

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received AUG 14 1984

date entered SEP 13 1984

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

1. Name

historic Marentis House

and/or common Marentis House

2. Location

street & number 45 Monterey Street

N/A not for publication

city, town San Juan Bautista

N/A vicinity of

state California

code 06

county San Benito

code 069

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 checked="" 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	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<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 Michael Fritch and Ann Gilsean

street & number 45 Monterey Street

city, town San Juan Bautista

N/A vicinity of

state California 95045

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. San Benito County Recorder's Office

street & number San Benito County Courthouse, Room 206, 5th Street

city, town Hollister

state California 95045

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Historic Architectural Survey of San Juan Bautista for Proposed Project
title at State Highway 156 and The Alameda has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date July 1979 federal state county local

depository for survey records California Department of Transportation
Division of Transportation Planning, Environmental Planning

city, town 1120 N Street, Sacramento

state California

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input 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 <u> N/A </u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Marentis House, situated amidst a residential area at the base of the historic cemetery of San Juan Bautista, exemplifies the Victorian Gothic styling used in the mid-19th century, circa 1870, of rural California. Entirely constructed of heart redwood, the dwelling is a single-wall, wood-frame structure of verticle, rough-sawn boards resting on a mud sill foundation. It is a 1-1/2 story detached structure, originally built in a T-plan. Designed as a family home for a large number of people, the original house consisted of eight rooms. Four upstairs bedrooms open onto a central hallway with stairs leading to the first floor hallway directly below. One bedroom contains a small fireplace, and shares a divided chimney with another fireplace in the living room, or "sala", directly below. Upstairs ceilings are 12 feet high. All ceilings are 1 x 4 redwood tongue-and-groove. The major alterations are the replacement of the front porch and a small addition on the kitchen at the rear.

The first floor contains two bedrooms on the south side of the house, separated from the living room on the north side by the central hallway. This hall extends from a glass-bordered front door to the kitchen at the rear of the building. Ceilings are 10 feet in height.

The twin gabled, steeply pitched roof is of redwood shingle, and has the interior double chimney protruding from the north side. Hood moldings over doorways and windows add interesting detail to the building's exterior, with those over the gable windows being of an especially unusual design. The 22 windows are six over six wood frame with the original glass mostly intact.

Floors are redwood tongue-and-groove. There is an unfinished attic over the upper bedrooms. A small dirt-filled basement exists under the rear portion of the "sala".

A shed-roofed porch, resting on four posts, extends the full width of the house front. This porch and its roof are partly enclosed with 1 x 4 horizontally laid tongue-and-groove siding. The present porch replaced an earlier, more ornate, structure. A railing was supported by lathe-turned balusters with supporting brackets. Similar balusters descended from the shed roof. This design is consistent with another porch in San Juan Bautista, a registered historic landmark, designed by the same architect. The current owners plan to restore the original appearance of the porch based upon historic photo documentation.

Other changes in this structure include a concrete perimeter foundation poured during the 1920s. An addition, housing an indoor bathroom and service porch, was added to the single story rear kitchen wing of the building when indoor plumbing was installed. The lower portion of windows bordering the front door have been replaced with plywood. Partially dividing the living room, 1910 style pillars and bookcases at the north and south sides of the room have been added.

The basic historic integrity of the structure, although badly needing rehabilitation, remains apparent to this date.

Approximate dates of alterations were derived from oral histories of elderly citizens, and from professionals who compiled the city's historic survey in 1980. Little written documentation exists to support most occurrences in San Juan Bautista during the first half of the 20th century. No other structures exist on the property.

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 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 1873

Builder/Architect George Chalmers

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Marentis House is significant under Criterion C for its architectural value. It is the finest example of its type and period in the local community; its Victorian Gothic styling exemplifies the mid-19th century of rural California. Although prevalent in other areas of the state, a mere handful of this style existed in San Juan Bautista. It is the work of a local master. The details are typical of Chalmer's best work. It was the home of an important local family for over 100 years.

The Marentis House is a notable local example of Victorian Gothic design. The builder, George Chalmers, was raised in New England, where he was influenced by Alexander Jackson Davis. Davis illustrated a much-utilized design book of the 19th century, Cottage Residences.

In the context of San Juan Bautista, where building styles range from Spanish and Mexican period adobes through most of the major 19th century eclectic revivals and the styles of the first two decades of the 20th century, the Marentis House is one of a few surviving examples of early rural carpenter styling and construction. The simple but fine lines, symmetrical massing, and monochromatic detail of expression are typical.¹

The Marentis House was designed by local builder, George Chalmers. Actual construction was accomplished by Thomas W. Bermingham, another local builder, from written specifications dictated to him by Pedro Marentis.²

This structure is the finest example of its type and period in the local community and, although much deferred maintenance is evident, it remains largely unchanged and intact to this day.

(continued)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Marjorie Pierce, East of the Gabilans, Fresno, Valley Publishers, 1976, pp. 24-26
San Juan Bautista Chamber of Commerce, "Visitors' Historic Walking Tour", entry #40
Bill Glines, staff writer, San Jose Mercury, "Living San Juan Legend", April 6, 1974
City of San Juan Bautista, Historic Survey of San Juan Bautista, 1981, p. 132
Andrew Jackson Downing, Cottage Residences, 1842.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 8582 sq.ft. (0.19 acre)

Quadrangle name San Juan Bautista

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	0	6	3	0	0	6	0	4	0	7	8	6	2	0
Zone			Easting					Northing						

B

Zone			Easting					Northing						

C

Zone			Easting					Northing						

D

Zone			Easting					Northing						

E

Zone			Easting					Northing						

F

Zone			Easting					Northing						

G

Zone			Easting					Northing						

H

Zone			Easting					Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

All that real property situated in the City of San Juan Bautista, County of San Benito, State of California, described as follows: Lot 1 as shown on that map filed Dec. 6, 1979, in Book 5 of Parcel Maps, at Page 19, San Benito County records. (See Continuation Sheet.)

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

state N/A code county N/A code

state N/A code county N/A code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Michael Fritch and Ann Gilsenan

organization owners

date 11/29/83 (OHP Staff revision 4/84)

street & number 45 Monterey Street

telephone (408) 623-2432

city or town San Juan Bautista

state California 95045

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 *Miriam Mitchell Wilson*

title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

date 7/16/84

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register

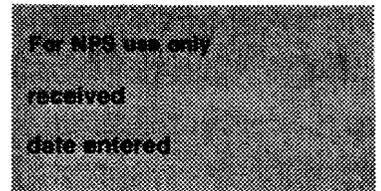
Sharon Byers
Director of the National Register

Attch:

OSHP Form 100

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
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Continuation sheet

Item number 6

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Representation in Existing Surveys (continued)

San Juan Bautista Historic Resources Inventory

1980 x State

Records at State Office of Historic Preservation
P. O. Box 2390
Sacramento, CA 95811

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Born in Guadalajara, Mexico, in 1833, Pedro Marentis emigrated to the gold fields of California in 1850. He married Claudia Estrada in the Mission San Juan Bautista in 1857.³

Claudia was born in Baja California in 1840. In 1846 she moved with her family to Monterey where the Estradas had significant land holdings.⁴

Pedro Marentis purchased several tracts of land, mostly portions of ranchos near San Juan Bautista, from 1866 through 1873.⁵ The last of these, a plot within the city being sold for \$10 in back taxes, was to become site of the family home wherein the 14 Marentis children would be raised.⁶ He contracted for a family home to be built in "a plain workmanlike manner nothing fancy everything plain but neat and mechanical".⁷

Pedro suffered a severe accident and became inactive until his death in the Marentis House in 1917.⁸

Claudia baked enchiladas to sell in the Plaza Hotel to help support her family. In 1931 Claudia died, leaving the family home to youngest child John.⁹

A daughter, Eloise Marentis Bowser, also made enchiladas for sale. "I wish I had a dollar for every one of her enchiladas I ever ate. I can still taste them. She even used to pack them on the bus to customers in San Francisco."¹⁰

True to California style, family and friends often gathered in the sala of the Marentis House. Johnny would play violin while his brother played guitar.¹¹

Born in 1888 in the Marentis House, Johnny was the most prominent of the children. "Probably no other person in San Juan Bautista is identified as closely with the past and present of the town as Johnny Marentis."¹² He spoke only Spanish until entering school. His early playmates were the Indian children living near his house. Becoming a butcher as a young man, he owned his own business for 26 years.¹³

Elected as city treasurer for 51 years, Johnny had served longer than any other elected official in the state at the time of his retirement in 1975. He contributed time as a volunteer fireman, and served as a deputy constable under C. C. Zanetta and for Bob Baccala, from the 1930s to the 1950s. Leonard Caetano, former Mayor, stated, "He went into office before I was born. And he was always a fixture at Saturday night dances in San Juan. The city folks felt so strongly about him, we gave him a big party for working for the city for 50 years. We even had the lawyer draw up a proclamation and gave him a plaque in honor of it."¹⁴

Johnny owned a 400 acre hunting ranch in San Juan Canyon, which was much used by his comrades. Annually until age 85 he rode to Fremont Peak for the flag raising ceremony, along with the Flints, Abbes, and Anzars. Also he took part in the yearly rodeo until no longer able to ride a horse.¹⁵

He married Lucille Mary Herman at the mission in 1944. She died in 1960.¹⁶

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FOOTNOTES:

1. San Juan Bautista City Hall, Historic Resources Inventory of San Juan Bautista, Cultural Resources Board, San Juan Bautista, 1981.
2. Handwritten contract between Marentis and Thomas W. Bermingham, copy in files of San Juan Bautista Cultural Resources Board.
3. San Benito County Courthouse, Register of Deaths, San Juan, Books 1 & 2, pg. 32.
4. Marjorie Pearce, East of the Gabilans, Valley Publishers, 1976, p. 24.
5. San Benito County Courthouse, Book B of Mortgages, Monterey County, 1873, p. 402.
6. Marjorie Pearce, East of the Gabilans, Valley Publishers, 1976, p. 24.
7. Same as Footnote #2.
8. Marjorie Pearce, East of the Gabilans, Valley Publishers, 1976, p. 24.
9. Ibid.
10. Marentis House, Leonard Caetano, former mayor and life-time resident, oral history tape #1.
11. Marjorie Pearce, East of the Gabilans, Valley Publishers, 1976, p. 26.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Marentis House, Leonard Caetano, former mayor and life-time resident, oral history tape #1.
15. Marjorie Pearce, East of the Gabilans, Valley Publishers, 1976, p. 26.
16. San Benito County Courthouse, Register of Deaths, San Benito County, 1977.

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Continuation sheet

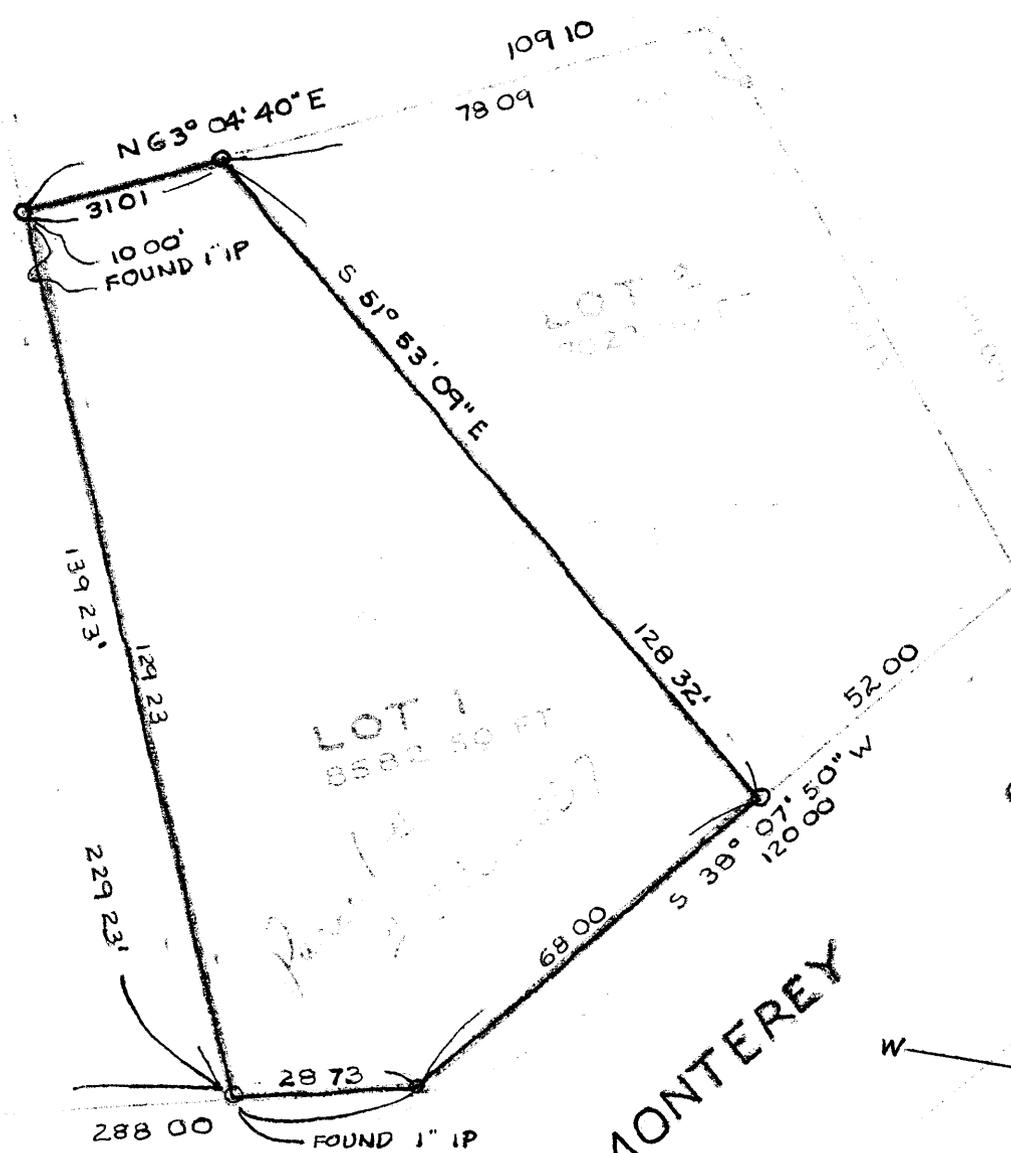
Item number 10

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MARENTIS HOUSE

The South Easterly boundary of the property begins at a point on Monterey Street 152 feet southwest of the junction of 4th Street and Monterey Street, and continues along Monterey Street in a southwesterly direction for 68 feet, then westerly approximately 29 feet to the northeast property line. From there it continues 129 feet in a northwesterly direction. From that point it continues 31 feet in a northeasterly direction, and changes to a southeasterly direction for 128 feet to the point of origin. Boundaries encompass the historic structure and its lot.

90 00



N 63° 04' 40" E

3101

1000'
FOUND 1" IP

109 10
78 09

S 57° 53' 09" E

139 23'

129 23

229 23'

28 73

288 00

FOUND 1" IP

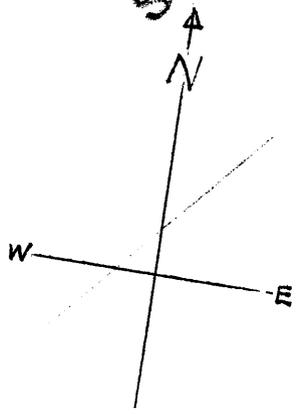
128 32'

52 00

S 39° 07' 50" W
120 00

STREET

MARBERT'S HOUSE
45 Monterey Street
San Juan Bautista, San Benito County, CA





Only Surviving evidence of
original porch. Photograph is
missing from the city files.

Marentis House
45 Monterey St.
San Juan Bautista CA