

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries complete applicable sections)

STATE: New Mexico
COUNTY: Taos
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Ernest L. Blumenschein House

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Ernest L. Blumenschein House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Ledoux Street (unnumbered)

CITY OR TOWN:
Taos

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
1st

STATE:
New Mexico

CODE:
35

COUNTY:
Taos

CODE:
55

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Kit Carson Memorial Foundation, Incorporated

STREET AND NUMBER:
Box B

CITY OR TOWN:
Taos

STATE:
New Mexico

CODE:
35

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Taos County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:
U.S. Highway 64

CITY OR TOWN:
Taos

STATE:
New Mexico

CODE:
35

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
None

DATE OF SURVEY:
 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:

CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Ernest L. Blumenschein House was acquired by the artist in 1919 and was used as his home and studio. Even before 1919 the house had been owned by an artist, Herbert Dunton and had been a gathering point for Taos artists. The 11-room, single-story adobe residence is reputed to have been built prior to 1823, and the house reflects the Spanish Colonial style of that era, to a degree. The present protective cement-stucco was added in more recent times. Since the property was acquired by the Kit Carson Memorial Foundation, it has been divided into four apartments. The house is enclosed by mud walls, and there is a gateway into an interior courtyard, on Ledoux Street.

Boundaries:

The landmark is bounded by the lot lines of Tract 276 on Map 18, Survey No. 2, New Mexico State Survey, 1941. This lot is roughly T-shaped, and is bounded on the north by Ledoux Street, for approximately 125' (the base of the T), and on the south by Ojitos Road for approximately 190' (the cap of the T), and runs approximately 250' from Ledoux Street to Ojitos Road. These boundaries enclose the house on its lot.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1898, 1919**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Ernest L. Blumenschein was a co-founder, in 1898, of the Taos Art Colony, which became the most important art center west of the Mississippi River.

The modern art movement in the Southwest was inspired by the "Famous Seven" Taos artists--of whom Blumenschein and Bert G. Phillips were the leaders--who in 1914 formalized their artistic and commercial association in the Taos Society of Artists. Exhibitions by these men, most of whom became National Academicians, spread the artistic attractions of the Southwest across the United States and into Europe. Soon Taos had become the most important art center west of the Mississippi, and the inspiration for other colonies in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Tucson, Arizona.

Blumenschein's home, on Ledoux Street in Taos, is an 11-room adobe dating from Spanish times. Even before the Blumenschein family acquired it in 1919, it had been owned by painter Herbert Dunton and had been a gathering point for Taos artists. Now owned by the Kit Carson Memorial Foundation, the house is used as an apartment building.

History

Six of the first artists to come to Taos founded the Taos Society of artists in 1912. The purpose of the Society was to enable its members to exhibit their paintings as a group in the various galleries throughout the United States. The organizational meeting was held in the home of Dr. Thomas P. Martin, the present location of the Taos Inn. The six charter members, Bert Phillips, Ernest Blumenschein, Oscar E. Berninghaus, Herbert Dunton, Irving Couse, and Joseph Sharp, laid the foundation for the Society and elected Irving Couse as its first president. Other members who later joined the Taos Society of Artists were: Walter Ufer and Victor Higgins, who joined in 1915; E. Martin Hennings in 1921; Catherine Critcher in 1923; and Kenneth Adams in 1926.

The Taos Society of Artists proved to be a success from the very beginning. By the time it was dissolved in 1927, several members had acquired considerable national recognition and each member had become financially successful.

The effect that the Taos Society of Artists had on Taos itself was far-reaching. The enthusiasm and the success of its members became instrumental in bringing other artists to Taos and was a major factor in the establishment of a permanent art colony here. Many tourists began to include Taos

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CONTINUATION SHEET Blumenschein ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

on their itineraries just to see for themselves the country that they had seen so vividly portrayed in art shows across the nation.

New Mexico was still a Territory in 1883 when Joseph H. Sharp, the first of the group, visited Santa Fe. After a trip in 1893 to Taos, his enthusiasm grew for the area and for the new kind of subject matter he found waiting to be painted. In Paris in 1895, he met Bert Phillips and Ernest Blumenschein, young American painters who were studying there. He told them about northern New Mexico and was so enthusiastic in his description that the two young artists decided to see the area at first hand when opportunity allowed. While in Denver in the fall of 1898, they decided to go on a sketching trip to Mexico, planning to stop for a look at Taos on their way South.

The story of these two artists' first trip to Taos is now a legend. They bought a fragile buggy and two horses in Denver and proceeded south. The two men were new to the ways of the trail, and soon after their start, one of their horses was accidently strangled. Then when traveling over the rough road near Questa, New Mexico, a wheel on the buggy was broken. They tossed their last coin to determine who should ride to Taos, the nearest settlement having a blacksmith, to have the wheel repaired, and Blumey, as he was called, won the toss and the job. The golden autumn landscape was beautiful, and by the time he had returned with the repaired wheel he had fallen under the spell of the area and had decided to travel no further. Phillips, after a look at Taos himself, stayed to spend the rest of his life in Taos.

Taos, at the turn of the century, had its physical drawbacks. Roads into Taos were primitive. First communications were limited to a single telephone line to Taos Junction, 25 miles to the West. There was no electricity nor running water. The winters were hard and cold; deep snow was followed by deep mud and leaky roofs were a way of life. There was a new language to learn - Spanish. But the physical hardships did not discourage these artists, who got down to work and produced painting after painting. They were thrilled by the new landscapes and by the Indians available to them as models - a refreshing change after the hackneyed subject matter they had been taught and offered in France and in the Eastern United States. The environment of Taos has a definite effect on the creative effort of those who experience it. There is something about Taos that is creatively stimulating in a way that defies definition, though many persons have tried. D.H. Lawrence called it "the peculiar 'otherness' of Taos," which perhaps comes as close anything to describe this effect. This is another factor which has brought and kept artists in Taos through the years. The members of the Taos Society of Artists felt it and were influenced by it, and because of it their paintings found their way to national exhibitions. They began to win recognition and as a result other artists began to flock to Taos. The subject matter - the Indians and the natural beauty of the landscape - struck a responsive chord with the public which was deeply involved at that time with the books of Fenimore Cooper, the Fremont Expedition, the Gold

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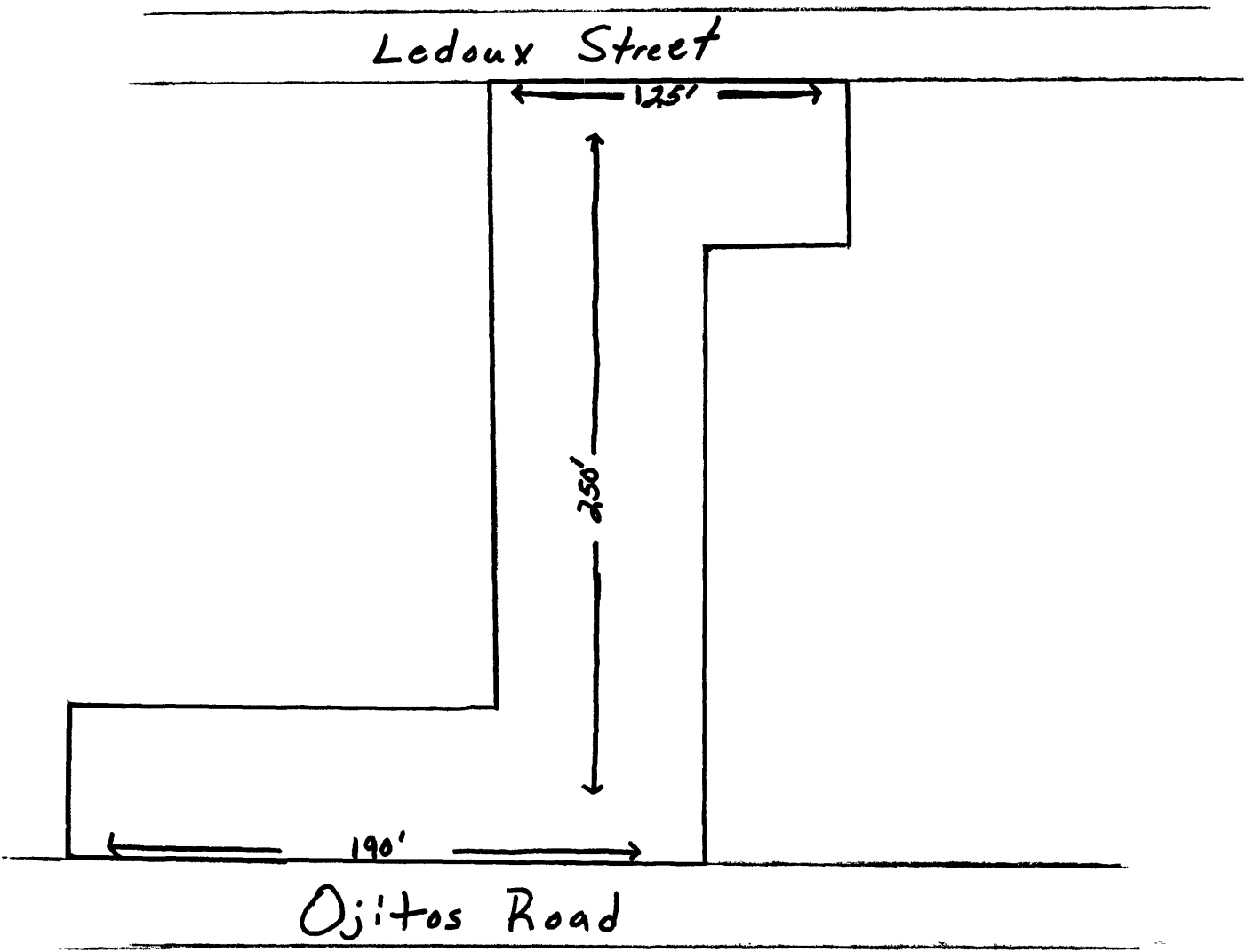
CONTINUATION SHEET Blumenschein

ITEM NUMBER 8

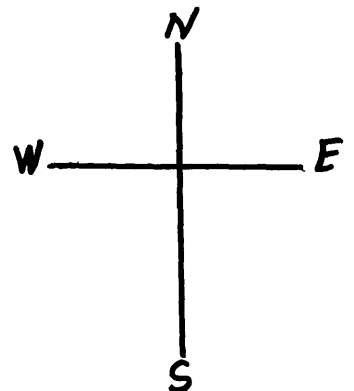
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Rush, and a fascination for legendary characters as Kit Carson, Charles Bents, Padre Antonio Jose Martinez, and others.

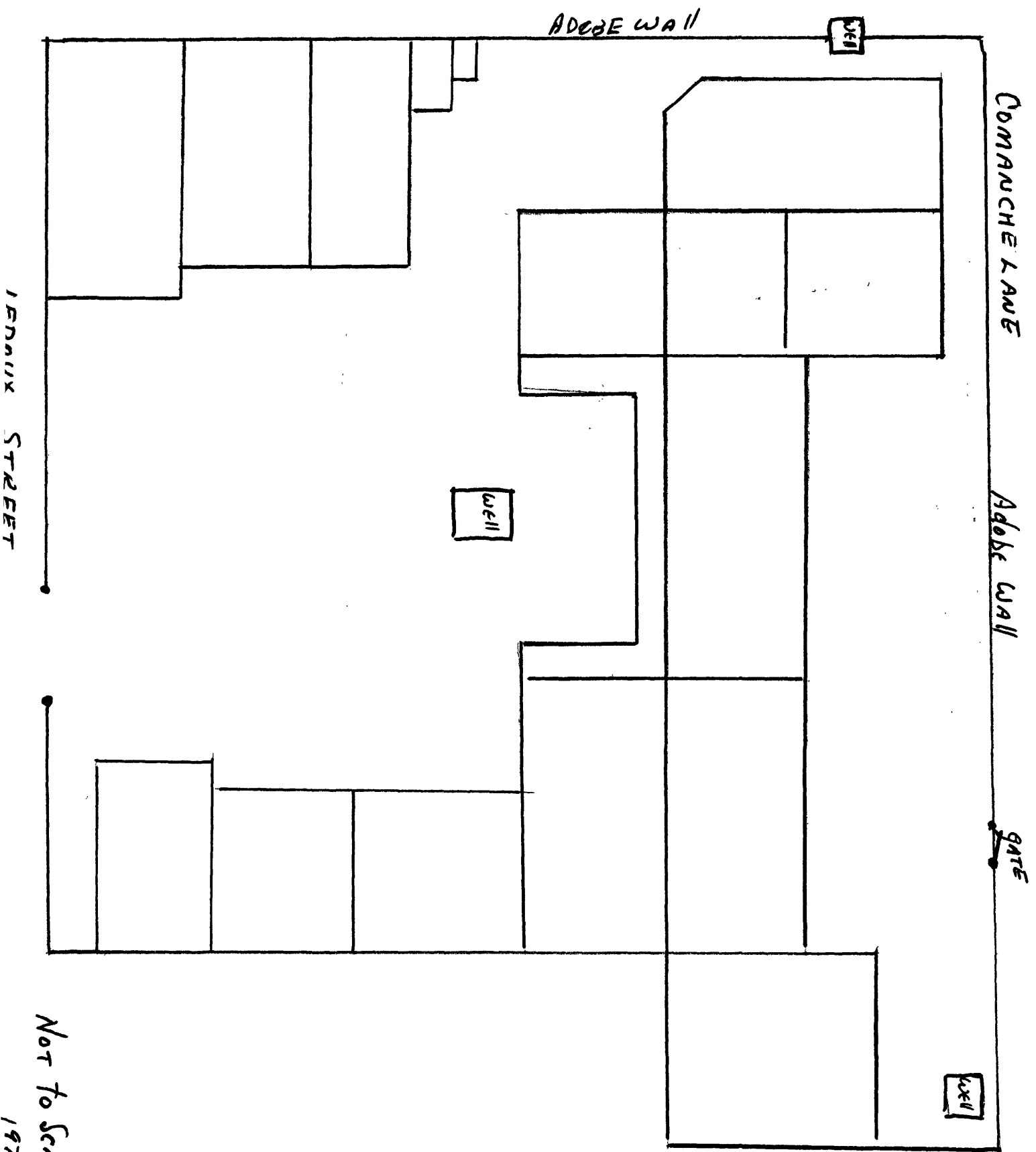
That was the beginning and Taos today boasts of many art galleries and scores of resident artists, writers, musicians, and sculptors. Nine of the eleven members of the Taos Society of Artists lived out their lives in Taos. Today, Kenneth Adams is the surviving member of the Taos Society of Artists and resides in Albuquerque.



Ernest L. Blumenschein House



ERNEST BLUMENSCHNEIN HOME - TAOS, N.M.



Not to Scale
1975