

Form 10-300  
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <b>TEXAS</b>	
COUNTY: <b>Bexar</b>	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	<b>FEB 23 1972</b>

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
**Mission San Juan Capistrano**

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**.8 mile north of Loop 410 on Mission Road**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**San Antonio**

STATE <b>Texas</b>	CODE <b>048</b>	COUNTY: <b>Bexar</b>	CODE <b>029</b>
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**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
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"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
**Catholic Archdiocese of San Antonio**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Chancery Office, P.O. Box 13190**

CITY OR TOWN: <b>San Antonio</b>	STATE: <b>Texas</b>	CODE <b>048</b>
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**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
**Chancery Office, Archdiocese of Bexar County Courthouse and San Antonio**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**P.O. Box 13190**

CITY OR TOWN: <b>San Antonio</b>	STATE: <b>Texas</b>	CODE <b>048</b>
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**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
**Historic American Buildings Survey TEX-321**

DATE OF SURVEY: **1934**     Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
**Library of Congress**

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: <b>Washington</b>	STATE: <b>DC</b>	CODE <b>008</b>
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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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input checked="" 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 Mission San Juan Capistrano, one of the five San Antonio missions, underwent several building periods during its ninety-three-year existence as a Spanish outpost in the New World.

The mission compound follows a traditional plan of rooms arranged side by side in a rough quadrangle around a plaza. Entrance to these rooms is gained through walls facing the plaza. Spaces not occupied by structures are walled (see site map). Minor modifications on this plan were made in the several building periods of the mission's life.

By 1756 a church had been completed, with a cloistered convent and a granary. The Indian quarters were composed of jacales, homes made up of upright posts plastered with adobe for walls and thatched roofs. Evidence of these jacales (rows of post holes evenly and closely spaced along the south wall) were revealed during excavations at the site in 1971 (Mardith K. Schuetz, personal communication).

In 1762 Fray Mariano Francisco de los Dolores inspected the mission. He states that a second church was under construction and the convent expanded. Indians were still living in the temporary quarters (Schuetz; 1968: 40-42).

The apex of mission development is considered to be that period between 1756 and 1777 when the economic stability of the mission allowed it to supply goods to other missions.

In 1794 Mission San Juan Capistrano was partially secularized. Twelve Indian families received ownership of mission land and properties, but by 1823 (the complete secularization of the mission) when San Juan property was sold at auction nearly all the Indian population had disappeared and only four or five Indians were left at the mission (Schuetz, 1968: 58).

What remains now are the ruins of the second church (c. 1756-1763/64) and the third church (post 1762), originally the granary, that chapel which is now in use. During excavations conducted in January-March 1971 foundations of what is believed to be the first church (1731) were uncovered. (Mardith K. Schuetz, personal communication).

Additional remains of the mission complex are the walls surrounding it, foundations of some of the Indian quarters, the convent, granary foundations, the well and an old residence (c. 1824) built within the mission walls after its secularization (see site plan).

Restoration done by the Works Progress Administration in the 1930s was located for the most part on the south and east walls. Excavations conducted by them at this time also uncovered part of the complex located within the plaza. Additional res-

(see continuation sheet #1)

S E E I N S T R U C T I O N S

**9. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |                                        |                                       |                                                  |                                       |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input checked="" 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) **1731**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |                                                  |                                                 |                                                         |                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input checked="" 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

Spanish interest in the occupation of Texas was based on the presence of the French in Louisiana and the native inhabitants of the area. The basis of the mission/presidio system was the extension of controls to hold the area through Christianizing the natives and settlement of the area.

"The center and defense of the western settlements was the presidio of San Antonio de Bexar, founded in 1718. By its side stood the mission of San Antonio de Valero...Within a stretch of twelve miles down the river there were four other missions, named Concepción, San José, San Juan Capistrano, and San Francisco de la Espada, and located in the order here given" (Bolton, 1970: 5).

After a succession of moves beginning in East Texas, San Juan was finally established in 1731 along the banks of the San Antonio River. The sporadic life in East Texas, move to Central Texas, and final permanency in San Antonio came as a result of the inability of the Spanish to send supplies, equipment and personnel to the outposts.

Missionary activity at San Juan lasted from 1731 (the establishment of the mission) through its complete secularization in 1824. Its longevity is evidenced by the fact that today, 240 years after its establishment, it is still a functioning parish.

Mission San Juan Capistrano stands, with its companion missions, as an historical and political symbol of the Spanish colonial empire in Texas and its principal vehicle, the mission system. Additionally, it is an architectural reminder of and memorial to the "accomplishments of Spain's Franciscan missionaries" built because of the success of the padres in their cultural and religious conversion of the Indian population.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bolton, Herbert E. 1970. Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century. Texas History Paperbacks TH-8. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Castaneda, Carlos E. 1936. Our Catholic Heritage in Texas. III. Austin: Von Boeckman-Jones.

Schuetz, Mardith K. 1968. The History and Archeology of Mission San Juan Capistrano, San Antonio, Texas. 2 vols. State Building Commission Archeological Program. Reports #11 and 12.

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	29 ° 20 ' 00 "	98 ° 27 ' 21 "		0 ' ' "	0 ' ' "	
NE	29 ° 20 ' 00 "	98 ° 27 ' 10 "				
SE	29 ° 19 ' 51 "	98 ° 27 ' 10 "				
SW	29 ° 19 ' 51 "	98 ° 27 ' 21 "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 15 acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Wayne Bell, Project Director  
Marsha Jackson, Research Associate

ORGANIZATION: Texas State Historical Survey Committee DATE: 10-20-71

STREET AND NUMBER: 108 W. 15th Street

CITY OR TOWN: Austin STATE: Texas CODE: 048

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

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: Smelt Johnson

Title: State Liaison Officer

Date: 10-26-71

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

Ernest A. Connelly  
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

FEB 23 1972

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

William J. Stuebel  
Keeper of the National Register

JAN 27 1972

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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(Continuation Sheet) #1

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toration sponsored by the Archdiocese of San Antonio in 1967 followed archeological work conducted by the Texas State Historical Survey Committee (Schuetz, 1968). Continuing restoration of the major buildings is being directed by the architectural firm of Ford, Powell and Carson of San Antonio for the archdiocese.

Beginning on the west wall with the chapel and moving clockwise, those standing buildings and ruins are:

Post 1763 chapel (present church; originally a granary)

The most prominent building at the site is the recently restored chapel. The rectangular building is of rubble construction with buttresses along the east and west walls. The east wall buttresses occur at regular intervals along a decorative arcade of segmental arches. A two-tiered espadaña, located at the north end of the east facade, has three bells arranged with one in the center of the top tier, two in the bottom tier. Finales on either side of both tiers, as well as one on the top of the highest section, complete the decoration of the wall belfry.

The flat roof, which is surrounded by a parapet, slopes on the west. Canales project from this west wall. The exterior of the building is stuccoed.

Entrance to the chapel is gained along the east wall through double doors at the north end under the belfry. There is also another door in the center of the building and a third at the south end.

Indian quarters

Two restored Indian quarters stand to the immediate north of the chapel. The building now serves as residences for the caretakers. The small cottages are rectangular buildings of stucco-covered rubble construction. The side walls (south and north) extend to create a parapet for the thatched hip roof. An entrance is located at the north end of the east facade. Two windows are adjacent to the door on the south. The houses have chimneys on the north walls.

1824 house

A third residence--a small, one room, square house with a hip roof--stands against the east wall. Construction is of limestone blocks. This house was built on the mission grounds after the completed secularization of the mission (1824).

1756-1763/64 church ruins

Located along the east wall of the complex are the ruins of the large stone church built c. 1756-1763/64, which was the second church constructed at the site. The octagonal baptistry

(see continuation sheet #2)

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(Continuation Sheet) #2

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on the southeast corner and the south wall were reconstructed by the Works Progress Administration in the 1930s.

Convento

The convento, located along the west wall adjacent to the chapel is of rubble construction. The rectangular building has two entrances on the east. The flat roof is surrounded by a parapet and slopes toward the west. Canales project from the west wall. The building has been restored and now serves as a museum.

# MISSION SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO

## SITE PLAN

