

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received DEC - 9 1983
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic San Ysidro Oratorio

and/or common Los Cordovas Chapel

2. Location

street & number ~~NR~~ NM. 240 not for publication

city, town Los Cordovas vicinity of

state New Mexico code 35 county Taos code 055

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	N/A being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Ms. Anna Muller

street & number 501 11th Street, NW

city, town Albuquerque vicinity of state New Mexico 87102

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Taos County Courthouse

street & number Box 676

city, town Taos state New Mexico 87571

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title State Register of Cultural Properties #783 has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date September 16, 1980 federal state county local

depository for survey records Historic Preservation Division, 228 E. Palace Ave.

city, town Santa Fe state New Mexico 87503

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The San Ysidro Oratorio is a single story, mud plastered adobe structure with a roof and a single entrance, a double-leaf wood door opening to the east. Buttresses have been added to stabilize the 1845 structure. Two simple 2/2 wood frame windows are located on the south wall. Vigas project below the slight roof overhang. The Chapel was originally part of a 10-room quadrangle with a central patio and a torreon (watch tower) owned by the Don Juan Romero family. A wing of the quad and the Chapel remain today. The quad wing, which extends west from the rear wall of the Chapel, has been owned by a different family since 1920 and is not included in the nomination. A traditional coyote fence of upright poles encloses the Chapel.

The Chapel once contained two altars, one located on the west wall of the east room and one located on the north wall of the west room. A large adobe arched entry connects the two rooms. Two of the bultos (carved wood saint figures) that were located in the Chapel were of Jesus on the Cross and of San José, the family patron saint. Both have been relocated in other chapels. Other bultos are still in the family and are owned by Ciria Montoya and Carolina Cardenas. The original hand carved remain in the west room.

In 1975, interior walls were replastered with mud and finished with tierra blanca (a fine mud plaster). The c. 1940 wood plank wood flooring was retained. Two traditional corner fireplaces were added, with no other interior alterations. The cement plaster was removed from the exterior walls and two supporting buttresses were added at this time. The south side has no foundation (typical of many early adobe buildings); a shallow banco (bench) was added to support the wall on this side. The exterior walls were then plastered in mud.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1845 **Builder/Architect** Don Juan Romero

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

San Ysidro Oratorio was built in 1845 and was subsequently consecrated by Archbishop Jean Baptiste Lamy, who arrived from France in 1850 and became the Bishop of New Mexico in 1853. Mass was performed by the Ranchos de Taos priest every Sunday until the late 1960's. At that time the chapel was converted to residential use and the altars were replaced by fireplaces. The chapel was originally part of a 10-room quadrangle with a central patio and a large torreon (defensive tower) to the west. The complex was the home of Don Juan Felipe Romero, an important member of the Spanish colonial village. The Oratorio is one of few extant in the State; it has remained in the Romero family since its construction.

Little is known about the early settlement of Los Cordovas. According to a WPA Writers' Project account, the community was established by Don Adan Cordova and his wife Dona Juliana Torres, natives of the province of Madrid, Spain who came to the area from nearby Truchas, New Mexico in the late 18th century. The community has remained a small rural settlement of farmers, who raise cattle and crops of corn, wheat and alfalfa.

Appropriately, the Oratorio--the first religious structure in Los Cordovas--was named in honor of San Ysidro Labrador, the patron saint of the farmer.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bunting, Bainbridge. Early Architecture in New Mexico.
Interview: Col. Gabriel Chavez, Taos, New Mexico 11/83.
WPA Writers' Project, File 5-5-56 #1; History Library, Santa Fe, NM

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Los Cordovas

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	1	3
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 Zone

4	4	3	6	1	8	1	0
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 Easting

4	0	2	1	6	8	1	5
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 Northing

B

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 Zone

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 Easting

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 Northing

C

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 Zone

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 Easting

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 Northing

D

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 Zone

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 Easting

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 Northing

E

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 Zone

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 Northing

G

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 Easting

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 Northing

H

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 Zone

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 Easting

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 Northing

Verbal boundary description and justification Tract 16, Map 42, Survey 2: Taos County.
Includes the house, previously used as a chapel, and a small yard. Boundaries established by this plot have served as the chapel boundaries since c. 1926.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state N/A code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ms. Anna Muller

organization N/A

date 8/82

street & number 501 11th Street, NW

telephone (505) 247-2603

city or town Albuquerque

state New Mexico 87102

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Thomas W. Muller

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 11/30/83

For NPS use only

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

Delores Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date

1/5/84

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration