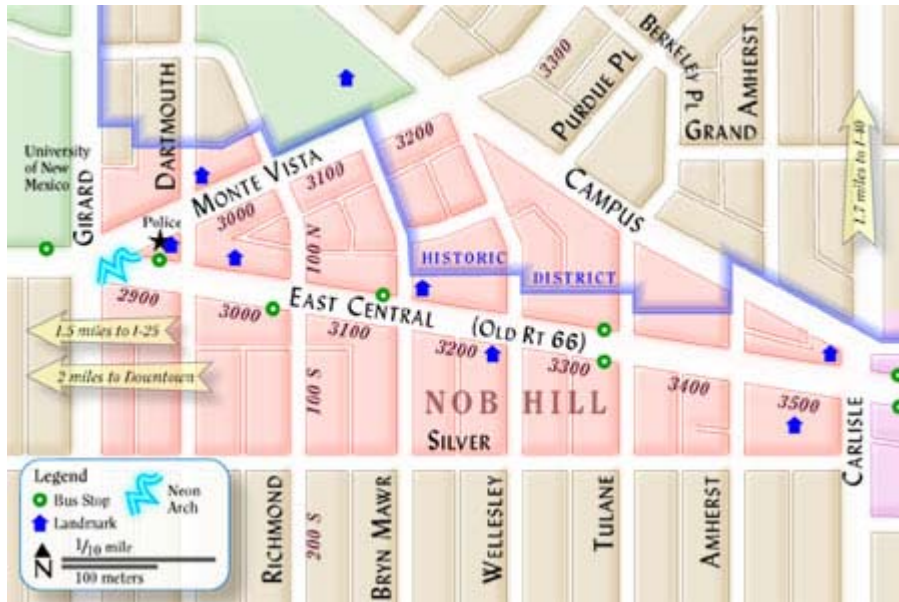




Nob Hill HIGHLAND

RENAISSANCE CORPORATION

Albuquerque, New Mexico Walking Tour of Nob Hill



The Hendren Building was a Nob Hill landmark, readily visible from Central Avenue and Monte Vista Boulevard and still owned by the Hendren family. Until recently faced with shiny black tile, it is curved at its corner to follow the angle of the intersection. Its appearance reflects J.L. Hendren's recollection of a photograph of a similar commercial building he had seen and architect T. Charles Gaastra's efforts to incorporate that vision into the plans he drew. It is "one of the finest examples of the Streamlined Moderne Style found in Albuquerque," according to historian David Kammer. Books are now sold in the curved corner where Mr. Carmel once stirred his cherry cokes.

Moving east along Central, welcome to the Lobo Theatre site, which had earlier supported the chunk of "ice" known as the Iceberg Cafe. The theater opened in 1938 with what it called the "great" American motion picture, "In Old Chicago." It was "scientifically air-conditioned"--a place to gather, visit with neighbors and avoid reality. It had a "nicely furnished room" with a nurse in charge to care for small children during the performance. The cooled air was probably crucial,



Walking Tour of Nob Hill Continued...



considering the hot New Mexico sun and the number of movies advertised as "seething." Like the Hendren Building, the Lobo Theatre block is still owned by the original family, the Hyders, who remodeled the block in the late 1980s.

A couple of blocks further east is Monte Vista Fire Station, now a restaurant, once an art gallery, but originally an actual fire station, despite its pueblo design. It was the third fire station in Albuquerque, built in 1936 by the Works Progress Administration. G.H. Blumenthal designer of Highland High School and the old Albuquerque airport terminal designed it. Originally, it had some sort of striped decor in front, but City Commission Chairman Clyde Tingley had it changed. (He thought it looked like a barbershop.) Construction of the fire station stimulated commercial and residential development in Nob Hill by lowering fire insurance rates for builders and property owners.

Just before Carlisle is Nob Hill Business Center, built after World War II as the city's first drive-in shopping facility and the first retail center of any sort outside of downtown. It was called "Waggoman's Folly" after the developer; people were sure that no one would ever drive that far just to shop! It actually attracted some of the finest shops to Nob Hill, shops like Stromberg's Clothing and Paris Shoes, who moved from downtown and, later, when the shopping malls were built in the new uptown area, moved on.

A proposal made to list the center on the National Register of Historic Places raised the ire of Sen. Howard Metzenbaum of Ohio, who had helped to draft the tax-credit law. It was the first time that a building less than 50 years of age and so commercial a property was proposed for the designation. Despite the controversy, the center was approved.

The white-stuccoed concrete block building is a one-story, U-shaped, Streamlined Moderne structure with four towers placed at the inner corners of the "U." Translucent tower windows were originally lit at night by colored neon. Note the brick belt courses that inject a Southwestern flavor, resembling as they do the brick copings found on New Mexico Territorial and Territorial Revival buildings.