

Form 10-300
(Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: CALIFORNIA
COUNTY: LOS ANGELES
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE: MAY 29 1975

1. NAME	
COMMON:	LEONIS ADOBE
AND/OR HISTORIC:	

2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: 23537 Calabasas Road			
CITY OR TOWN: Calabasas		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 27th	
STATE: California	CODE: 06	COUNTY: Los Angeles	CODE: 037

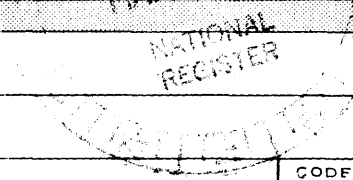
3. CLASSIFICATION			
CATEGORY (Check One) <input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	OWNERSHIP <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	STATUS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious	
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY			
OWNER'S NAME: Leonis Adobe Association			
STREET AND NUMBER: 23537 Calabasas Road			
CITY OR TOWN: Calabasas		STATE: California	
		CODE: 06	

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION			
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: City Hall, Los Angeles			
STREET AND NUMBER: Los Angeles City Hall, Los Angeles			
CITY OR TOWN: Los Angeles		STATE: California	
		CODE: 06	

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS			
TITLE OF SURVEY: HAB (1) Calif. 342; Cultural Heritage Board Monument #1; Native Daughter \$269 (5-2-53)			
DATE OF SURVEY: HAB 1963			
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Library of Congress			
CITY OR TOWN: Washington		STATE: District of Columbia	
		CODE: 11	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



STATE: California
COUNTY: Los Angeles
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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The original adobe was a two story, Monterey style building with porches and balconies on at least three sides. It had a stairway at the rear. The interior of the first floor was divided by a wooden partition into two rooms. The second floor had a center hall with a bedroom on each side. The exterior and interior walls, except for the woodwork, were of adobe brick, plastered with adobe and whitewashed. This building remains virtually intact, although it was added to and somewhat remodeled by Miguel Leonis in the late 1870's. The building was restored to its appearance after Leonis's remodeling; considered its period of "highest and best use".

PRESENT PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The present appearance is that of a two-story Monterey style adobe dwelling, as partially remodeled in the late 1870's. It has a pitched shingle roof, porches on both floors on three sides of the house, and a Calabasas fieldstone foundation. The front adobe wall of the first floor has been panelled over with vertical tongue and groove redwood, the rest of the adobe walls are exposed. Half of the right side (east) and all of the rear (north) porches are enclosed with board and batten and divided into several rooms. On the left (west) of the adobe there is no porch, but a one story board and batten addition with a flat roof, originally of tin squares soldered together, now covered with asphalt paper. There is a brick fireplace and a tall chimney on the left (west) side. The front (south) and rear (north) walls of the addition are parapetted, so that the roof is not visible. The windows in the adobe walls and the frame addition are double hung, 6 over 6, with solid wood exterior shutters having cast iron hinges carrying the legend "Pat'd 1843" and apparently imported from the Eastern United States. Two rear windows of the frame addition and all of the windows in the board and batten enclosure of the porches are single 6 light sash sliding sideways and without shutters.

The doors are typical mid-19th century four panelled doors, except that the ground floor front and rear doors to the adobe portion are extra thick, with the interiors being vertical tongue and groove boards. The hardware is mid-19th century cast iron, with porcelain doorknobs.

The house is painted white, with red and blue trim on the doors, windows and shutters, as determined by careful research.

The interior walls of the adobe portion downstairs are panelled with vertical 1X6 tongue and groove redwood boards with a bead detail, covering the original whitewashed adobe walls. There is a 1X6 tongue and groove ceiling and 1X6 tongue and groove plank floor. The 1X6 trim has a bead

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **C. 1844, restored to C. 1879.**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

ARCHITECTURE:

The house is a good example of a Monterey style adobe. Subsequent owners modified it almost entirely by additions: oak hardwood over the pine floors, a wing added to the rear, etc. In hardly any way did they disturb the early structure, so that most of the restoration was an uncovering process. As a consequence a very high percentage of the building is original rather than reconstruction.

AGE:

Documents now lost gave the construction dates as 1844-46, while California was still Mexican, and earlier than any remaining building in the San Fernando Valley with the exception of the San Fernando Mission.

HISTORY:

While the origin of the adobe is still obscure, it became in the late 1870's the home of some fascinating people. The wife, Espiritu Chihulla, was an Indian, the daughter of Odon. Odon and his brothers had been in charge of raising cattle for the San Fernando Mission. As a consequence, when the Mission lands were divided they were given a rancho, called El Escorpion. Espiritu was raised at the Mission and later inherited the Rancho, making her reasonably well-to-do. Her husband, Miguel Leonis, was a Basque shepherd who increased her property substantially, remodeled the Adobe in the late 1870's, and died in 1889. His will described her as his "housekeeper" and cut her off with a pittance. Her sixteen year battle for her rights against overwhelming odds is a part of California history deserving of further study. She won the battle in 1905 and died at the Adobe in 1906.

EDUCATIONAL VALUE:

The high percentage of original material in the Adobe makes it more than usually valuable for scholars. Not only is the building largely original, but it has numerous original photographs of the family, several original pieces of furniture,

continued on Form 10-300a

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bell, Major Horace - ON THE OLD WEST COAST, Reminiscences of a Ranger, Grosset and Dunlap, New York, 1930
 Newmark, Harris - SIXTY YEARS IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, Knickerbocker Press, New York, 1926
 Keefer- HISTORY OF THE SAN FERNANDO VALLEY, Stillman Printers, Los Angeles, 1934
 THOMPSON AND WEST - HISTORY OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY, Oakland 1880 republished 1960 by Howell-North, Berkeley, P. 105 refers to "McGill Leonis"

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		34° 09' 27"	118° 38' 22"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: One-half acre (1/2)

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Mrs. Ralph Kelly, Mr. Ray Phillips

ORGANIZATION: Leonis Adobe Association DATE: Oct 10, 1974

STREET AND NUMBER: 23537 Calabasas Road,

CITY OR TOWN: Calabasas, STATE: California CODE: 06

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: [Signature]
 Title: State Historic Preservation Officer

Date: JAN 2 1975

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

[Signature]
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 5/29/75

ATTEST:
[Signature]
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: 5.23.75

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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RECEIVED MAR 14 1975

DATE ENTERED MAY 29 1975

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

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#7 Description, Leonis Adobe continued

detail and the deep reveals around windows and doors are also panelled. The
woodwork (except the natural wood floor) is painted cream with a pumpkin yellow
trim. The frame addition is of single construction with an open beam ceiling,
divided into a dining room and kitchen. The woodwork is painted flat white to
resemble the original whitewash. The floor is the original adobe. On the west
wall of the dining room is a brick fireplace.

#8 Singificance, Leonis Adobe continued

and is furnished with 1870 and 1880 furniture and Persian carpets. An old barn
dates back to 1912. A wealth of early photographs and two early watercolors in
the Southwest Museum collection have enabled us accurately to reconstruct such
outbuildings as a dovecote, chicken coops, bake oven, grape arbor, well and wind-
mill, and tank house. One of the two privies is original, the other from a ranch
nearby.

The barn contains a blacksmith shop and an early threshing machine; other wagons
and early agricultural implements are nearby. The dovecote has pigeons, the
chicken coops, Black Spanish chickens of a breed brought from Spain by the
Franciscan Missionaries. The windmill pumps water, when the wind blows.

So, rather than a single isolated building, as many Adobes are now found, the
Leonis Adobe provides a rather complete display of a working ranch of a century ago.
For this reason, it is very actively used for field trips by Los Angeles area
schools as well as many other types of organizations from Scouts (both boy and
girl) to senior citizens and groups of tourists.

The Adobe is on the Historic American Building Survey, has been marked by the
Native Daughters of the Golden West, has been designated Historic Cultural Monu-
ment Number One by the Cultural Heritage Board of the City of Los Angeles, has
received an award from the Conference of California Historical Societies.