

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

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

HISTORIC

La Purisima Mission

AND/OR COMMON

La Purisima Mission

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 4 miles east of Lompoc, near the intersection of Calif. 1 and 150.

CITY, TOWN

Lompoc

☒ VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

13th

STATE

California

CODE

06

COUNTY

Santa Barbara

CODE

083

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

Department of Parks and Recreation, State of California

STREET & NUMBER

P.O. Box 2390

CITY, TOWN

Sacramento

VICINITY OF

STATE

California 95811

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

Santa Barbara County Registry of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Santa Barbara

STATE

California

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

☒ EXCELLENT
☐ GOOD
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED
☐ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED

☒ ALTERED **reconstructed**

CHECK ONE

☐ ORIGINAL SITE

☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

In 1935, "after years of total neglect, vandalism and despoliation, the mission buildings were not much more than heaps of rubbish. Yet, diligent and patient examination of records and photographs, interviews with early settlers, and archeologists and structural study has made possible the almost complete restoration of the compound as it existed before secularization. Where details of the original were lacking, such as wood carving, in colors, and furnishings, extant examples from other missions were copied. Even the adobes and the burned bricks were made in the original manner."¹

A California mission was not only a church, but an entire settlement that was usually arranged around the four sides in an open square or quadrangle. A mission thus included in its compound the padres quarters, storehouses, workshops, and quarters for the soldiers stationed to guard the mission, as well as the church. Outside this square was usually situated the Indian Village where the neophytes lived.

La Purisima Mission, however, did not follow this usual plan. Its buildings were strung out in a straight line along the foot of the long hill. At the northern end of this line were located the padres' quarters and to the east of these, the principal gardens, with the fountains, lavadereas, and storage cisterns. Next in the line of mission buildings were storehouses, workshops, and quarters for the soldiers; these had a small enclosed patio on their western side. The mission church and Spanish cemetery were located at the southern extremity of the line. The Indian Village and cemetery were situated about 400 feet to the east of the line of mission structures.

La Purisima Mission is comprised of the following reconstructed structures:

1. The Padres' Residence. Built in 1815, this is a one-and-a-half story adobe building that measures 318 by 65 feet and has 4½-foot thick walls that are further strengthened by buttresses. Across its entire front extends a long colonade of 20 square fluted columns which support the tile roof. This building was chosen as the basis of the restoration since it was in the best state of preservation. Its massive four-foot walls withstood the rain and earthquakes better than the two-foot walls used in many of the buildings, with the exception of the church. Many early photographs together with careful measurements of the excavated building, provided an accurate picture of the original. Restored in 1935-37, the structure includes a chapel and the living quarters above which is located a hay loft.
2. Shops and Soldiers' Quarters. Constructed in 1816, this is a one-story L-shaped adobe building that measures 323 by 22 feet in the main section, with a 56-foot long wing. The adobe walls are 2½-foot thick and 20 feet high. Nine-foot wide tile-covered corridors extend along the length of both the east and west sides of the building. Reconstructed in 1940, this structure contains 17 rooms.

¹ Kurt Baer, Architecture of the California Missions (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1958), 6-8; The leading architectural authority on the California missions, Mr. Baer has written on this N.P.S. work, "Perhaps the outstanding example (of mission restoration) is the restoration undertaken in 1930's at Mission La Purisima Concepcion." (p.6).

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

☐ PREHISTORIC	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	☐ COMMUNITY PLANNING	☐ LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	☐ RELIGION
☐ 1400-1499	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	☐ CONSERVATION	☐ LAW	☐ SCIENCE
☐ 1500-1599	☐ AGRICULTURE	☐ ECONOMICS	☐ LITERATURE	☐ SCULPTURE
☐ 1600-1699	☐ ARCHITECTURE	☐ EDUCATION	☐ MILITARY	☐ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
☒ 1700-1799	☐ ART	☐ ENGINEERING	☐ MUSIC	☐ THEATER
☐ 1800-1899	☐ COMMERCE	☒ EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	☐ PHILOSOPHY	☐ TRANSPORTATION
☐ 1900-	☐ COMMUNICATIONS	☐ INDUSTRY	☐ POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	☐ OTHER (SPECIFY)
		☐ INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1787

1813-1818

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

With its completely authentic reconstruction of all the mission buildings and gardens, and set in an unaltered rural surrounding, La Purisima Concepcion today best illustrates the former mission way of life in California. La Purisima is the outstanding example of a detailed and accurate reconstruction of a complete California mission. While never one of the great missions, La Purisima Mission was representative of most of California's 21 missions.

HISTORY

La Purisima, the 11th in the mission chain, was founded by Father Fermin de Lasuen on December 8, 1787. The first site was located in what is now the town of Lompoc. Here, between 1801 and 1803, a large adobe church and many other adobe mission buildings were erected. On December 21, 1812, these structures were damaged beyond repair by a great earthquake and the torrential rains that followed. In 1813 the work of rebuilding the mission on a new site, its present location, was begun; this building program was completed in 1818.

On February 21, 1824, the news of the Indian uprising at Santa Ines mission reached La Purisima and its 1000 neophytes immediately joined in the revolt, sizing the mission and driving out the small Mexican garrison. The Indian fortified the buildings and held La-Purisima until March 16, when they were finally defeated by troops from the Presidio of Monterey.

In 1834 the mission was secularized by the Mexican government and its buildings quickly fell into ruins. In 1935 the State of California acquired 980 acres of the 1813-1834 mission site. Between 1935 and 1942, using the labor of the Civilian Conservation Corps, the National Park Service under took the partial reconstruction of the mission structures. In 1941 the site became a State Historical Monument and since that date the State of California has continued this program of careful reconstruction.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Baer, Kurt, Architecture of California Missions, Berkeley, 1958.
Berger, John A., The Franciscan Mission of California, Garden City, N.Y., 1948.
Engelhardt, Father Zephyen, Mission La Concepcion Purisima de Maria Santisima,
Ewing, Russel C., "Mission La Purisima Concepcion, California," NPS report, HSS Library, 1937.
Newcomb, Rexford, The Old Mission Churches and Historic Houses of California, Philadelphia
1925.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

980

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY

UTM REFERENCES

A | 1 | 7 | 3,7 | 3,6,0 | 3,8 | 40 | 9,8,0 |

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C | 1 | 7 | 3,4 | 6,1,0 | 3,8 | 39 | 8,2,0 |

B | 1 | 7 | 3,7 | 4,1,0 | 3,8 | 38 | 7,8,0 |

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

D | 1 | 7 | 3,4 | 8,5,0 | 3,8 | 40 | 9,2,0 |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION Mission La Concepcion Purisima de Maria Santisima is located in a fertile valley which remains undeveloped today preserving the environmental integrity of the mission site. As a result of recent acquisition, the state park now consists of 980 acres, an area large enough to include the old water system in Purisima Valley. For this reason the boundaries of the landmark have been drawn coterminous with those of the state park as indicated on USGS 7.5'-Lompoc Quadrangle-1959.

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

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Boundary determined by Patricia Heintzelman, Architectural Historian,
Landmark Review Project, original form prepared by Charles Snell, 1967.

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Historic Sites Survey

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

1100 L Street

523-5464

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Washington

D.C.

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 in accordance with the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

Designated by the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) on 11/24/58
Boundary Certified: June 7, 1978

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

11/24/58

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

(NATIONAL HISTORIC
LANDMARKS)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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La Purisima
Mission

CONTINUATION SHEET ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

3. The Mission Church. Built in 1818, this building collapsed in 1835 and was reconstructed in 1941. The adobe church is 174 feet long and 34 feet wide, and has 4-foot-thick plastered walls that are 19 feet high. The tile roof is supported by hand-hewn redwood beams that are lashed together by rawhide thongs. The floor is tile and a 12-foot wide covered corridor extends along the entire western side of the structure. The campanario or bell tower is located on the southeast corner of the church.

To the east, portions of the Indian village have been restored as follows;

4. Indian Infirmaryes. Built about 1817, this was restored in 1947.
5. Indian Dormitory. Constructed about 1815, this structure was reconstructed in 1949. Also located in this area are the foundations, ruins of an adobe structure 554 feet long and 25 feet wide, once containing 56 rooms of identical size, 9 by 17 feet, that housed the Indian families. Two connecting rooms extending across the width of this building served each family.

As a result of recent acquisition, the monument now consists of 980 acres, an area large enough to include the old water system in Purisima Valley. Water still flows from these springs. The water system was a marvel of mechanical ingenuity. Tapping three different springs, tile pipe and open tile-lined aqueducts carried the water down the canyon more than a mile into two twenty-foot fountain basins, a smaller fountain, and a cistern, all in front of the mission.

The mission gardens and water system were fully restored in 1938. The plantings in the garden are representative of the type of fruits, herbs, and flowers grown in the mission days. Now a State Historical Monument, the mission is open to visitors.