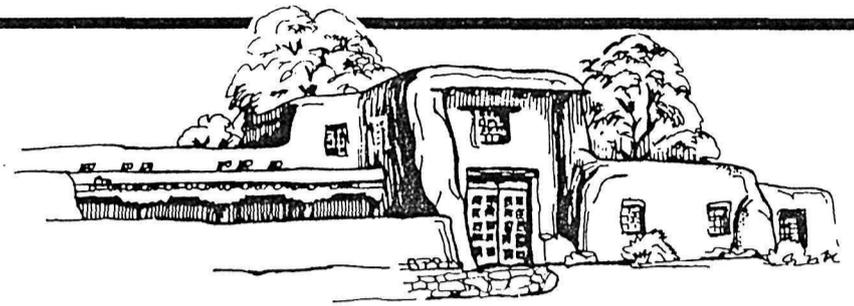


Southwest Office

Santa Fe, New Mexico
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Self-guided Tour



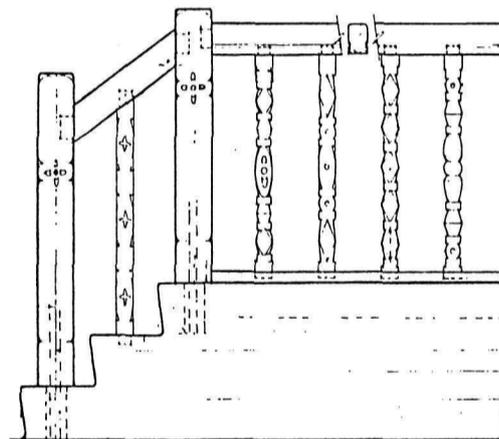
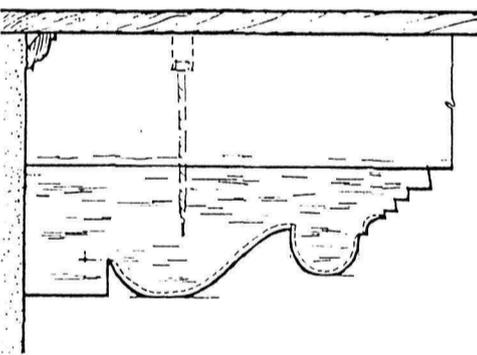
HISTORY

The National Park Service's Southwest office building, formerly known as the Southwest Regional Office, is the largest known adobe office structure — and one of the largest secular adobe buildings — in the United States. The distinctive architecture forms one part of larger story, demonstrating that historic buildings represent more than just wood and earth. It is the story of the people who designed and constructed

it — and today, many others who live and work here.

In the early 1930s, the National Park Service began to search for a centralized location to manage a growing number of Southwest parks and monuments. The regional office in Oklahoma City was isolated from the majority of parks centered in New Mexico and Arizona. Santa Fe, with its

central geographic location, mild climate, and distinctive architectural flavor and charm, possessed the right ingredients for a headquarters site. Also, the nearby Laboratory of Anthropology offered to donate 8.5 acres of land if the National Park Service would build in Santa Fe. In the autumn of 1937, plans to construct a new regional headquarters building in Santa Fe were announced.



ARCHITECTURE

This building is an outstanding example of Spanish-Pueblo Revival architecture. The sculptural, massive quality of the adobe walls, the irregular grouping of volumes around patios, and the hand-worked wood beams and corbels are some of the characteristic elements of the style that was initiated around 1910 in Santa Fe, and continues to be popular today.

National Park Service architect Cecil Doty successfully used the revival style to express the National Park Service goal of designing buildings to harmonize with both the natural and cultural contexts. Doty worked closely with landscape architects Harvey Cornell and John Kell to integrate the landscaped patios with the site and interiors.

The building is a National Historic Landmark, deriving its significance from its architecture, art collections, association with the federal relief programs of the New Deal era, and place in National Park Service history.

CONSTRUCTION

The Public Works Administration (PWA) provided funds for materials and skilled labor to construct the new headquarters. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), under the leadership of the National Park Service, fielded the unskilled labor. CCC Company 833, based in Santa Fe, performed much of the work. This

group was made up of single men from New Mexico, 17-23 years of age, and generally from needy families. They earned about a dollar a day, and were required to send at least \$22 home to their families each month. The manufacture of 280,000 hand-made adobe bricks consumed much of their time. Workers also learned wood-

working and construction techniques, stone and foundation masonry, and tinwork skills.

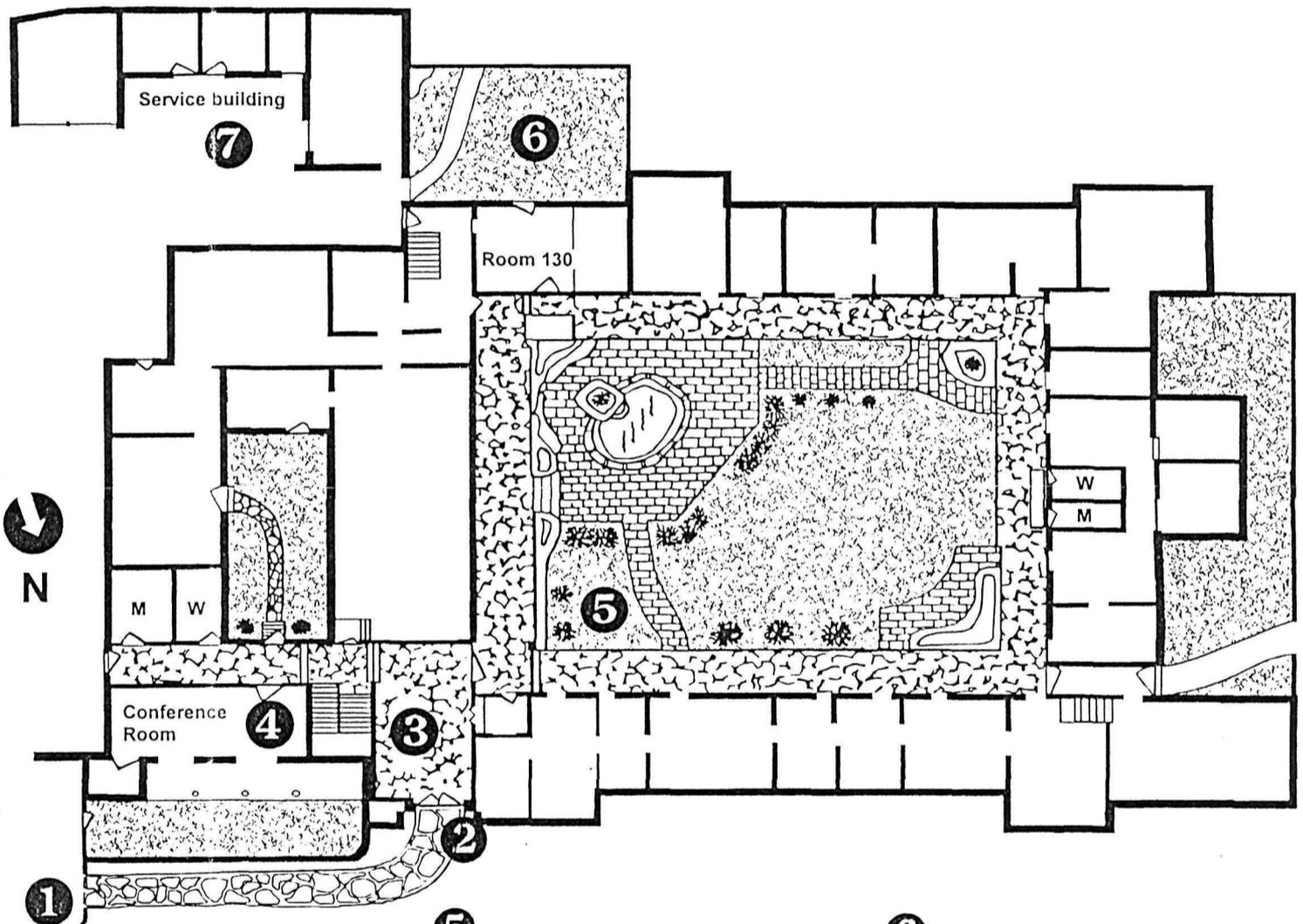
Works of local art, Navajo rugs, and Pueblo pottery were also purchased at the same time to complete the building. On July 1, 1939, the National Park Service took possession of the building.

You can begin your tour in front of the building. Remember that this is a working office building; please do not enter the offices.

1 The 1930s National Park Service design concept of harmonizing buildings with their surroundings is expressed first in the site planning. The transition from site to building is made less abrupt by screening parking areas with plants, separating smaller lots with walls, and using curving, native stone curbs. Second, it is also expressed as you pass through the main entry wall where you see native grasses and trees instead of the building.

2 Following the curving flagstone path, you arrive at the main entrance, which is reminiscent of Southwest mission church facades. The massive, buttressed entrance is impressive here, while the second story is visually de-emphasized by single-story walls everywhere else. To the left you see another way the architect made the building blend well with the site. The walls are layers of different heights, gradually stepping down to the earth from the second story to the single-story portal (covered porch) to the patio wall.

3 The lobby's 4- to 5-foot thick walls, massive hand-worked beams, and corbels, and large tin light fixtures are exemplary features of the Spanish Pueblo Revival style. The pottery pieces from Santa Clara, San Ildefonso, and Cochiti Pueblos housed in the mahogany cases were products of 1930s PWA Arts Project funding. The large oil painting of the first National Park Service Director, Stephen T. Mather, was done by Oden Hullenkramer — a Santa Fe artist born in Hungary. He, too, was commissioned by the federal relief programs of the New Deal era.



4 The CCC crews built the furniture in the conference room exactly to the architect's drawings. On the north wall are photographs that give you an excellent feel for the period of construction, including one showing the carpenters with the table components. This conference room originally had the one larger table, and was designed with access to a small patio, perhaps to be used for employee breaks. In the far lower left photograph, the CCC workers are laying the first course, or layer, of adobes on the massive stone foundations. The center right photograph shows the crews beginning to lay the stone basement walls. The excavation also provided the dirt for making the adobe bricks. On the south wall is hung PWA art of Santa Fe and Taos artists.

5 This patio with fountain and seating is the centerpiece of the building — a feature that traces back centuries in Mediterranean architecture. It also may suggest a Southwest Mission compound plaza, except for the landscaping. The rhythm of the portal posts completely encircling the space, the irregular lengths of the exposed viga ends, and the rounded, thick adobe walls exemplify the Spanish Pueblo Revival style. The portal provides a visual transition from open space to building, and a shaded passage that connects one with nature. Windows and French doors dispersed around the patio and second floor take advantage of views of this beautiful enclosed respite in the center of a busy workplace.

6 Room 130 was originally a lunch room, with access to both the central patio and a smaller south patio complete with fireplace for cookouts. The architect clearly had more than function in mind, providing quality amenities for the new Regional Office building employees.

7 The service building's vertical log motif is derived from structures found in rural New Mexico, although greatly increased in size here. This is characteristic of revival styles — in particular one such as Spanish-Pueblo, which combines and romanticizes elements of Spanish settlement, Indian Pueblo, and Spanish Mission types of architecture.

You may walk around and enjoy the patio

Please exit through the main entrance