

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

MAR 10 1977

DATE ENTERED

SEP 13 1977

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

** The Val Verde Hotel

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

203 Manzanares Street

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Socorro

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

New Mexico

__ VICINITY OF

CODE
35

COUNTY

Socorro

CODE

053

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

 DISTRICT
 BUILDING(S)
 STRUCTURE
 SITE
 OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

 PUBLIC
 PRIVATE
 BOTH
PUBLIC ACQUISITION
 IN PROCESS
 BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

 OCCUPIED
 UNOCCUPIED
 WORK IN PROGRESS
ACCESSIBLE
 YES: RESTRICTED
 YES: UNRESTRICTED
 NO

PRESENT USE

 AGRICULTURE
 COMMERCIAL
 EDUCATIONAL
 ENTERTAINMENT
 GOVERNMENT
 INDUSTRIAL
 MILITARY
 MUSEUM
 PARK
 PRIVATE RESIDENCE
 RELIGIOUS
 SCIENTIFIC
 TRANSPORTATION
 OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Dr. Gale Billings

STREET & NUMBER

1307 Lopezville Road

CITY, TOWN

Socorro

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

New Mexico

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Socorro County Clerk's Office

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Socorro

STATE

New Mexico

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

New Mexico State Register of Cultural Properties

DATE

September 21, 1973

__ FEDERAL STATE __ COUNTY __ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

State Planning Office

404 Don Gaspar

CITY, TOWN

Santa Fe

STATE

New Mexico

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input 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

Erected in 1919 at the northeast corner of Sixth and Manzanaras Streets in the central New Mexico town of Socorro, the Val Verde Hotel is a 140'x140' U-shaped building made of yellow concrete brick. An interesting example of Spanish Mission Revival architectural style, much in vogue in the Southwest when the Val Verde was constructed, the building's design features a three-story central section flanked by two one-story wings which form a patio. Shielded from the traffic along Manzanaras Street by a low wall and two enormous spruce trees, the handsomely landscaped patio is enclosed on three sides by an arcade which shades the first floor of the building. The high arched facade of the structure's mid-section, a characteristic element of California Mission style, which rises above the upper story is topped by a wooden flagpole and large weathervane. Over the ends of the portal next to the street are two silver painted cement domes. The flat roof is drained by a series of canales (rain spouts) which protrude through the firewall around the patio.

The walk leading from Manzanaras Street through the patio to the hotel's main entrance was originally illuminated by a pair of concrete lamp posts which are still in place but no longer functional. Just behind the lamp posts on the ends of the wall enclosing the patio are two cement urns used as planters flanking the walk to the lobby's entrance, which is located on the ground floor of the central section under the arcade. The entry is composed of large French doors under a transom between two full length windows with all the sash painted a bright royal blue. Inside to the left of the entrance, past a broad wood staircase leading to the upper floors, stands the heavy main desk, also made of dark wood, which forms a right angle that blocks off the northwest corner of the lobby. The same dark wood was used again in the massive exposed beams and pilasters on the ceiling and walls. On the wall opposite the desk on the other side of a high brick fireplace hangs a huge grizzly bear skin, a hunting trophy of days gone by, now somewhat frayed. Originally the lobby and many of the other rooms were decorated by reproductions of paintings by the noted western artist Frederic Remington.

In the northeast corner on the first floor of the central section is a large apartment for the hotel manager. Adjoining this suite and opening off the lobby into the east wing is a large 35'x35' dining room which overlooks the patio through three sets of French doors. Boasting a hardwood floor, it doubled as a ballroom on many occasions. The lower half of the walls are covered with sections of wainscoting which alternate with panels painted in a brown and orange design. A frieze circumscribes the room 12" below the ceiling in which an artist has rendered southwestern desert scenes. Connected to the dining room on the south is the kitchen, also 35'x35'; almost all of the equipment from range to waffle irons is still in place. At the south end of the east wing next to the kitchen but opening onto Manzanaras Street is an area originally used for storage but later converted to a combination barber and beauty shop. It is now used by the present owner, a mining engineer, as an office and drafting room.

Access to the large bedrooms west of the desk and the smaller ones in the

(See Continuation Sheet Page 1)

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 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" 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

Erected 1919

~~BUILDER~~ ARCHITECT Trost and Trost (local report)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Almost unchanged since its construction in 1919 from plans reportedly drawn by architects Trost and Trost of Albuquerque and El Paso, the Val Verde is the last of a series of interesting hotels erected in the central Rio Grande valley community of Socorro, New Mexico during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Although agriculture and mining were the mainstays of Socorro's economy during its early years, tourism, an extremely important industry in New Mexico, has become an increasingly significant element. Beginning in 1880 with the arrival of the Santa Fe railroad the business of providing food and lodging for travelers has grown intermittently in Socorro, particularly since the construction of U.S. Highways 85 and 60, main north-south and east-west routes which intersect there. During the late 19th century early tourists could find accommodations in Socorro in such impressive hostelries as the Grand Central and Park hotels located on the plaza, the traditional center of the community, or the Windsor which was erected on the east side of town nearer the depot. Destroyed by fire in 1905, the Windsor stood just east of the present Val Verde on land now occupied by a large one-story neo-Territorial style structure, housing the Socorro Electric Co-operative.

The town of Socorro is situated on or near the site of a major Piro Indian pueblo in existence at the time of the Spanish conquest. It was given its name Socorro, the Spanish word for succor, by conquistador Don Juan de Oñate, first governor of New Mexico, because of the badly needed supplies of grain given by the Indian inhabitants to his men during his historic 1598 colonizing expedition into New Mexico. In the 1600's several Spaniards established haciendas nearby but these were abandoned during the Pueblo Revolt of 1680. At that time many of the inhabitants of the pueblo, allied to the Spaniards by fear of Apache attack, accompanied the retreating settlers to the El Paso area where they established the new pueblo of Socorro del Sur (Socorro of the South) in that area. Following the Spanish re-conquest of New Mexico in 1692-3 continued Apache pressure prevented permanent settlement in the area until about 1815 when a land grant was made by Governor Alberto Maynez to a group of colonists who established the plaza of "San Miguel del Socorro." Following U.S. occupation of New Mexico in 1846 silver and lead ore were discovered in the 1860's at Magdalena, twenty-seven miles to the west. This marked the beginning of thirty years of mining activity in the region which reached boom proportions with the construction of three smelters during the 1880's at Socorro, which was also the distributing center for such nearby camps as Magdalena and Kelly. In 1889 the New Mexico School of Mines, now known

(See Continuation Sheet Page 1)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

New Mexico State Records, State Records Center and Archives, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Records of the Secretary of State, Incorporation Records. Vol. 6. Socorro Chieftain March 18, May 27, 1922, May 6, 1975.

Christiansen, Paige W. The Story of Mining in New Mexico. Socorro, 1974. (See Continuation Sheet Page 2)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approximately 1/2 acre.

UTM REFERENCES

A	13	325	620	3769	980
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		

B					
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

John O. Baxter, Archivist

ORGANIZATION

State Records Center and Archives

DATE

February 22, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

404 Montezuma St.

TELEPHONE

827-2321

CITY OR TOWN

Santa Fe

STATE

New Mexico 87503

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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

Thomas W. Mark

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

2-25-77

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Lowell

DATE

9/13/77

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHITECTURE AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

Charles

DATE

9-2-77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

MAR 10 1977

DATE ENTERED

SEP 10 1977

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 & 8 PAGE #1

#7

west wing is provided by a corridor beginning next to the staircase. Immediately behind the desk, a 4'x6' dumb waiter was installed which runs between the partial basement where the hotel's steam heating plant is located, to the second floor. The hallway ends at a two-room suite opening on the patio which was used for a salesman's display or as a meeting room. The end of the wing beyond these rooms has been partitioned off for offices and has been rented at various times to a number of different tenants. Both the offices and rooms have double hung windows with blue sash and six over three lights of the type found throughout the hotel.

On the second floor which extends to the south over the arcade are several large rooms with bath opening on a central hallway. A small staircase rises to the third floor which has a much smaller floor plan containing two sample rooms for salesmen, five small bedrooms for employees and a bathroom.

#8

as New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, was established by act of the Territorial legislature but by this time mining and smelting had already begun to decline.

Despite the slump in business activity which began with the closing of the three smelters and several mines in the area and which continued past the turn of the century, a group of local businessmen, filled with the community pride and "boosterism" found throughout the west circa World War I, incorporated the Socorro Hotel Co. in April, 1919. Hoping to capitalize on the growth of tourism which came with increased automobile travel for both business and pleasure, the new syndicate planned to construct an impressive hotel to be known as the "Val Verde." Headed by mining executive Cony T. Brown, a civic leader who had become wealthy by recycling slag heaps at nearby smelters, the group included several other Socorro businessmen and Darcy E. Snider, of Ft. Smith, Arkansas, an experienced hotel manager who was to be in charge of the new hostelry. Snider, associated for many years with the Grier hotel chain in the south and mid-west, moved to Socorro in May, 1919 and managed the Val Verde until his sudden death three years later from pneumonia. Following this unfortunate event his widow, Lucinda Paxton Snider, took charge of the hotel until 1929 when failing health forced her to move to California. At that time direction of the business was turned over to Mr. and Mrs. Walter T. Paxton, Mrs. Snider's brother and sister-in-law. Paxton died in 1955 but Mrs. Paxton continued to look after affairs at the Val Verde for another twenty years until her own death in 1975.

During the first twenty-five years of operation the Val Verde was not only operated as a first class hotel, one of the finest in the Southwest,
(See Continuation Sheet Page 2)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	MAR 10 1977
DATE ENTERED	SEP 13 1977

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 & 9 PAGE #2

#8 but was also the social center of the region. Boasting the services of a highly skilled chef it was the scene of innumerable political dinners, wedding receptions and business meetings. During the 1940's, however, increased competition from newer motels in the area and changes in the life-style of the region's population and the traveling public resulted in a serious decline in business. It was no longer possible to maintain the large kitchen and dining room staff necessary for the hotel's mode of operation. Mrs. Paxton continued to run the Val Verde but on a greatly reduced scale until her death two years ago. However, the hotel was reopened as recently as Thanksgiving weekend of 1976 when a late fall blizzard stranded hundreds of motorists in Socorro, many of whom were accommodated in The Val Verde, a reminder of better days. The present owner, proud of the building's heritage is seeking an appropriate adaptive use, probably a combination of apartments and offices so that the building can be maintained.

#9 Nieman, Charles F. "Spanish Times and Boom Times: Toward an Architectural History of Socorro, New Mexico," Socorro County Historical Society Publications in History, Vol. VI, Socorro, 1972.
Pearce, T. M. New Mexico Place Names, A Geographical Dictionary. Albuquerque, 1965.
Twitchell, Ralph Emerson. The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, Vol. IV. Cedar Rapids, 1917.