

TUBA CITY BOARDING SCHOOL, TUBA HALL
(Building No. 3)
Main Street & West Cedar Avenue
Tuba City
Coconino County
Arizona

HABS AZ-146-A
AZ-146-A

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146-A

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

ADDENDUM TO
TUBA CITY BOARDING SCHOOL, TUBA HALL
(Tuba City Boarding School, Building 3)
Navajo Reservation
Main Street & West Cedar Avenue
Tuba City
Coconino County
Arizona

HABS No. AZ-146-A

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

FIELD RECORDS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY
Southwest System Support Office
National Park Service
P.O. Box 728
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504

ADDENDUM TO
HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

TUBA CITY BOARDING SCHOOL, TUBA HALL
(Tuba City Boarding School, Building 3)

HABS No. AZ-146-A

- Location:** Campus Physical address: 10 Main Street, Tuba City, Arizona, 86045.
Legal Description: Southwest corner of Main and Cedar Streets, Part of the Tuba City Administrative Reserve Tract, Section 20, Township 32 North, Range 11 East, Salt River Meridian Tuba City, Coconino County, Arizona.
The building faces south, away from Cedar Street towards a quadrangle flanked by Manuelito hall (Building 5) to the west and Castlerock Hall (Building 6) to the east.
- USGS Map: Tuba City Quadrangle (7.5 minute series).
- Present Owner:** United States Bureau of Indian Affairs-Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of Facilities Management and Construction (BIA-OF&C)
Navajo Area Office
P.O. Box 1060
Gallup, New Mexico 87301
- Present Occupant:** Tuba City Boarding School
P.O. Box 187
Tuba City, Arizona 86045
- Present Use:** The building is currently unoccupied. The building was used as a dormitory until the 1967-68 school year, when the last students where moved to the newer dormitories, built in 1962.¹ It has remained abandoned since that date.
- Significance:** Tuba Hall is significant as a good example of turn-of-the-century Bureau of Indian Affairs architecture in the Southwest and for its association with early BIA education programs on the Navajo Reservation. Originally built as a dining hall but later changed to a dormitory, this boarding school structure modestly incorporates Neo-Classical Revival Style elements such as its symmetrical exterior and portico and entry details. The use of local materials applied to an imported building style suggests how through its buildings the BIA sought to assert its presence on the Navajo Reservation, at once drawing from the region but nevertheless reflecting its centralized authority by imposing the prevailing national architectural style for public buildings on its projects. The absence of elaborate ornamentation also suggests both the bureau's

budgetary constraints and the Spartan-like nature of the Bureau's boarding school program

The building also bears physical testimony to turn-of-the century BIA educational policies. The imposing two story stone structure with its symmetrical exterior and floor plan conveys the goal of acculturation that underscored the establishment of the early southwestern boarding schools. Similarly the floor plan with rooms for manual arts, with an office controlling egress and entry, and with large impersonal sleeping rooms all executed in a stark and utilitarian way, suggests the manner in which the BIA sought to impose the values of white culture on Navajo children by placing them in a different spatial environment.

Today large elms fill much of the quadrangle on which Tuba Hall faces and somewhat obscure the orderly manner in which those early buildings were situated. Such an arrangement suggests both system and the authoritative, almost military-like, approach to education that dominated BIA thinking through the first two decades of this century. Coupled with the influence of early civic and institutional planning inspired by City Beautiful thinking, the result was an insistence upon symmetrically composed teaching posts even in the remote western reaches of the Navajo Reservation. Tuba Hall is a significant part of the configuration of that early complex.

Part I. Historical Information

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection:

According to the Bureau of Indian Affairs building Inventory for the Western Navajo Agency, the building was built in 1919.² Research performed by Veronica Tiller indicates the construction date to be earlier:

From the historical documents found within the Navajo Agency Files at the National Archives, Buildings No. 3 (Tuba Hall), 5 (Manuelito Hall), and 6 (Castlerock Hall) were constructed between 1904 to 1905 ... There were no definitive documents, such as the original construction contract for the buildings, blueprints, sketches, or financial records that were located that gave the exact building dates or descriptions of the three boarding school buildings. However, official correspondence pertaining to the establishment and administration of the construction strongly indicated that Buildings Number 3, 5 and 6 were built in the years of 1904 to 1905.³

2. Architect:

The architect of record is unknown.

3. Original and subsequent owners, occupants, uses:

The building has always been owned by the Bureau of Indian Affairs as part of the Tuba City Boarding School. The building was most likely originally designed as a dining hall with employees' quarters on the second floor, and converted to a dormitory at a later date.⁴ While the date of conversion to a dormitory is unknown, Bureau of Indian Affairs field records indicate that the building was used as a dormitory before being abandoned.⁵

4. Builder, contractor, suppliers:

The contractor for the three buildings was Wilcox and Rose of Flagstaff, Arizona. The company obtained a bid to build five buildings in Tuba City, the three boarding school buildings, and two other buildings. The building of the school buildings employed Navajo and Hopi workers. Local red sandstone from a local Hopi quarry near the Moencopi Wash was used.

5. Original plans and construction:

Original plans have not been located. Drawings of an unknown date were found at the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Western Navajo Agency office in Tuba City. These drawings are more than likely survey drawings from the 1960s, however could be older. These represent the only drawings created before the abandonment of the buildings in 1967-68. Other drawings found are from a 1971 Bureau of Indian Affairs

Building Inventory, found at the BIA Facility Management Offices in Gallup, New Mexico.

6. Alterations and additions:

A small one-story bathroom addition was added sometime after 1919 to the east of the front porch. The addition is of the same sandstone/limestone materials and has a hipped roof. A shed-roofed wooden one-story addition was also added after 1919 to the north of the one-story washroom and shower wing. This addition, which housed lockers and a utility room, appears in an aerial photograph from the 1920s.

It is unclear whether the washroom and shower wing was an addition or original. The original function of the building is unclear. There are early descriptions of a Mess Hall with employees' rooms above⁶, though this may have been Building 21, across Cedar Street. It is possible that the building was used for classrooms, though other government correspondence letters indicate that parts of Manuelito Hall and Castlerock Hall were used as classrooms due to the non-existence of a "school building".⁷ The theory of the original use being a dining hall is the most likely. It is clear the building was not a dormitory in its early days, due to descriptions of the campus only having two dormitories (Manuelito Hall and Castlerock Hall).⁸ Whatever the early use of the building, it is most likely Tuba Hall became a dormitory during the first expansion of the campus. This movement to expand started in 1912 with the erection of an assembly building (possibly Building 4) and the 1914-15 enlargements of Manuelito Hall and Castlerock Hall. It is possible the wing was added as part of this expansion. The wing appears in 1919 photographs. Its construction appears to be identical to the rest of the building. It is likely that the concrete porches and steps flanking the washroom/shower wing are additions or alterations from the original porches.

Other minor alterations include lighting fixtures and fire escapes. Photos taken ca. 1919 do not show fire escapes or the previously mentioned additions, except as noted.

B. Historical Context:

For a complete historical context description, refer to the overall campus report, HABS No. AZ-146, Tuba City Boarding School.

Part II. Architectural Information

A. General statement:

1. Architectural character:

Tuba Hall is of architectural merit as an example of the modest use of the Neo-Classical Revival Style in early 20th century BIA boarding schools in the Southwest.

2. Condition of fabric:

The building has been vacated for almost 35 years, and thus the condition has deteriorated considerably. Pigeons have nested causing structural damage to floors and ceilings and unsanitary conditions. There is considerable exterior masonry damage. Some door and window sills and lintels have deteriorated. Most windows now have broken or missing glass and muntins. The original wood entry stairs are missing, along with the wood porch railings.

3. Summary Description:

Tuba Hall is a two story sandstone building with an elevated limestone basement. It employs a cruciform plan with symmetrical hip-roofed wings each with a single hip-roofed dormer. A one story gable projects to the front; to the rear extends a one story hip-roofed washroom and shower area with a wood shed-roofed addition beyond. Projecting from the front gable is an elevated hip-roofed porch with square wood columns. To the right of the porch a slight, one story gable-roofed addition denotes the only deviation from the structure's overall symmetry. In general, the integrity of the building remains intact. However, fire escapes have been added at the ends of both wings, concrete steps and porches have been added to the rear, some windows have been remodeled and the steps to the front porch have been removed.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions:

The building is symmetrical and cruciform in plan. The main east-west section measures 80'-6" long and 38'-0" wide. This section, combined with a 36'-6" long and 9'-6" wide central entry gable section to the south continue the full two-story height, approximately 30'-10" (eave height) above grade. A one-story addition flanks the east side of the entry section, measuring 7'-6" long by the depth of the entry section, 8'-0". A central front porch on the south side measures 36'-4" long and 8'-0" wide, with an eave height of 17'-10". A one-story washroom and shower wing to the north measures 42'-6" wide and 36'-0" deep. An 8'-0" deep by 58'-0" long one-story wood addition is attached to the north of the shower/washroom wing. The overall floor area is 15,448 square feet.

2. Foundations:

The foundations are of stone with a plaster-over-stone retaining wall.

3. Walls:

The exterior walls are [20" thick] stone masonry in a random ashlar pattern. The basement is [grey] limestone, and the two stories and front gable are of local Navajo [red] sandstone. [The surface of the sandstone is weathered due to water absorption followed by freeze-thaw action. The mortar between stone courses has deteriorated.⁹ There is evidence of major stone movement in several other parts of the exterior walls, in addition to some sill and lintel collapse.] The wood addition to the rear is vertical tongue and groove planking.

4. Structural system, framing:

The structural system consists of wood joists bearing on load bearing masonry walls with some timber load bearing posts. The roof consists of wood framed trusses and wood decking.

5. Porches, stoops, balconies, porticoes, bulkheads:

The front porch is an elevated wood portico with a hip roof. The four porch piers are limestone. Six square wood columns with molded capitals support the roof which is covered with metal pressed in a fluted, fish-scale pattern. [The original wooden steps seen in historical photographs have been removed.] The rear extension of the building is flanked by elevated concrete porches with metal railings and concrete steps. These porches are supported by concrete piers and beams.

6. Chimneys:

No chimneys currently exist, however there is early photographic evidence chimneys. In a ca. 1919 photograph, two were located where the front entry gable section intersects the main east-west building. A third was located on the east side of the main wing. A 1920s aerial photograph shows possibly 4 more along the north wall, and one at the washroom/shower wing.

7. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors:

The front porch entry is a double wood-panel door with six lights flanked by sidelights and topped by a fanlight. The wood surrounds are framed by a segmented sandstone arch. The fire escape exits (additions as evidenced by concrete lintels) consist of flush steel doors. The rear entries are presently boarded. [December, 2001 field observation revealed that all doors have been boarded.]

b. Windows:

Original windows are recessed four inches from the face, symmetrically placed and set with stone lintels and sills. Windows are double-hung with four over four lights. Altered fenestration appears in the form paired windows and window groupings with metal posts, all employing concrete sills and lintels. All first story

and basement windows have been boarded. Small fixed windows appear in the gable elevation and the wing dormers. In the rear wood addition, large windows with aluminum frames have been boarded. [December, 2001 field observation revealed that all windows have been boarded. The windows have sandstone sills which have uniformly worn into a shallow u-shape due to water erosion.¹⁰]

8. Roof

a. Shape, covering:

The wings and rear extension of the building's cruciform plan are hipped, and a gable with a projecting one-story hipped porch extends to the front. The building is roofed with [painted] pressed metal using a fluted, fish-scale pattern except at the rear addition where no [finished] roofing [material] exists.

b. Cornice, eaves:

The eaves are thirty inches, and the cornice exhibits a slight wood molding. A molded built-in gutter lines the edge of the roof overhangs. [The gutter is deteriorated in many places due to debris build-up. Most of the downspouts are missing.]

C. Description of Interior:

[Interior access was not possible for the 2001 field visit. The description that follows is based on conditions observed by the 1988 field team, and written by David Kammer, PhD.]

1. Floor plans:

The floor plan reflects the utilitarian nature of this boarding school structure. A central hall extends from the entrance to the utility and locker rooms added at the rear of the building. An administrative office and teacher's sleeping area and small bathroom flank the hall in the projecting gable area. Large rooms extending the width of the wings flank the central portion of the hall. Two of these rooms are sleeping areas, and one is a living room. Several small closets as well as the stairway to the second floor also line the central hall. A washroom and toilets and a sewing room and showers flank the rear section of the central hall.

The second floor central hall extends the length of the building's wings and is perpendicular to the first floor hall. Four large sleeping rooms extend along the front (south) side of the building, and two large sleeping rooms, a small storage room, and the stairwell extend along the rear side. Fire escape exits are located at both ends of the central hall.

The basement, with entry afforded only from exterior wells at the rear of the building, consists of several small storage and supply rooms and a large recreation room in the southwest corner.

[As previously stated, Tuba Hall originally was used as a Mess Hall with employee rooms on the second floor. During the 1988 field visit, no indication of the original floor plan relating to this use was observed.^{11]}

2. Stairways:

The main stairway is of oak with a wood handrail and employs a scissors design. Its simple utilitarian elements suggest that it may be a replacement. It is partitioned off from the main corridor in a stair well that may be an addition. [The stair treads are in poor condition.^{12]}

3. Flooring:

Floors are hardwood tongue and groove planking and, in many places, are severely warped and damaged.

4. Wall and ceiling finish:

All of the walls are plaster. In some first floor rooms and in the bathroom there is a modest vertical wood wainscoting. The ceilings consist of pressed tin with a slight cornice molding and smooth plastered ceilings. [Some of the ceilings in the main building and almost all of the ceilings in the north wing have collapsed due to water leaking from the roof.^{13]}

5. Openings:

Original doors are wood panel. However, most have been removed and, in some instances, replaced by wood veneer institutional doors.

6. Decorative features and trim:

The utilitarian nature of the building's interior precludes much trim work beyond a simple wood capping in those rooms where wainscoting is used. [A wood base is found on most walls^{14]}.

7. Hardware:

Lighting plates are large flat plates with beveled edges. Original panel doors have push button handsets.

8. Mechanical Equipment:

a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation:

The building used steam heat provided by a central heating plant. A few molded cast iron radiators remain in some spaces. [Exposed asbestos covered steam piping appears in many portions of the building.^{15]}

b. Lighting:

Lighting domes lying on the floor were probably used throughout the building, but were likely later additions or replacements. Ceiling conduits which appear to have been added lead to some bare and broken bulbs.

c. Plumbing:

Modest ceramic bathroom fixtures appear to be replacements.

D. Site:

1. Historic landscape design:

Tuba Hall is located in the northeast corner of the original Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) boarding school compound at Tuba City. Built in 1904-05 just after the last Mormon residents had vacated the community, the building faces south on a quadrangle formed by other early BIA boarding school structures. Flanked by Manuelito Hall and [Castlerock] Hall, Tuba Hall maintains a commanding presence over the quadrangle.

[Building 8 completes the quadrangle on the south side. This was built later, sometime before 1919.¹⁶ Other early buildings include a dining hall (presumably used for employees or for student use once Tuba Hall converted to dormitory space) built in 1919 across Cedar Street and a teacher's quarters (possibly hospital) built in 1925 across Main Street from that. Historical photographs show a central flagpole in the quadrangle. This further exemplifies the rigid, military-like planning and use of the campus. The quadrangle is dissected by a north-south concrete sidewalk. Another sidewalk lining the north side of the quadrangle, next to Tuba Hall is bordered on the east-west edges by a stone retaining wall and steps at the ends. Another sidewalk parallels this one to the south of Manuelito Hall and Castlerock Hall. Between this walk and Building 8 is a small playing field. The entire block which now contains 10 other school buildings of various dates was initially divided into farming plots and orchards.]

Part III. Sources of Information

This report was written in conjunction with HABS No. AZ-146 (Tuba City Boarding School), HABS No. AZ-146-B (Manuelito Hall), and HABS No. AZ-146-C (Castlerock Hall). All information regarding this section are located in Part III. Sources of Information of HABS No. AZ-146 (Tuba City Boarding School).

Part IV. Project Information

This report was written in conjunction with HABS No. AZ-146 (Tuba City Boarding School), HABS No. AZ-146-B (Manuelito Hall), and HABS No. AZ-146-C (Castlerock Hall). All information regarding this section are located in Part IV. Project Information of HABS No. AZ-146 (Tuba City Boarding School).

Endnotes:

List of Abbreviations: -

CIA - Commissioner of Indian Affairs

OIA - Office of Indian Affairs

RG 75 - Record Group 75

LS - Letters Sent

Supt. - Superintendent

NA- National Archives

CCF - Central Classified Files

MF - Manuscript Flies

¹ Nuvayestewa Interview, 12/12/01.

² U.S. Dept of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Albuquerque Area Office, Office of Facilities Management, "Inventory of Navajo Area Buildings," computer printout. 1988.

³ Tiller, Veronica E. PhD., "An Historical Context Report for the Tuba City Boarding School Buildings 3, 5, and 6" (part A of Tuba City Boarding School Buildings 3, 5, and 6 Historical and Architectural Reports, prepared by Tiller Research, Inc., Albuquerque, NM for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Navajo Area Office, Gallup, NM, Contract Number N00-C-87B-008, November, 1988.), 6.

⁴ Ibid., 7. Also, in an undated photograph located in the Northern Arizona University Special Collections Library (AHS-PM 506-17) the building is labeled as the "employee's quarters".

⁵ U.S. Dept of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Western Navajo Agency, Tuba City, Arizona, Office of Facilities Management, "Inventory of Navajo Area Buildings," folder, 2001, and Ellen Threinen, "*The Navajos and the BIA*" Navajo Area Office, Gallup, Office of Facilities Management, copy, 1981.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Jefferies to CIA, Sept 14, 1910, RG 75, CCF,1908-39, NA.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Hicks, Gregory, "Architectural Report, Recommendations and Estimates for the Tuba City Boarding School Buildings 3, 5, and 6" (part D of Tuba City Boarding School Buildings 3, 5, and 6 Historical and Architectural Reports, prepared by Tiller Research, Inc., Albuquerque, NM for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Navajo Area Office, Gallup, NM, Contract Number N00-C-87B-008, November, 1988.), 39.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid., 42.

¹² Ibid., 41.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ The building appears in photographs taken circa 1919 by Marie L. Olson, found in Northern Arizona Univeristy, Cline Library, Special Collections, NAU- PH-516-71.)