

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received OCT 3 1984
date entered NOV 29

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Our Lady of the Angels School

and/or common Sister Blandina School; The Sand Pebble

2. Location

street & number 320 Romero Street NW not for publication

city, town Albuquerque vicinity of

state New Mexico code 35 county Bernalillo code 001

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Archdiocese of Santa Fe

street & number 202 Morningside Drive, S.E.

city, town Albuquerque vicinity of state New Mexico 87108

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Bernalillo County Clerk's Office

street & number 505 Central Avenue, N.W.

city, town Albuquerque vicinity of state New Mexico 87102

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historic Landmarks Surv. of Alb. has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date July 1979 federal state county local

depository for survey records Historic Landmarks Survey,
Redevelopment Planning, P.O. Box 1293

city, town Albuquerque, vicinity of state New Mexico 87103

7. Description

Condition excellent good fair deteriorated ruins unexposed**Check one** unaltered altered**Check one** original site moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Physical Description

Our Lady of the Angels School is located one block north of the plaza in the heart of the historic Old Town section of Albuquerque. Its southern wall connects to the 1881 convent built just west of the San Felipe de Neri Church. The school, now partitioned into a gift shop and a parish meeting hall, is a one-story, rectangular, adobe building with a gabled roof and a small bell steeple. The building is notable for its exterior Greek Revival woodwork around the windows and main entrance.

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The walls of Our Lady of the Angels School are two and one-half feet thick and are made of adobe bricks. It has been reported that the exterior bricks were not true adobes (formed in a mold), but were terrones (sod bricks) cut from the flood plain of the Rio Grande, and used on the exterior because of the superior strength given by the grass roots. The walls, originally mud-plastered, are now covered with hard plaster.

The building was reported in contemporary accounts to measure 85 by 25 feet, but the actual dimensions are approximately 83 by 26 feet. The original height of the ceiling above the floor was reported to be 13 feet, with the floor considerably below the street level. Through the years new floors have been built on top of old ones so that there are now four floors. The present floor is just slightly below street level and the height to the ceiling measures approximately 10 feet.

The ceiling appears to be original and is made of narrow tongue-and-groove boards. The ceiling has a slight slope and is about one foot higher in the front than in the rear of the building. This slight slope was desirable for drainage of the flat roof that was originally put on the building. However, it was the stated intention of the builders to install a pitched roof as soon as feasible, and this was done within three years. The pitched roof can thus be considered to be the original design. There are gables at the north end and over the main entrance; the roof abuts the two-story convent at the south end.

The school is notable for its Greek Revival exterior decoration. Bainbridge Bunting, the foremost historian of southwestern architecture, has described the school as follows:

It contains one of the handsomest Territorial doors in the state. The dentil is carved from a single board, not tacked on, while the volutes and acanthus leaves of the capitals were carved separately out of three-quarter inch boards and ingeniously fitted together in rough approximation of the Corinthian order.¹

The Greek Revival motif is continued in the pedimented lintels over the windows on the front (west) facade of the building.

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Description

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The school is one of the least altered buildings in the Old Town section of Albuquerque. Restoration in the 1960's and 1970's was limited to converting one of the large windows into a door, adding bancos (benches) in front of the building, and adding a partition that divided the building into two shops.

¹Bainbridge Bunting, Early Architecture in New Mexico (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1976), p. 96.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below				
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention			

Specific dates 1877-1878 **Builder/Architect** multiple

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Our Lady of the Angels School, built in 1877-78 and used as a school for more than fifty years, is the oldest existing school building in Albuquerque, and one of the oldest in the state. It provides an excellent example of adobe architecture of the Territorial period, with some of the finest Greek Revival exterior woodwork still existing in the state. The building retains most of its original character and is one of the least-altered nineteenth-century buildings in the Old Town section of Albuquerque. The significance of the building is enhanced by its association with Sister Blandina Segale, a key figure in the development of schools and hospitals in the Southwest. Already designated as a significant building in the Old Albuquerque Historic District listed on the New Mexico Register of Cultural Properties, Our Lady of the Angels School stands out from its old town surroundings as worthy of individual recognition on the National Register.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Segale, Sister Blandina. At the End of the Santa Fe Trail. Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1948.
 Johnson, Byron. Old Town, Albuquerque, New Mexico. A Guide to its History and Architecture. Albuquerque: The Albuquerque Museum, 1980.
The Albuquerque Review: November 3, 1877; May 18 and November 23, 1878

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one-half acre

Quadrangle name Albuquerque West

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

13

3	4	7	8	0	0
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3	8	8	4	8	6	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

B

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 Zone Easting Northing

C

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Verbal boundary description and justification

A rectangular lot on the northwest corner of Tract 201, Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District Map 38 measuring roughly 96' x 50' (see attached map). This includes only the building and some ground on the east, north and west. The bldg. is attached to the convent on the south for some 8 feet.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Robert R. White, volunteer; Mary Davis, Architectural Historian

organization Historic Landmarks Survey

date July 24, 2984

street & number P.O. Box 1293

telephone (505) 766-4720

city or town Albuquerque

state New Mexico 87103

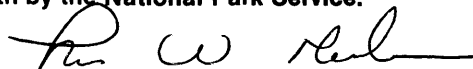
12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

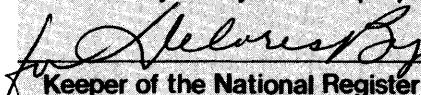


title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 10-10-84

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register


 Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the
 National Register

date 11-29-84

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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As early as 1875, plans were made to begin construction of a public school on the western side of San Felipe de Neri Church, on what had been the northwestern corner of the old Spanish plaza of Albuquerque. Public schooling--for boys only--had been available in Albuquerque since January 1874 when the Jesuit priests started classes in the same building that housed the Jesuit printing press. Attendance soon proved too great for these limited quarters and the Jesuit fathers decided to build a larger separate building. Although public funds were available to finance public education since the passage in 1872 of a poll tax, the Jesuits financed the building completely.

Its construction was reported in detail by the local newspaper, The Albuquerque Review, and it is from these reports that the following description is taken. The school foundation of lava rock was laid in November 1877. Upon this, the adobe walls were raised by Mick McGuire. The roofing and flooring were done by Pedro Lobato and the finer woodwork was done by Brother Cofano and a Mr. Willey. The building was reported 85 by 25 feet with a ceiling 13 feet above the floor. The school was partitioned into two classrooms, but the partition could be moved aside so that the building could be used as a town hall. The building had a flat roof, but it was the intention of the Jesuits to install a pitched tin roof when feasible, and they did so in September 1881, after the arrival of the railroad made construction materials more readily available. At the time of construction, the school was considered to be one of the finest buildings in Albuquerque, second only to San Felipe de Neri Church.

Fathers Tromby and DiPalma were the first teachers at the school, but they were soon joined by Brother Enrique Armijo, from Las Vegas, New Mexico. However, the Jesuits soon realized that full-time teachers were needed for the school, so in September 1880, they asked the Sisters of Charity in Santa Fe to provide teachers for the school.

Sister Blandina Segale was appointed to make arrangements for the sisters to move to Albuquerque. She was already well-known in New Mexico for her work in the schools and at Saint Vincent Hospital in Santa Fe. She was later to publish a book of her experiences entitled At the End of the Santa Fe Trail, which has become one of the classic works on territorial New Mexico.

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The Sisters of Charity chosen to go to Albuquerque were Sisters Mary Josephine (Mother Superior), Blandina (treasurer and music teacher), Pauline, Gertrudes, Agnes Cecilia, and Mary Alacoque. Classes began under the direction of the Sisters of Charity on September 8, 1881. The subjects taught included reading, writing, arithmetic, English, Spanish, history, geography, art, and music.

It soon became apparent that there were many more students in need of schooling in Albuquerque than could be accommodated at Our Lady of the Angels School. As a consequence, construction was begun on a new brick school at the corner of Sixth Street and New York Avenue (now Lomas Avenue), and work was completed on January 9, 1884.

The new school (now destroyed), known both as Public School, Precinct No. 12 and as Saint Vincent Academy, was also staffed by the Sisters of Charity, who at first walked to the new school each morning from the convent in Old Albuquerque.

In September 1885, the administration of the two schools was separated, and Sister Blandina became Mother Superior of Our Lady of the Angels School in what became the Old Town section of Albuquerque after a new town grew up near the railroad tracks. Sister Blandina held this post until 1889, at which time she was sent to Trinidad, Colorado, where she remained for five years before returning to Ohio, the place that was her home when she first took her vows with the Sisters of Charity.

Following its discontinuation of use as a public school around 1930, the old building saw a great variety of tenants. From 1930 to 1945 the building was often used as a church meeting hall, but was also at times used as a store and for a number of years was used only for storage (particularly during World War II).

It was again used as a school in the late 1940's and early 1950's when kindergarten classes were held there for six years. The old school building served as the museum of the Historical Society of Albuquerque from about 1957 until 1966 and also saw use as an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting room and as an exhibit hall during the first Old Town arts and crafts fair in the 1960's. In 1973 it was briefly used as a restaurant, but in 1974 or 1975 it was made into two shops by adding a partition and by converting one of the windows into another door. One-third of the building is now a parish meeting hall and the remainder is a gift shop. It is still owned by the Catholic Archdiocese.

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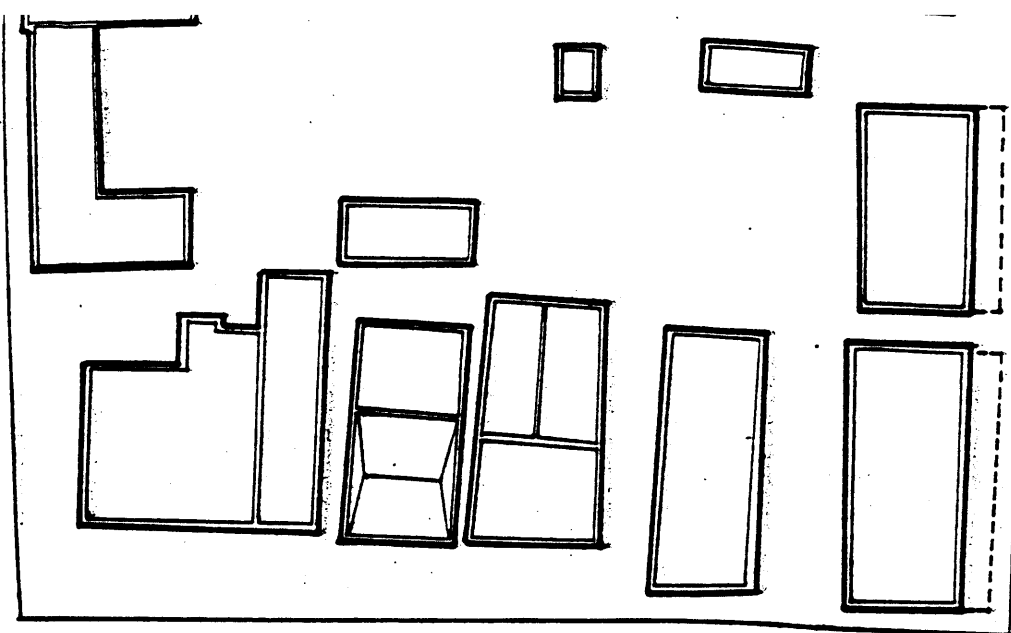
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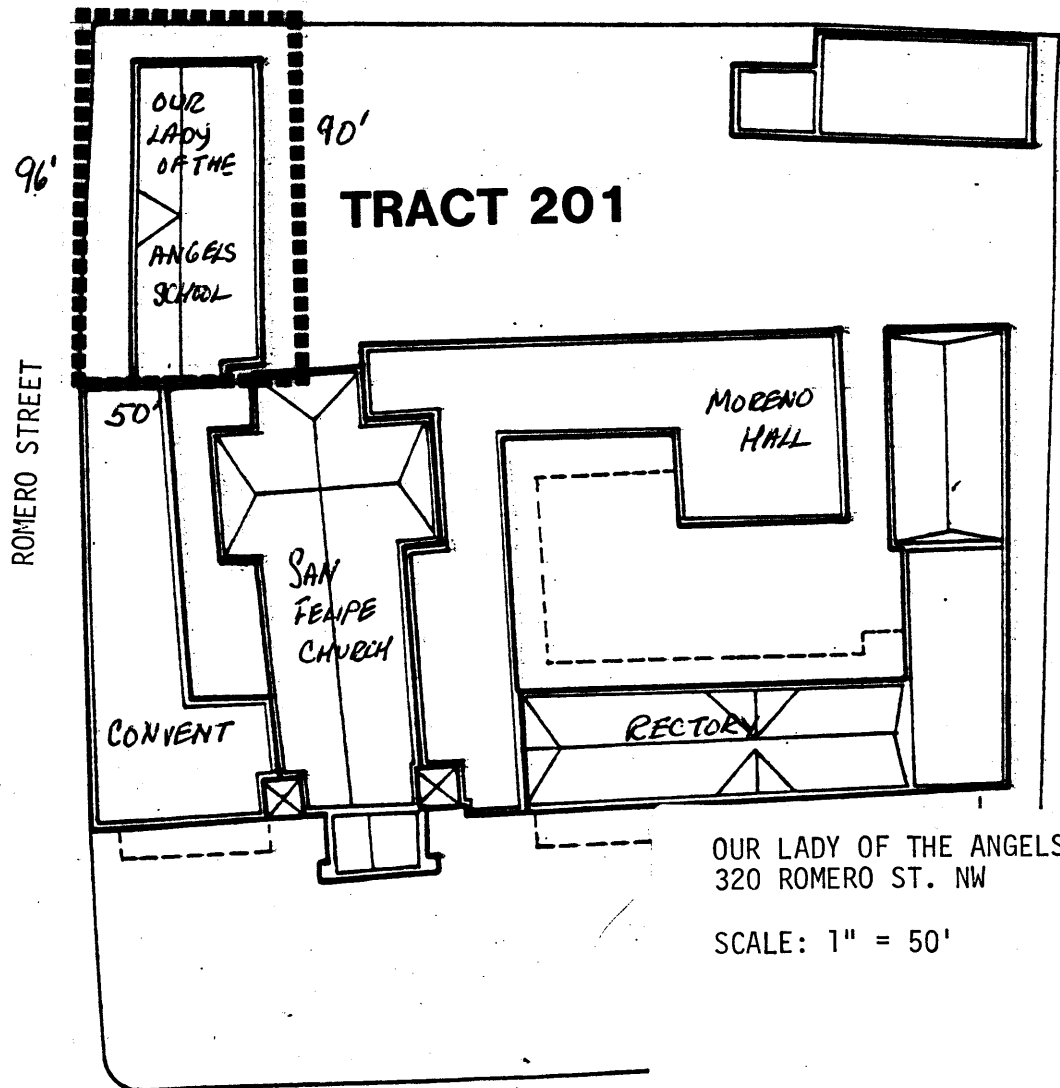
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Our Lady of the Angels School is designated as a significant structure within the Old Albuquerque Historic District, a State Register district listed in NM as SR# 749.



50' CHURCH ST.



TRACT 201

OUR
LADY
OF THE
ANGELS
SCHOOL

MORENO
HALL

SAN
FELIPE
CHURCH

CONVENT

RECTOR

OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS SCHOOL
320 ROMERO ST. NW

SCALE: 1" = 50'

NORTH PLAZA

SAN FELIPE ST.

ROMERO STREET

