

79001213

HISTORIC NAME: St. Michael's School and Convent COUNTY: Brown  
 CURRENT NAME: Holy Trinity Convent CITY/TWP.: New Ulm  
 LEGAL DESC.: O.P. B100N L 12,13,14 ADDRESS: 500 State St. N.

CLASSIFICATION:	CONDITION:	SIGNIFICANCE:	THEME/S:
Building <u>X</u>	Excellent <u>X</u>	Local <u>X</u>	Primary <u>Architecture</u>
Structure _____	Good _____	State _____	Secondary <u>Religion</u>
Object _____	Fair _____	National _____	Others _____
District _____	Deteriorated _____		

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: Yes \_\_\_ No X Restricted \_\_\_ PRESENT USE: Convent  
 VISIBLE FROM THE ROAD: Yes X No \_\_\_  
 OCCUPIED: Yes X No \_\_\_

DATE CONSTRUCTED: 1872 and later additions ORIGINAL USE: Convent/School  
 ORIGINAL OWNER: Parish (see Description) ARCHITECT/BUILDER: Unknown - 1872 Section  
 Paul Klinghammer - 1898 Chapel Addition

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: Holy Trinity Parish ACREAGE: Less than one acre X  
 605 State St. N.  
 New Ulm 56267

LOCAL CONTACT/ORG.: UTM REFERENCE:  
 15 / 383060 / 4907920

FORM PREPARED BY: Dennis A. Gimmetad New Ulm Quad.  
 DATE: January 1979

## DESCRIPTION:

St. Michael's Convent and School (now Holy Trinity Convent) is located at Fifth North Street and State Street in New Ulm, adjacent to the associated Holy Trinity Church and School.

The Convent and School is composed of four portions of varying construction dates. The lower two stories of the central building were constructed in 1872 (the date is inscribed on the upper portion of the front facade) as a rectangular brick-and-stone Italianate structure, two unequal bays wide and nine bays long. The brick is red, with buff-colored stone used on the window hoods, for marking the bays of the structure, and at the cornice level. Round-arched double-hung windows make up the generally symmetrical fenestration on both streetside facades. The foundation is of light-colored stone.

A straight-sided mansard roof was added as a third story at an uncertain early date. Available evidence suggests that this addition may have been made after the building was damaged during an 1881 cyclone. Windows at the third story, located in individual, gabled dormers, repeat the round arches and the spacing of those on the lower levels.

A small Gothic chapel of cruciform design was added to the north of the structure in 1898. The chapel features stained glass-round arched windows, gothic wood decoration under the eaves of the sharply gabled roof, and a cut-out metal spire. The chapel was designed by Paul Klinghammer.

A one-story kitchen area was added to the rear at an uncertain date.

The building has been consistently well maintained.

## SIGNIFICANCE:

St. Michael's Convent and School was built in 1872, the same year the first railroad reached Brown County. Buildings designed for institutional purposes (and reflecting the influence of the high styles often reserved for such buildings) dating from this early period of settlement are rare in this section of the state.

The Convent and School was constructed under the direction of Father Alexander Berghold, who had established the first Catholic Church in New Ulm in 1869. Labor and materials were donated by the parishoners in the construction of the building. It housed a school taught by lay teachers until 1874, when the Sisters of Christian Charity took over operations. The school was moved to larger quarters in 1882, but the 1872 building has served as a residence for the order (and, occasionally as a boardinghouse for students) continuously through the present day. Berghold was also the author of several volumes dealing with the history of New Ulm and of the Indian War.

(see continuation sheet)

SIGNIFICANCE - continued

The polychromed building materials, corbelled cornice, and repetitive fenestration pattern of the round-arched windows of the Italianate 1872 section - as well as the sympathetic Second Empire mansard addition - make the building a handsome surviving example of early institutional architecture. The use of somewhat similar cornice ornament, round-arched windows, and red brick help to integrate the later Gothic chapel into the entire composition.

Most early urban institutional buildings (primarily schools but also such structures as hospitals or government buildings) which remain in New Ulm and Brown County date from around the turn of the century and later and reflect the styles of architecture popular at the times of construction. St. Michael's Convent and School is singularly important as a very well-preserved example of institutional architecture (here incorporating elements of the Italianate and Second Empire, and the Gothic in a later addition) utilized during the first decades of settlement.