

Temple B'nai Sholom at 427 N. Ninth is an example of Moorish Revival architecture

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Temple B'nai Sholom at 427 N. Ninth is an important architectural landmark for Quincy.

It is an example of a rare style of architecture, Moorish Revival, and is one of the last remaining designs of the early Quincy architect John Bunce.

In the 19th century when the temple was built, Exotic Revival styles were popular. The Moorish

Revival style, one of the Exotic styles, became associated with the Jewish reform movement in America, partly because it distinguished synagogues from churches. The style also had historical precedent in the pre-15th century Mudéjar synagogues of Spain.

The temple's most spectacular feature, its original twin 80-foot Moorish towers with onion domes, were lost in the 1945 tornado. Moorish features remain, such as the curvilinear parapet, the keyhole, hand-blown rondel — or bottle glass windows — and the stages of progression of the towers.

The temple has other special architec-

tural features such as the two belt courses and decorative brick work at the start of the second stage of the towers. The front entrance projection with decorative stonework and engraved marble Ten Commandments are remarkable.

Temple history indicates the women of the temple played a vital role in raising the \$15,500 that it cost to build the temple in 1870 and have played a vital role in raising money through the years to preserve their spiritual home.

Throughout its long history, the congregation has preserved the original style of the temple while meeting the needs of progress. The original gas chandeliers are now electric and the detailed black and white tile entryway floor is still in place. In the 1960s a skilled craftsman painted the high beamed ceiling a heavenly blue with

intricate gold designs.

The original opalescent stained-glass windows on the north and south sides are intact. Phyllis Snodgrass, owner of The Glassworks, said their design is a 1500s Celtic design that was influenced by the Spanish. The round stained-glass windows have a very unusual six-sided design that is not typical for round windows.



An organ from the 1870s is still in the slanted-floored choir loft. The organ was recently refurbished for the temple's production of "Rooted in the River," taken from the diary of Elias Epstein.

In the past 10 years, the small congregation of 40 families has renovated the old electrical system, added storm windows, installed a new furnace and put a new roof on the building.

Last summer, the temple was repainted. The intricately carved arches at the back of the temple, the original wooden pews with prayer book holders, the exterior of the ark and architectural features on the Bimah were painted black with detailed gold trim.

