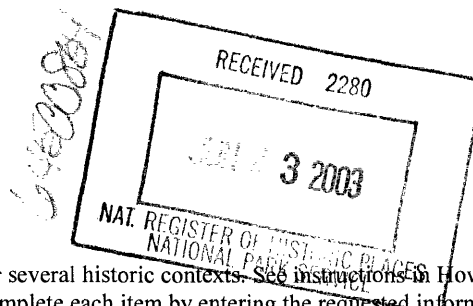


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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
MULTIPLE PROPERTY DOCUMENTATION FORM



This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form (National Register Bulletin 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

☒ New Submission ☐ Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

NEW MEXICO FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S CLUB BUILDINGS IN NEW MEXICO

B. Associated Historic Contexts

The Development of the New Mexico Federation of Women's Clubs, 1911-1941

C. Form Prepared by

Name/title: David Kammer, Ph.D.

Organization: Consulting historian

Date: May 2003

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City or town: Albuquerque State: NM

Zip code: 87108

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation. (\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*Kathleen Slide SHPO*  
Signature and title of certifying official

*6/19/03*  
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

*Edson H. Beall*  
Signature of the Keeper

*Aug 4 2003*  
Date of Action

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Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and the title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheets in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

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F. Associated Property Types	13
G. Geographical Data	15
H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods	16
I. Major Bibliographical References	17

**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.).

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**The Development of the New Mexico Federation of Women's Clubs, 1911-1941**

The origins of the women's club movement and the development of volunteerism among women is a distinctly American social phenomenon dating to the decades following the Civil War. Its rise is associated with broader 19<sup>th</sup> century social movements in which women became involved, including abolitionism, temperance, suffrage and efforts to regulate the social ills such as abusive child labor and unsanitary tenement living conditions fostered, in part, by the industrial revolution. An early example of women seeking to redefine themselves outside of the home, the club movement involved both a quest for self-improvement and education and, increasingly, efforts to find ways to improve the communities in which they lived. From its formal beginnings in 1890, when the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC) was organized, by 1912 the federation included clubs in all 48 states and over a half million members. Beginning in 1905, proponents of the federation in New Mexico had begun to investigate the possibility of uniting many of the independent women's clubs located in communities in the territory under the auspices of the GFWC. In 1911, they realized this goal with the creation of the New Mexico Federation of Women's Clubs. As the state federation grew over the next four decades to include as many as 59 clubs, the role that these clubs played in the new state's cities and smaller towns expanded. It included establishing many town libraries, civic improvements, landscape enhancements, cultural activities, and, increasingly, programs aimed at promoting the welfare of children and families. As their role within communities expanded, many local clubs sought to establish clubhouses that would also serve the general community. Club members financed some of these building projects; others were funded as Works Progress Administration (WPA) projects with local governments acting as the sponsoring authority. The clubhouses and community halls dating to that period recall the important role the federation clubs played in creating volunteer opportunities for women to serve their communities and the contributions the clubs made to the communities as well.

**The National Women's Club Movement as a Framework for Its Development in New Mexico**

Although the GFWC dates to 1890 when delegates from 61 independent women's clubs met in New York and appointed a committee to draft a constitution that was adopted a year later, the roots of the organization extend to 1868. That year the all-male New York Press Club, seeking to honor Charles Dickens, hosted a banquet to which women were denied admission. Among those seeking admission was Jane Cunningham Croly, a noted New York City newspaperwoman who wrote under the pen name Jenny June. Dissatisfied with a compromise the club offered in which a few women might attend the banquet but remain secluded behind a curtain, Croly determined to organize a club for women only. Naming it Sorosis, a Greek word denoting "an aggregation; a sweet flower of many fruits," Croly quickly found New York women responsive to the opportunity to participate in monthly gatherings that offered luncheons and discussions of timely topics. Within a year the club listed over eighty members including artists, authors, editors, poets, teachers, physicians and philanthropists (Houde 1989:7). Attending luncheons at the fashionable Delmonico's, members heard lectures and discussed social issues ranging from state support for expectant mothers to freedom

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of dress. Speaking to the club as its incoming president in 1875, Croly sought not only to dispel male prejudices against women's organizing but to convey the intellectual curiosity that women of the time were first beginning to articulate.

We thought that closer acquaintance would prove...that a woman's club is nothing monstrous or unnatural... We do not paint pictures, perhaps, but we want to know all about those who do, and, if it is a woman, what kind of pictures she paints. As a club we do not get up dramatic entertainments, but we want to know how the drama affects the interest and welfare of women, socially, mentally, morally, physically, and pecuniarily, and whether we want to train our daughters in that direction for a livelihood (in Houde 1989:8).

In the two decades following Croly's founding of Sorosis, women's clubs sprang up across the country so that by the late 1880s hundreds of clubs comprised of several thousand members thrived across the nation. Independent of one another, but sharing the common goals of finding new ways for women to work and learn together, the clubs' diverse names offer clues as to their members' collective aspirations. Among them were the New Century Club of Wilmington, Delaware; the Schuylkill Students Shakespeare of Pennsylvania; the Ladies Library Association of Kalamazoo, Michigan; the History Club of Sioux Falls, Iowa; and the Chicago Woman's Club, Illinois. While some of the clubs' names convey their members' interest in literature and history and others denote the essential role that women played in the creation of public library systems throughout the nation, these organizations also permitted the means for women to nurture their self-worth beyond their traditional roles within the home. Previously working within the narrow environment of raising children and housekeeping, women had found few outlets beyond working in religious-based groups. Even the abolition movement prior to the Civil War and other morality-based reform efforts such as the temperance movement and the anti-prostitution crusade had offered relatively few women a forum in which to find new ways of defining and expressing themselves beyond the confines of the home.

Furnishing a more directly political arena for activity outside the home was the decades-long quest for suffrage. Dating to the first women's suffrage convention held at Seneca Falls, New York in 1848, the movement began to gain momentum in the decades following the Civil War. In fact, the two leading suffrage organizations, the National Woman Suffrage Association and American Woman Suffrage Association were both founded in 1869, the same year in which Croly founded Sorosis. That same year women first gained suffrage in the Territory of Wyoming, a fact that The Queen Anne's Club of Cheyenne, Wyoming later proudly noted. While some early clubwomen shied away from the then controversial issue and the GFWC officially endorsed suffrage only in 1914, women's clubs frequently offered a platform for travelling suffragettes to make their case. By 1920, as the efforts of Susan B. Anthony and other suffrage leaders were about to be realized with the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, Carrie Chapman Catt, a GWFC member, organized the League of Women Voters.

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It was within these areas of social reform, soon broadened to become the basis for much of the social legislation that occurred during the Progressive Era, dating from 1890 to 1920, that women's clubs found their greatest opportunities for service and growth. In doing so, many clubs struck a balance between the quest for self-growth that had initially brought women together and a growing sense that volunteerism brought with it an accompanying opportunity to better the greater community in which its members lived. The tone for this shift was struck at the GFWC meeting in 1904 when the federation's president observed that clubs were abandoning the study of Dante's *Inferno* and beginning to "proceed in earnest to contemplate our own social order" (Woloch 1984:290). In Chicago, for instance, Jane Addams, a member of the Chicago Woman's Club, founded Hull House in 1889, creating the opportunity for clubwomen to work with the poor. The experiences of some club members such as Dr. Julia Clifford Lathrop, who lived and worked at Hull House, resulted in an expanded vision of how women might apply their homemaking skills to broader social problems.

As these women began to move beyond the traditional household into the broader community, their efforts assumed what historian Daniel Scott Smith terms a "domestic feminism" (in Schackel 1992:6). Using their "supposedly 'natural' traits of ladyhood—moral superiority, compassion, and sensitivity," they used their domestic credentials locally as they undertook municipal park projects, founded libraries and became involved in childcare programs. As the Progressive movement broadened its scope, the GFWC and other women's groups increasingly petitioned for more government involvement in social reform. The Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906, the creation of the Children's Bureau in the Labor Department in 1912 with Lathrop as its first head, and the passage of the Smith-Towner Act of 1921, the first federally-funded program to reduce infant and maternal mortality rates, received strong support from the federation. In undertaking local community improvement projects and lobbying for reform legislation at the state and national levels, the GFWC found a way to exercise the "municipal housekeeping" that its members were able to contribute to the Progressive Era (Woloch 1984:138; Smith in Cott 2000:386).

By 1889, the women's club movement had gained momentum to the degree that leaders of Sorosis as well as other clubs began to envision that women might accomplish more through the formation of a unified organization. Support for a federation came from nationally prominent women such as Julia Ward Howe, author of the "Battle Hymn of the Republic" and founder of the American Woman Suffrage Association; Frances E. Willard, president of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union; and First Lady Mrs. Benjamin F. Harrison. Thus, in March 1889 some 100 women representing 61 independent women's club in 19 states met at Madison Square Garden to begin the process of creating a federation of women's clubs. Representing not simply upper class women, but a broad cross-section of middle class American women, the convention set about writing its constitution, adopted at its next meeting in 1890. In the spirit of national reconciliation that sought to eliminate sectional feelings remaining from the Civil War, the convention adopted a phrase used by Sorosis club president, Ella Dietz Clymer, "Unity in Diversity" as the GFWC's motto.

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Over the next five decades, the GFWC grew at a phenomenal rate so that by the eve of World War II it included some 15,000 clubs with over two million members. In 1922 the club purchased the former home of General Nelson A. Miles at 1734 N Street, Northwest, in Washington D.C., now listed as a National Historic site for its long association with the GFWC. So successful was the movement that in 1927 the noted writer and educational theorist, Dorothy Canfield Fisher, included an assessment of the organization in her book *Why Stop Learning?* (Fisher 1927:79-115). Advocating more adult educational opportunities, popularly termed life-long learning, Fisher termed the women's club movement a "new folk way which has sprung up out of the American soil...a spontaneous movement, directed towards mental self-improvement, not connected with the money-making instinct." Proclaiming it as distinctly American as "the sugar maple and the Ford car," she saw it as indicative of the "idea of the potential value to society of every individual if properly trained and developed." Moreover, Fisher saw a clear connection between self-education and the clubs' growing ability to contribute to the larger community through music and art programs in public schools, voter education, health programs, and the then popular Americanization programs for recent immigrants.

Of particular interest to Fisher was a phrase that Julia Ward Howe had once used to describe the early clubhouses that some federation clubs constructed. Stating that "the club is a larger home," Ward meant that the buildings offered the "immunities and defenses" of the home, affording women both privacy and dignity (Fisher 1927:112). Basing her descriptions of the "Club Homes" on the many that she had visited, Fisher saw them as "modern and handsome," with many offering "well-outfitted small stages for the concerts and plays which are one result of their classes in music-study and the drama." She also noted their well-equipped kitchens and, in the case of larger facilities, classrooms. Reemphasizing the democratic nature of the GFWC, Fisher concluded that these classrooms would serve not only club members and their daughters but "the daughters and granddaughters of the woman who was Mother's hired girl."

### **The Development of the New Mexico Federation of Women's Clubs**

Despite its isolation and prolonged territorial status, New Mexico became more closely tied to the broader American culture following the completion of the Santa Fe and Southern Pacific transcontinental railroad lines through the territory in 1883. These closer ties manifested themselves in a variety of ways. Large-scale extractive industries emerged, taking advantage of nearby railroad shipping points. Communities arranged on grid plans and streets lined with commercial and residential buildings reflected popular imported design styles. These new ties were also apparent with the development of educational and social institutions. Among the latter was the emergence of several women's clubs, first appearing in the 1890s. The first known club, the Las Cruces Woman's Improvement Association formed in 1890, organized in order to prepare an exhibit for the much-anticipated Woman's Building designed by Sophia Hayden at the upcoming World's Colombian Exposition held in Chicago in 1893. Although the club's exhibit never materialized, its members undertook numerous projects in Las Cruces, establishing a park (now Pioneer Park) with a gazebo for concerts,

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constructing a clubhouse that also served as the community's first library, and providing the town with its first hearse.

In 1892, women also banded together in Santa Fe, forming the Santa Fe Benevolent Association. Renamed the Woman's Board of Trade and Library Association shortly thereafter, the group in 1895 carried out a landscape project on the plaza, removing patches of alfalfa, picket fences and turnstiles, and adding a masonry coping lining the plaza's walkways. Pursuing its long-term goal of providing Santa Fe with a free public library, in 1896 the club opened a library and reading room in one of the abandoned barracks of the former Fort Marcy Reservation. In 1908, it opened a new city library (now the Museum of New Mexico's History Library) on land conveyed to the club by the Territorial Legislature in 1903. Similar to many of the other early women's clubs in New Mexico, in 1899 the Woman's Board of Trade also assumed responsibility for the maintenance of the city's Fairview Cemetery, a role that it continued until 1978.

Prior to statehood, similar clubs appeared in several other territorial communities including The Mothers' Club in Silver City, The Ladies' Earnest Working Club in Tularosa, The Research Circle in Carlsbad, The Women's Study and Civic Club in Aztec, the Tucumcari Bay View Reading Club and the Woman's Club of Albuquerque. Similar to the national pattern in which groups of women formed clubs, in part motivated by accounts of women elsewhere taking this initiative and a growing sense of a need for self-growth beyond the confines of the home, these first clubs developed independently of each other. Historical accounts of individual clubs note that some affiliated with the GFWC by the turn of the century (NMFWC 1990: 12-49). In 1905 the GFWC appointed a committee within the territory to explore the possibility of creating a federation within New Mexico.

Working with the GFWC and learning of the role that state federations played in organizing committees and statewide activities within each of the states, the committee, with Mrs. George W. Frengers of Las Cruces as secretary, began plans to organize the New Mexico Federation of Women's Club (NMFWC). In March 1911, just one month after President Taft had recommended that Congress approve statehood for New Mexico, Mrs. Eva Perry Moore, GFWC president, traveled to Las Cruces to convene the session that established the NMFWC. With 17 clubs joining the federation, Mrs. S.P. Johnson of Roswell became the first president. Within the next two years, the federation had grown to include 30 clubs and adopted the yucca as its state flower, the rising sun as its emblem, and the phrase "And the Desert Shall Bloom as a Rose" as its motto. Consistent with a theme raised nationally by the GFWC during its 1921 convention, the NMFWC endorsed the International Peace Movement and a proposal to place a Statue of Peace at the entrance to the Panama Canal.

Over the next four decades, the NMFWC would expand to include as many as 59 clubs with over 4,300 members. By 1920, its expansion had resulted in the division of the state into three districts. The reports prepared by these districts as well as the annual state reports provide a broad perspective on the structure, activities and accomplishments of the NMFWC and its member clubs. The state organization offered a

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pyramid-like structure with statewide, district, and local officers. The state officers provided the liaison between the national federation and the districts and local clubs. The capsule summaries of each state president's two-year term generally reflect the way in which the NMFWC supported the causes promoted by the national federation (NMFWC 1991: 2-11). The post-World War I years, for instance, reflect the federation's Americanization campaign, its support of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> amendments, and its campaign to include sex hygiene education in public school curriculum. During the early 1920s, the state federation opposed the ill-conceived Bursum Bill that would have opened Indian lands in New Mexico to purchase by non-Indians. Later in the decade, as GFWC president, Mary King Sherman, known as the National Park Lady played an active role in the creation of six national parks, the NMFWC actively promoted the designation of Carlsbad Caverns as a national park, a goal it realized in 1930 (Houde 1989:176-178). This advocacy of parks, as well as support for reforestation and wildlife preservation projects, would continue, with the Carrizozo Woman's Club providing the initiative for the creation of the Valley of the Fires State Park in 1954.

As the Great Depression spread, with the numbers of unemployed overwhelming the traditional sources of charity relief, the NMFWC increasingly lobbied the state legislature to create and adequately fund the necessary public agencies and institutions to protect and care for children as well as the sick and handicapped. While many states had already begun to create such agencies and to fund them adequately so that they contributed to solving the social problems they had been created to address, New Mexico lagged behind. Many institutions, such as the Library and Extension Service, the Home for Mental Defectives, the Girls' Welfare Home and the Boys' Industrial School lacked adequate funding. The Bureau of Child Welfare, for instance, was able to function during the 1920s only because of grants from the Rockefeller Foundation (Schackel 1992:19; Kammer 1994:6-12). Increasingly becoming a public advocate for children, the federation also lobbied for the enactment of child labor laws in New Mexico and the creation of a children's orthopedic hospital to be located in Hot Springs (now Truth or Consequences). Working with NMFWC member Carrie Tingley, wife of Governor Clyde Tingley (1935-1938), the federation saw the hospital completed as a WPA project in 1937 and continued to support projects at the hospital throughout its three-decade tenure at its original site.

Also essential to the organization of the state federation were its eight committees, or departments. Functioning at both the state and local levels (although not all eight departments were always active in each club), they included the Education, Music and Art, Legislation, Literature, Library and Reciprocity, Civics, Public Health, and Household Economics Departments and the Standing Committee on History. While clubwomen continued to conduct social activities, these committees provided a focus for the ideas and programs which members contributed to their communities. Education Committees, for example, presented programs for club members on the Peace Movement, a broadly supported initiative during the 1920s that contributed to the signing of the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928, renouncing the use of force in international relations (Evans 1989:191). On the local level, they established school libraries, funded school travel, and undertook beautification of school grounds. Much of the landscaping that surrounds the WPA structures on the Fort Sumner school campus, for instance, is the result of the projects carried out by the Fort Sumner Woman's Club.



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School libraries in Alamogordo received books from the Alamogordo Women's Club and the Carrizozo boy's basketball team's road trips received support from the Carrizozo Women's Club. As the GFWC did throughout the country, many of the local clubs were instrumental in the creation of the first Parent Teacher Associations.

Often related to the efforts of the Education Committee were those undertaken by the Standing Committee on History. As it sought to define its role during the first decade of the state federation, the committee quickly developed programs to study the state's archaeological past, as well as the Spanish colonial, Mexican and Territorial eras. Later, the committee advocated the erection of roadside historical markers, a campaign that came to fruition when Governor Tingley created the Bureau of Tourism within the State Highway Department in 1935 and rustic, log-framed signs began to appear along roadsides two years later. Less successful was the state federation's support of a proposal advanced by the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs to locate a permanent Culture Center of the Southwest in Santa Fe in 1926. Having considered and rejected Boulder, Colorado and Cloudcroft, New Mexico as possible sites, the Texas federation, with considerable encouragement from the Santa Fe Chamber of Commerce, selected Santa Fe. Envisioning a permanent cultural center similar to the one in Chautauqua, New York that had spawned the popular traveling educational and lecture programs of the same name, the federation planned a permanent site for summer programs in Santa Fe. The proposal, however, was dropped when many of the small city's newly arrived population, including Mary Austin, Ashley Pond and Carlos Viera, joined with the longtime Hispanic population, expressing concern that such a program would strip the self-proclaimed "City Different" of its quaint charm (Culture Colony file 1926:np).

Two other committees directing federation members' volunteer energy into significant contributions to local communities were the Public Health and Civics Departments. While public health projects often entailed community-wide cleanup programs, cemetery maintenance, fly eradication campaigns (flies were a scourge during the horse and buggy era), and the installation of public drinking fountains and lighting systems in public places, many projects involved the promotion of child welfare. So supportive were the NMFWC child welfare programs to the state's poorly-financed and understaffed Child Welfare Bureau that the bureau's director, Margaret Reeves, remarked in her address to the federation convention in 1929 that the programs of the state bureau and the federation "are largely identical" (NMFWC 1929-30:54). Also a federation member, Reeves explained that in each community having a federation club, members worked with the bureau identifying needy families and children, making home visitations, and providing food and clothing. Citing club efforts in Alamogordo and Silver City, Reeves noted how club members distributed financial aid to impoverished families and how, in Carlsbad and Santa Fe, clubs underwrote a milk and lunch program for needy children in the public schools. In Aztec club members conducted a study group for expectant mothers. These examples, a public expansion of the same nurturing activities women had traditionally carried out in their homes, underscore how the volunteerism of club members' permitted them to broaden their roles from homemakers to "municipal housekeepers."

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Initially lacking meeting houses, the early clubs often met in members' home or relied on the generosity of churches, fraternal orders, public schools or even armories for space in which to hold their meetings. In the larger cities, such as Albuquerque and Santa Fe, where larger club sizes and the affluence of some members permitted the financing of buildings, clubhouses, or meeting rooms sometimes within club-sponsored public libraries, appeared. The Santa Fe Public Library (1908), for instance, also contained the clubrooms of the Woman's Board of Trade and Library Association. The Roswell Woman's Club, which had established the community's first library in 1897, campaigned vigorously over the next decade for public funding so that Roswell might qualify for a Carnegie Library. When it achieved its goal in 1906, the club was also granted a meeting room that it used for the next quarter century. In contrast, in Silver City, the club met variously in the Elk's hall, a commercial building and the armory before acquiring land on which to construct its clubhouse completed in 1936. Similarly, after its formation in 1916, the Fort Sumner Woman's Club met in a downtown room referred to as the Guild Hall, the only meeting space in the community. When the building was rented to the American Legion following its formation after World War I and the upkeep of the building declined, clubwomen retreated to their homes for club meetings all the while raising funds for a future clubhouse.

The widespread absence of public meeting facilities for women in general was an issue often addressed by the Civic Departments of many of the individual clubs. While these departments focused on a panoply of issues ranging from making education available at the state penitentiary to improved sewage treatment and garbage disposal, a constant concern during the first decades of the NMFWC was the need for adequate public meeting spaces. Initially related to the concerns club members had for rural families and the glaring deficiencies evident in the more than 900 largely rural school districts scattered across New Mexico, the need for sufficiently large public spaces became a theme in many Civic Department reports. At the rural level, members advocated "throwing open of the doors of all public school buildings for the use of the community, in social, political and literary meetings, in fact making the school house a public club room" (NMFWC 1913:28). Urging the staging of Rural School Fairs as a means for bringing rural communities together, they hoped that these public events would lead to more "instruction in agriculture" for men and boys and to more opportunities for rural women to be "brought into active club work."

These same concerns assumed an even greater dimension within the small towns, especially county seats, scattered across New Mexico. Noting that when rural women came to town to shop and conduct their affairs there were no public places for them to gather, rest and socialize, Civic Departments began advocating the creation of "Social Centers" or community halls. Acting as a "Woman's Exchange," these sites would permit rural women to bring "their produce and sell it at the rest room." (NMFWC 1916:24). During the 1920s, the idea of having such a facility, or "rest room" as it was then termed, that would serve women and the various organizations to which they belonged began to take hold. To be sure, individual clubs continued to aspire for buildings that would serve the particular needs of the federation, but many also viewed such a building as having a dual purpose and serving the broader needs of all women as well as the community at large.

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The means for some clubs to fulfill this goal appeared with the advent of the WPA funded under the Federal Emergency Relief Act (FERA) as a part of President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. While a variety of public works programs emerged under the umbrella of the New Deal, the WPA with its specific goal of providing work relief for the locally unemployed exerted the greatest impact on small communities in New Mexico (Kammer 1994:48-67). Not only did it create local jobs, it resulted in much-needed public works that contributed to the quality of life in these communities. Administered at the state level and dependent upon local sponsoring authorities who often supplied the land and building materials as their share of the project's cost while the federal government supplied the funds to pay workers, the WPA projects carried out throughout New Mexico greatly transformed the built public environment. Schools, municipal buildings, parks, courthouses, airports, and hospitals appeared throughout the state as the result of WPA funding. So, too, did, several public buildings connected with the efforts of the NMFWC. In Alamogordo, Carrizozo, and Fort Sumner, clubhouses funded as WPA projects and designed to serve the communities at large appeared. In Hot Springs, the WPA constructed a community building at the urging of the Hot Springs Woman's Club; and nearby, WPA crews completed the Carrie Tingley Children's Hospital, for which the NMFWC had lobbied.

That these local federation clubs were viewed as partners with their local municipal or county governments and then operated the clubhouses also as halls for community events suggests the degree to which the NMFWC was viewed as a volunteer organization with a quasi-public status. Open to all women within the community who wished to serve the community in a voluntary capacity, the federation clubs had, in fact, become the "municipal housekeepers" of their hometowns. Some historians examining the legacy of the New Deal have noted that gender bias and New Mexico's diverse population resulted in "fewer relief opportunities for women." They also note, however, that women "were most successful when they built their organizations from within and then went outside their group to cooperate with male-dominated institutions" (Schackel 1992:164). The success of the NMFWC in securing support to construct some of its clubhouses and to lobby successfully for other public buildings suggests that in their role as "municipal housekeepers" they were able to move easily "across the blurring lines of private and public spheres." In doing so, they succeeded in continuing to advocate solutions for many of the issues that initially drew women to the club movement during the Progressive Era.

As the New Deal gave way to the national effort to win World War II, the NMFWC supported the war effort, selling war bonds that permitted clubs to name some of the bombers they financed. Clubhouses near military training bases, such as the new Fort Sumner Community Hall near the Army Air Corps' glider school and the Alamogordo Woman's Club near the Alamogordo Bombing and Gunnery Range (now Holloman AFB), served as sites for USO and canteen events. In the decades following the war, the federation embarked on new projects, creating a number of Junior Federation clubs, lobbying for a joint property law in New Mexico (passed in 1958), and developing new programs aimed at supporting Native American women. Membership reached a high water mark in 1960 with 4,124 members and 47 clubs.

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More recently, the number of clubs and membership has declined as more women have entered the labor market and found less time to engage in voluntary activities. As the times have changed, so have the programs the NMFWC supports. With tighter public budgets preventing schools from expanding libraries, some clubs contribute books to school libraries, continuing a tradition of library support that dates to the clubs' earliest years. As awareness of domestic abuse has emerged as a major social issue affecting the well being of families, federation volunteers address new social issues as they work more closely with social workers to help battered women.

The GFWC is proud of what its members' volunteerism has contributed to communities and worthwhile social causes over its history. With a legacy extending over nearly a century in New Mexico, the NMFWC has come to see itself as a part of the state's history. Indeed, its historic club and community houses are recognized as landmarks in the communities they serve; and parks, landscapes, and libraries offer further testimony to what women's volunteerism has achieved. Just as its Standing Committee on History once urged the study and celebration of the state's history, the NMFWC views listing its historic properties in the National Register as a way of recognizing the significance of the federation's contributions to many of the state's communities.

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**F. Associated Property Types**

**Property Type: Clubhouse/Community Hall**

Description

The clubhouse and community halls appear throughout New Mexico where local clubs belonging to the NMFWC are, or were active. The historic clubhouses, sometimes designated as community houses, appear in sections of the community that were being developed during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In some instances, these additions are primarily residential; in others, especially those located along primary roadways, they include mixed residential and commercial uses. All of the clubhouses are identified with signage, often rustic in character, and many are landscaped with evergreens and other plant materials scattered about the grounds or with foundation plantings along the elevations of the buildings. Some of the properties offer parking lots, while others, primarily in residential areas, have only on-street parking.

Constructed during a period in which regional architectural styles were increasingly popular, especially in public buildings funded by the WPA, many clubhouses are of adobe construction and reflect stylistic elements associated with the Pueblo Revival style. The Fort Sumner Community House with elements of the Bungalow style also employs adobe, the community's common and locally made building material of the period. Characteristic of regional styles, many buildings have flat roofs, structural or decorative details such as *vigas*, *canales*, and stepped parapets. Decorative elements including log support posts, corbels and exposed vigas also appear along the larger porches, or *portals*, marking the main entries. Some buildings also present small courtyards or patios with entries to the main hall. Fenestration in all buildings is ample with paired and grouped windows that are generally double-hung wood sash or wood casement. Entries vary from wood panel to double doors with multiple lights.

While it is likely that most, if not all, of the buildings were locally designed by the contractor or WPA project foreman, all share similar plans reflective of the buildings' function. Intended to provide a large meeting hall functioning as an auditorium, dance and banquet hall, and site for bazaars and cultural exhibitions, all of the properties have a large central hall, which is the main character-defining feature of the property type. Consistent with their function as an auditorium, some also have small stages. Recalling Julia Ward Howe's comment that a clubhouse is "also a larger home," all of the buildings contain large kitchens, and some have small side rooms used for department meetings and resting. The image of the home writ large is also apparent in the large fireplaces serving as focal points in each of the great rooms. Continuing an early federation tradition of providing women with access to art, most of the buildings also include canvases done by New Mexico artists, with those above and flanking the fireplace at the Alamogordo Woman's Club done by J.R. Willis, a Federal Arts Project artist.

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Significance

The club and community houses associated with the NMFWC represent the longstanding role that the organization has played in many New Mexican communities. Offering many women an opportunity to expand their own horizons and to carry out voluntary projects to improve the quality of life within their communities, federation clubs contributed to the built environment through the establishment of libraries, municipal parks, cemetery landscaping, lighting projects and other works. As the early clubs surveyed the needs of all women within their communities, the absence of public spaces, or "rest rooms" for women contributed to members' desire to establish permanent buildings that would serve club members as well as other women and the community at large. To meet this need and as their budgets permitted, clubs undertook the construction of club houses that also served as community houses. Their plans, details and furnishing reflected the GFWC philosophy that as women expanded their horizons beyond the home the environments they created should continue to embody the positive elements associated with femininity and home life.

In their new role as "municipal housekeepers," women shaped their clubhouses to meet that need. Recognized for their contributions to their communities during the Great Depression as quasi-public institutions, some federation clubs were able to build clubhouses with WPA funding. The most visible reminders of the contributions made by NMFWC members volunteering to benefit their communities during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the buildings are significant under Criterion A for their role in shaping the social history of their communities. Most of the clubhouses dating to the period of significance remain largely unaltered and are also significant architecturally under Criterion C.

Registration Requirements

To meet registration requirements under Criterion A, a club or community house must have a clear association with the NMFWC during the period of significance and retain a high degree of integrity as to location, siting, design, materials and workmanship. To also meet registration requirements under Criterion C, the exterior of the building must have its original features with a minimum of alterations. Any alterations must be evaluated as to their impact on the integrity of the design.

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**G. Geographical Data**

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**H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods**

The multiple property listing for the architectural resources of the NMFWC club and community houses in New Mexico stemmed from the inclusion in 2002 of the Carrizozo Woman's Club building on the list prepared by the New Mexico Cultural Preservation Alliance of the Ten Most Endangered Properties in New Mexico. Marked by a severe crack in an adobe wall, the building and its plight attracted the attention of preservations and prompted club members to begin researching the property and preparing a nomination to list it in the State Register of Cultural Properties. Interest raised by NMFWC in other communities about other club buildings led the New Mexico Historic Preservation Division (NMHPD) to contract with historian David Kammer to identify and evaluate three clubhouses constructed as WPA projects. Initially, Kammer anticipated that these properties would be added to the state's 1994 multiple property listing "The Historic and Architectural Resources of the New Deal in New Mexico."

Archival research pertaining to the NMFWC, however, revealed that other clubhouses similar in age and design to those constructed under the New Deal also existed. The research also indicated the extensive role that the voluntary organization played in New Mexico's communities in the years before and during the Great Depression, a manifestation of the phrase "social housekeepers" that historians often apply to the efforts of the GFWC. Thus, NMHPD determined to create a separate multiple nomination treating the history of the organization within the state.

Using NMFWC records located at the Museum of New Mexico's History Library and local club histories, Kammer identified and surveyed four buildings using NMHPD's standard NMHPD's standard Historic Cultural Properties Inventory form. At each site, he interviewed longtime club members and examined additional club records. Given the statewide membership of the organization and the possibility that other resources may be included, a statewide geographical area was selected. The date of the founding of the NMFCW and 1941, the date by which much of the early clubhouse construction ended determined the period of significance. Archival data also facilitated the determination of the property type, especially with regard to building plans, details, and function. Determinations of eligibility are based upon a comparative evaluation of the buildings and the specific details associated with any alterations. Buildings, for instance, that underwent a change in their plan to meet new functions as a result of their service during World War II, are still regarded as retaining historic integrity, since women's clubs played a significant role in entertaining soldiers at their clubhouses as their part in the war effort.



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