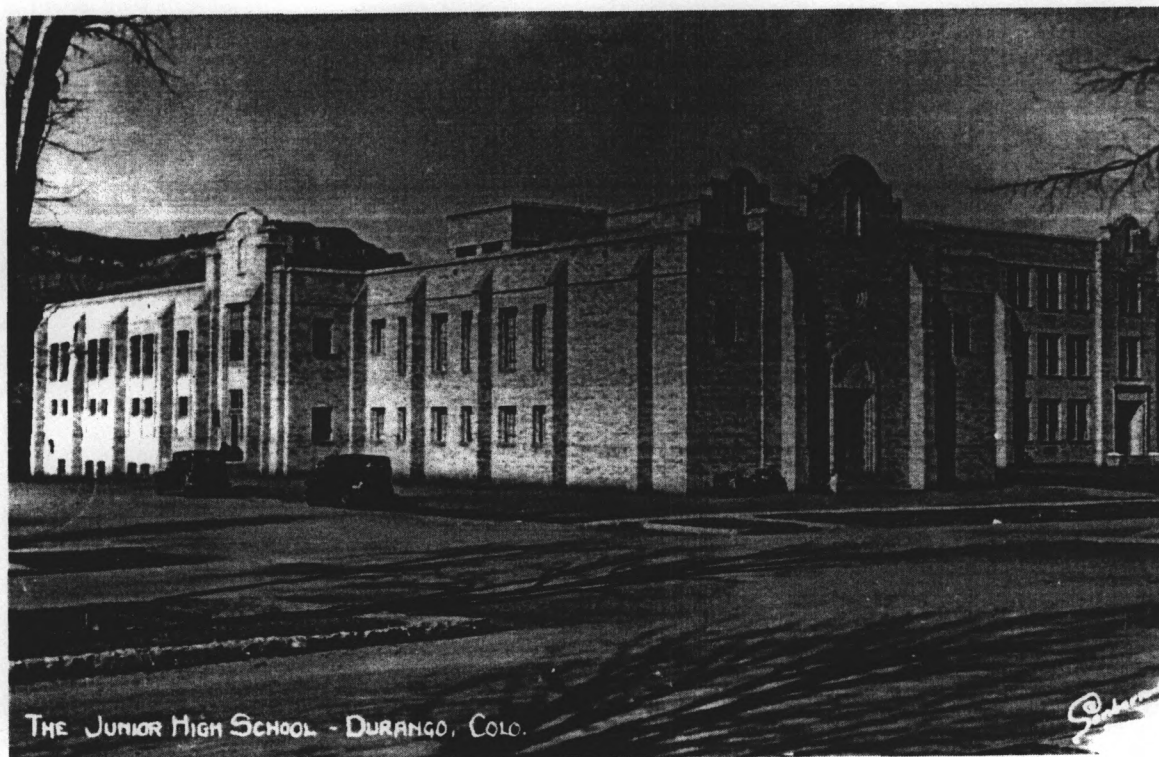
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Smiley Junior High School  
La Plata County, CO

This photograph was probably taken in 1937—soon after the building opened and before construction began on the north addition. Source: Animas Museum Collections.



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La Plata County, CO

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National Park Service

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La Plata County, CO

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Smiley Junior High School  
Name of Property

La Plata County, CO  
County/State

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** less than one

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1.     13     245000     4129350  
      Zone    Easting     Northing

2.            Zone    Easting     Northing

3.            Zone    Easting     Northing

4.            Zone    Easting     Northing

[ ] 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 Jill Seyfarth / Principal

organization Cultural Resource Planning                      date May 15, 2002

street & number P. O. Box 295                                      telephone 970-247-5893

city or town Durango                                      state Colorado                      zip code 81302

## 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 districts 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 SHPO or FPO.)

name Charles Shaw, John Shaw and Lisa Bodwalk

street & number 1309 East 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, #35                      telephone 970-385-1977

city or town Durango                                      state Colorado                      zip code 81301

**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 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 Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.



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Smiley Junior High School  
La Plata County, CO

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**GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The nomination boundary is shown as the dotted line on the accompanying scaled sketch map.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The boundary was drawn along property lines with the exclusion of more recent construction and alterations on the west and north sides.

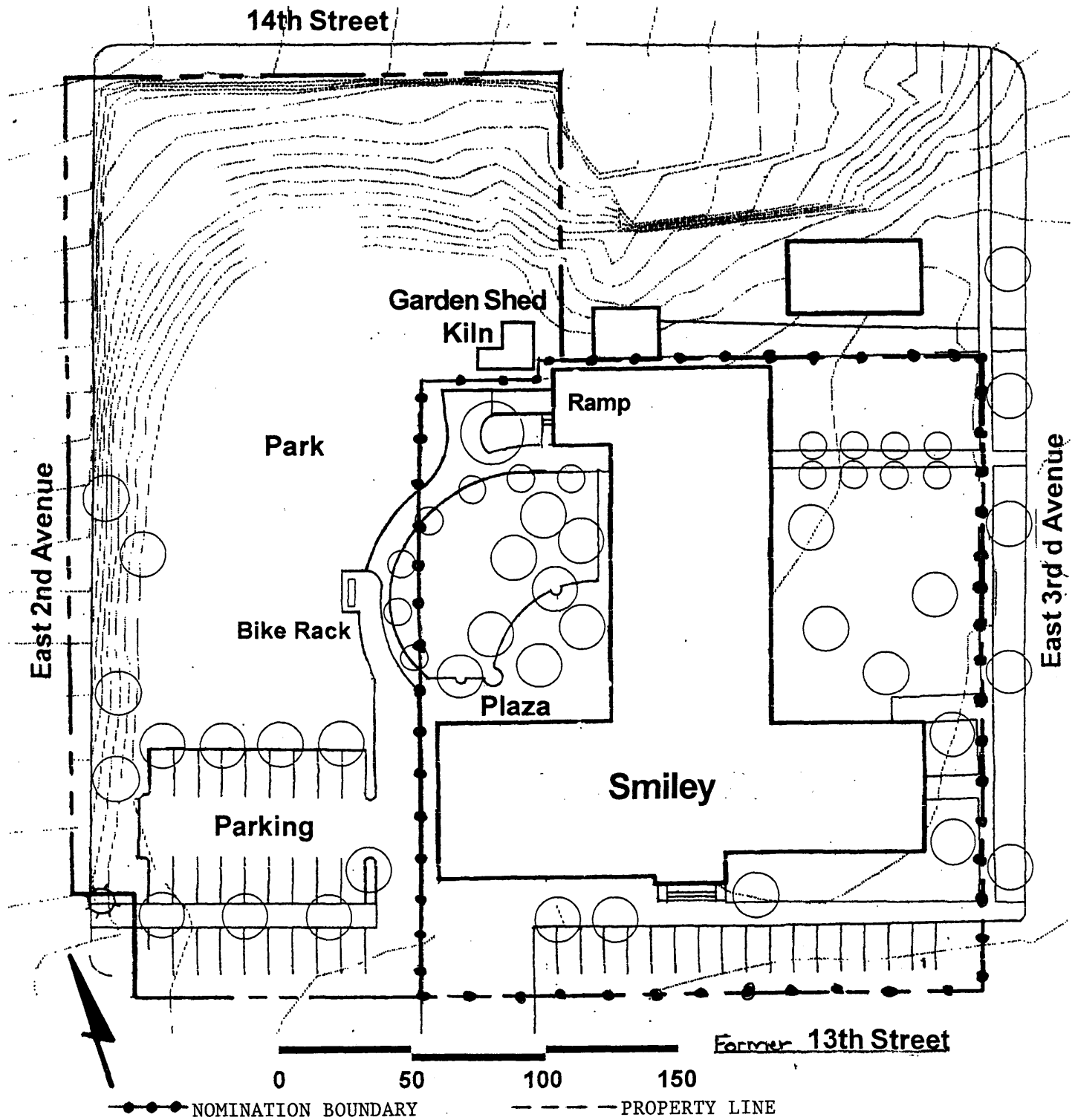
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SKETCH MAP



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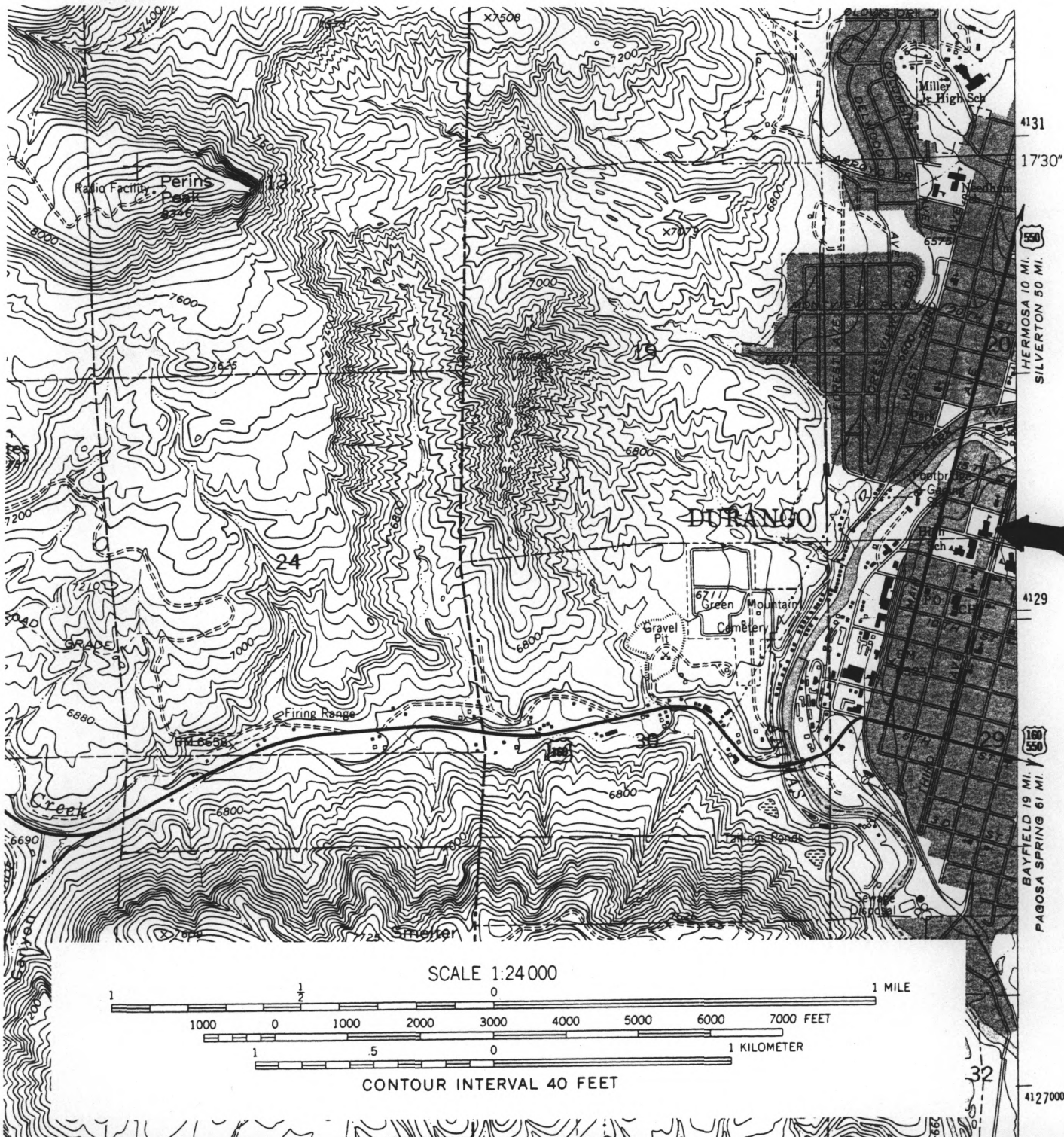
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Smiley Junior High School  
La Plata County, CO

USGS MAP

Durango West Quadrangle, Colorado  
7.5 Minute Series



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Smiley Junior High School  
La Plata County, CO

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**PHOTOGRAPH LOG**

The following information applies to all photographs:

Name of Property: Smiley Building  
City, county, state: Durango, La Plata, Colorado  
Photographer: Jill Seyfarth  
Date of Photograph: April 17, 2002  
Location of Negative: Jill Seyfarth, Cultural Resource Planning Consultant  
PO Box 295  
Durango, Colorado 81302

<u>Photograph #</u>	<u>Photograph Information</u>
1	East side of building along the East Third Avenue Historic District; looking west. The one story addition to the building is at the right end.
2	East side of building showing arcade; looking southwest
3	South side of the building along the former 13 <sup>th</sup> Street right of way; looking north-northwest
4	West (rear) side of the building; looking southeast.
5	The north side of the building. The flat-roofed one story addition is in the foreground. The car and foundation for a garage under reconstruction are on the adjacent property; looking southeast.
6	Interior of the theater as seen from the stage; looking west.
7	Interior of the theater as seen from the balcony; looking east
8	East side of building showing arcade; looking southwest