

1680

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Lujan/Ortiz House

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Approx. 1 mile from NM 502 on County Rd. 84 not for publication

city or town Jaconita, near Pojoaque vicinity

state New Mexico code NM county Santa Fe code 49 zip code 87501

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Dorothy Victor, Acting SHPO 12/07/99
Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): _____

Edson A. Beall 7/14/00
Signature of Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

Lujan/Ortiz House
Name of Property

Santa Fe, New Mexico
County and State:

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

Agriculture/Outbuilding

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

Domestic/Secondary Structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Northern New Mexico Vernacular

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation None

walls Adobe

roof Metal

other Wood

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See continuation sheet – Section 7, Pages 1 – 4.

Lujan/Ortiz House
Name of Property

Santa Fe, New Mexico
County and State:

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

c.1900 to 1952

Significant Dates

1923

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Hispanic

Architect/Builder

Lujan Benito, builder and owner

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

Lujan/Ortiz House
Name of Property

Santa Fe, New Mexico
County and State:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .93 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	13	404460	3971660	3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	
2				4			
	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.) See continuation sheet – Section 10, Page 1.

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title James Oberlander
organization N/A date August 15, 1999
street & number Route 4, Box 21-0 telephone 505.753.5897
city or town Espanola state NM zip code 87532

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name William Agnew & Florence Perkins Agnew
street & number Route 5, Box 244 telephone 505.455.2613
city or town Santa Fe state NM zip code 87501

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 1

Introduction:

This simple house is best described as a traditional rural American adobe house of Northern New Mexico. In her book *American Adobes: Rural Houses of Northern New Mexico*, architect Beverley Spears lays out thirteen fundamental characteristics common to this type of house. These include 1: Adobe walls. 2. Exterior plaster in pastel or white. 3. Contrasting exterior woodwork. 4. Pitched roof of corrugated steel. 5. A concrete grade beam at base of walls. 6. Single story construction. 7. Unfinished attic space. 8. Windows at exterior of wall, doors recessed, jambs splayed. 9. Wood panel doors with windows. 10. Kitchen door most used. 11. Interior walls pastel or wallpaper. 12. Fiberboard ceilings. 13. Floor plan a series of plain rectangular rooms. Below, included in the physical description, are called out 12 of the 13 characteristics as they come up for discussion. Due to the unchanged condition of this house, these elements are particularly easy to see and help create a fine and pure example of the American Adobe style.

Setting:

The Rio Grande Valley of Northern New Mexico is generally arid but interspersed with comparatively lush area that occur adjacent small streams and arroyos. These areas stand out in the landscape because of the cottonwood trees that invariably grow along the water ways. Settlers have long taken advantage of this water by constructing irrigation ditches and using the fertile bottomlands for small farms. While the surrounding hills are covered with cactus and drought resistant piñon and juniper trees, these small valleys provide a much more varied habitat capable of supporting orchards and small farms. In this case, the Pojaque River descends from the nearby Sangre de Cristo Mountains (Blood of Christ Mountains) on its way into the Rio Grande. Its path is clearly marked by the trees and communities that flourish on its meager flow of water. Numerous pueblos and small Spanish villages survive to this day, as do the centuries old irrigation ditches that made life in this arid landscape possible.

Location:

The Lujan/Ortiz Adobe home is located immediately adjacent to and clearly visible from County Road 84 in the vicinity of Jaconita, about 4 miles from Pojoaque, NM. It was built at about the turn of the century by the Benito Lujan family. Associated with the house is a wooden pole barn, the last vestige of a once vibrant farming life.

This four-room single story adobe house with a rusted corrugated tin roof sits on a small rise perpendicular to the road. It lies roughly halfway between the Pojoaque River and the Jacona Larga Acequia, a location that reveals much about its relationship to the surrounding agricultural lands. The well originally associated with the property lies down a small hill and across the road. This too is significant when one considers that there is no indoor plumbing in the house and all the water necessary for cooking, cleaning and washing had to be carried back across the road and up to the house. The house itself measures approximately 70 feet long by 16 feet 6 inches wide. This amounts to 1150 square feet. There is a covered portal that measures 70 feet by 7 feet for another 490 square feet of space covered by roof.

Elevations:

The single story design (Characteristic 6) is simple and elegant. Four rooms in a linear arrangement run north to south. The eastern elevation contains a covered portal, which protects all of the four doors to the house.

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One door enters each of the four ground floor rooms. The southern elevation has one window roughly centered in the wall and a doorway to the attic through the adobe gable end. The western elevation has four windows; one into each of the three northern rooms, as well as a small square window tucked up under the soffit to a room in the attic. The northern elevation, closest to the road, has only one fixed window in the gable end.

Wall Construction:

All of the exterior adobe walls (Characteristic 1) measure 22 to 24 inches in thickness and are slightly over 11 feet tall. Both gable ends of the house are also made of adobe as well as a third interior wall that divides the space in the attic. The house is divided into four rooms of approximately equal size lined up in a north to south direction. (Characteristic 13) The interior walls are also made of adobe. The wall between the northern most room, which was last used as the kitchen (Room #4) and the adjacent room (Room #3), perhaps a bedroom, measures 22 inches thick which suggests that this wall was once an exterior wall and that Room #4 was added at a later date. The other interior walls between Rooms #1 and #2 and between Rooms #2 and #3 are both only 11 inches thick suggesting the three southern most rooms were all built at the same time.

The interior shape of the rooms is rectangular and there are no hallways, or original closets with the exception of a single *alacena*, or recessed cupboard built into one exterior wall. There are two closets in Room #1 that are built using modern dimensioned lumber and were obviously added much later. The rooms are all more or less 200 square feet in size. It is interesting to note that the adobe walls comprise 362 square feet or fully 31.5% of the total space.

Doorways:

Each room has one exterior door and one interior door between rooms. All the exterior doors are on the eastside of the house and protected by the portal. They are recessed from the face, hung at the center of the wall (Characteristic 8). Each door has a window in it, which allows for more light to the interior. (Characteristic 9) In Room #2, the parlor, the exterior door is centered in the wall, which creates a more formal feeling. (This feeling is further amplified by the presence of two symmetrical *nichos* and the largest window in the house on the opposite wall.) In the other rooms the exterior door is offset which allows for greater flexibility. The interior doors are also off set. This also increased flexibility but secondarily added a measure of privacy as it prevented one from seeing "through" the house to other rooms. The fact each room had an exterior door allowed various family members to come and go without disturbing others.

Only two of the doors in the house match. These are two "store bought" doors with elegant arched top windows and raised panels. One enters Room #1, probably the original kitchen and hence the most used door. (Characteristic 10) The other enters Room #2, the most formal room in the house. The interior door between Rooms #2 & 3 is a five panel door, also "store bought". The other four doors are handmade to peculiar dimensions and exhibit a clear hierarchy of craftsmanship and importance within the house. While the interior trim is simple with beaded accents, the exterior trim over several of the doors and windows includes pedimented crowns associated with early in the century.¹ Exterior trim protected from the weather near the top of the gable ends show

¹ Spears, 1986, page 72.

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sign of orange paint. (Characteristic 3) The two matched doors to the parlor and original kitchen have elaborate screen doors painted orange. The door to the new kitchen has a simple handmade screen door.

Windows:

Each room also has one window with the exception of Room #4, which has two small windows. The window in Room #1 is on the south wall, presumably for the sun. The sash is completely missing although the jamb suggests it was a double hung window. Windows in the other rooms are in the west wall opposite the doors, centered in the wall. They are set at the exterior of the jamb with the interior jamb slightly splayed to allow in more light. (Characteristic 8) Like the doors, no two windows are alike, but they do seem to have been mass-produced or made by a professional. This may reflect either some sense of formal hierarchy or it may have been a function of budget and availability. The parlor window, Room #2, is the largest and a 1 over 1 double hung. The bedroom window is a double hung 2 over 2. The new room, the kitchen, has two smaller windows in opposite walls, a 4 over 4 and a 6 over 6. The windows in the attic consist of a 4-pane casement and a 4 pane fixed window. Several windows on the ground floor have pedimented crowns similar to the doors.

Floors:

The house has a variety of floors and it is difficult to determine if they were always present. Room #1 has a concrete floor. It probably had a dirt floor for a long time before that. This room also has two closets that were added much later than the original construction. This room seems to have undergone some change in function and it is difficult to guess its original function. It was perhaps the original kitchen.

Room #2 has a wooden floor made with 8-inch wide planks nailed to 2 x 4's laid flat on the dirt. It is obviously the most formal room in the house and is also the largest. It was probably always the parlor or sitting room. Originally this room had carpets. These were later replaced with linoleum "area rugs".² The wooden moldings are the biggest and the doors the most expensive. Room #3 also has a wooden floor but the boards are only 6 inches wide. It is the smallest room. The *alacena* (or shelf) built into the wall suggests that historically, this room may have functioned as a bedroom.

Room Addition:

Room #4 is the newest room in the house and differs in many ways. It was built after the original three rooms and has a room upstairs. It originally had a pine floor like two of the other rooms. Sometime later an oak floor made from small boards was added. The presence of a fine wood cook stove and a large pantry storage unit identify it as the kitchen. Also it should be noted that the arrangement of the *vigas* in this room is different from the other rooms. They are not sloped and they are set lower than in other rooms. This was undoubtedly to accommodate the bedroom in the attic. There is an L-shaped staircase in the north west corner of the room that leads to the attic. As was typical, the top portion of the staircase is enclosed after step #5 and one must pass through a door to get to the attic. The door is low in order to allow passage under the *viga*. Despite its later construction date this room was built using the same techniques and high level of expertise. The walls are 22 - 24 inches thick and the *latillas*

² Interview with Tutania Romero, February 18, 1999.

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still are covered with dirt. The owners were obviously comfortable with the linear arrangement of rooms and did not want to alter the basic shape or feel of the house.

Roof:

The house has a corrugated metal roof with a 7 in 12 pitch, or approximately 31 degrees. (Characteristic 4) This roof was added in April of 1923, a fact revealed by a dated rafter clearly visible in the attic. The "dropped" portal roof is a much shallower 3 in 12 pitch or 14 degrees. Several factors indicate that the main - roof was added after the construction of the first three rooms and at the same time as the fourth room. First, and most important, the *vigas* that span Rooms #1, 2, & 3 are sloped from the east side down to the west side. This would indicate that the house was originally built with a flat roof and that water was meant to drain off the west side. Secondly, one can see in the attic that the mud *torta* over the ceiling was sloped in a north- westerly direction, most probably directing the water to a single *canale* or waterspout. Third, the interior adobe wall that divides the attic from the upstairs bedroom is offset on the wall below in such a way that had it been an exterior wall a ledge exposed to the weather would have been created, a condition no builder would have wanted. Finally, the roof framing technique and materials all seem to be of a consistent type.

Attic:

The attic space is uninsulated and unfinished (Characteristic 7) and yet it is sufficiently tall enough to easily move around in. The collar ties are very small and close to the ridge making this space much more usable. Former occupants of the house remember wires in the attic strung with drying beef jerky. The gable ends are made of a single course of adobes in contrast to later in the century, as pitched roofs became more common when one finds gable ends increasingly made of wood. The south gable end of the house has a door that was probably accessed using a ladder. There is no sign there was an exterior staircase. Three quarters of the way through the attic is the interior wall described above. This too has a doorway, which separated it from the upstairs bedroom yet allowed easy access to the attic storage space.

The floor of the attic or *torta* is compacted dirt. The parapet is a sophisticated combination of wood frame with adobe infill. It is carefully plastered and varies in height from 16 to 24 inches due to both the slope of the *vigas* and the grading of the *torta*. The addition of wood into the parapet allowed for a method of attaching the roof to the walls. Was the parapet rebuilt before the addition of the roof or was the tin roof anticipated at the time the walls were laid up? The circa 1900 date of construction, the sloped *vigas* and the graded *torta* argue heavily that the house went through a period without the tin roof, yet the construction of the parapet suggests otherwise. Perhaps this is merely a sign that the builders had both a limited budget at the time of initial construction and a good amount of foresight.

The northern end of the attic also has an adobe gable end but with a window instead of a door. The floor is a full step lower and the wood framing of the roof is covered with salvaged wood planking. A small staircase leads down to the kitchen below. Unlike the rest of the attic, this room was lived in and its construction involving the lower floor and inclusion of two windows clearly anticipated that fact.

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Addition of Ceilings:

All four rooms have low ceilings that were added at some later date, probably in the 1940's. Originally each room had a ceiling that was composed of *vigas* 7 to 8 inches in diameter on 2 foot 4 inch centers covered by pine boards of varying width. This in turn is covered with a thick layer of dirt known as the *torta*. In rooms 1, 2, & 3 the height to the top of the *vigas* at the center of the room measures over 9 feet. At some later time boards were nailed to the *vigas* and a "dropped" ceiling was added made from plastered rock lath or button board. This effectively lowered the ceiling height to between 7 foot 9 inches and 7 feet 4 inches.

Original Manta Ceilings:

There is reason to believe however that the *vigas* may not have been always exposed, even before the addition of the later dropped ceiling. In modern homes *vigas* are a symbol of status and are much prized in contemporary custom adobes. One hundred years ago they were simply the only way homes were built. While *vigas*, *latillas* and a thick layer of dirt was warm and generally water tight, it presented the home owner with the problem of a slow but constant rain of dirt into the dwelling space. This problem was often solved by suspending a cloth *manta* below the ceiling.³ Two of the rooms show signs that a *manta* was used. It is obvious that interior walls were finished above the modern drop ceilings. There are different colored plaster washes and even traces of wallpaper. The telling evidence however, is that even these older finishing touches do not extend all the way to the wood decking and intervening *vigas*. This speculation was confirmed by interviews with a former tenant⁴. Tutania Romero, grand niece of Benito Lujan, remembers each spring taking down the *manta*, washing and repairing it and putting it back up.

Room #4, the added kitchen, also has a dropped ceiling but it is made of fiberboard with strips of lath covering the seams. (Characteristic 12) It may be the oldest "ceiling" in the house because plastered ceilings, as are found in the other rooms, are a later development.⁵

Mud Plaster:

Both the interior and the exterior of the house is plastered with mud plaster. The exterior plaster has been applied very thick. Even in the few places the plaster has been worn away to the depth of almost two inches there is no sign of exposed adobes. As is the case with all successful mud plaster it contains a great deal of straw. It also contains a wide and interesting mix of aggregate. The usual rocks and pebbles are present, but it also contains an impressive number of pottery shards, bit of glass, burned wood, obsidian and miscellaneous trash. The materials for this house were undoubtedly obtained from a nearby source if not from directly on the property. It was well known that local middens from previous dwellings or even abandoned pueblo sites made an excellent source of adobe mud. It seems that a fair amount of previous human history has made its way directly into the

³ Spears, 1986, page 97.

⁴ Interview with Tutania Romero, February 18, 1999.

⁵ Spears, 1986, page 97.

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homes of those that came later. The mud plaster, protected on the east -side of the house by the portal, is in good condition. It is still a yellow color from a layer of paint added to brighten the wall.(Characteristic 2)

The interior of the house was also plastered using mud. In the space above the drop ceilings one can easily see the light brown color of a fine plaster. Unlike the exterior plaster that contains straw and aggregate, the interior plaster is smooth and the materials used were obviously well screened and sifted. Portions of this plaster were also painted and there is even evidence to suggest there may have been wallpaper in the more formal rooms. (Characteristic 11) After the ceilings were added, the rooms and were replastered using gypsum plaster. Nowhere in the house is any evidence of cement plaster, so common in later adobes.

Portal:

The entire length of the east side of the house is covered with a "dropped" portal roof. This means that the roof does not extend all the way up to the main roof, but that it attaches to the wall below the main roof leaving a short span of wall visible. This created a more protected porch and accentuates the tall adobe walls of the main house. The most significant feature of the portal is the turned posts that hold up the roof. These were part of the original construction of the portal and do not constitute a later addition made during a period of affluence. While the portal floor is currently concrete, the original floor was wood planking. The builder's granddaughter replaced the wood in the 1940's.⁶

Associated Contributing Building:

Also located on the property is a pole barn. It measures 35 feet long, 19 feet wide and is approximately 19 feet tall. It is oriented parallel to the house about 65 feet away. It also has a pitched corrugated steel roof. Twelve poles 6 to 8 inches in diameter and 11 feet tall comprise the main structure of the barn. These are not set into the ground but rather rest either on stacks of lumber or on smaller posts driven almost flush with the ground. Five poles are on either side of the barn, with one pole each at the center of the gable ends. These are tied together across the tops with a double plate of rough-sawn 2 x 10's. Diagonal bracing of 2 x 6 boards provides lateral stability. These boards start high at each corner and brace to the bottom of the adjacent pole. The rafters are widely spaced 2 x 6's onto which are nailed 2 x 6 purlins set approximately 3 feet apart. 2 x 6 collar ties complete the framing. There is no "joinery" per se, but rather all joints are either lap or butt joints simply nailed together. The roof is corrugated tin which still maintains its galvanized coating which suggests this structure is not as old as the main house. There is no ridge cap, which results in a 6-inch gap in the roof at the peak. Nailed to the outside of the poles are two sets of 2 x 6's parallel to the ground. On to these is nailed "first cut slabs" of local pine about 6 feet tall. These boards have one flat side with the other side being bark. They are the waste from the first cut a sawmill makes to square a log. They are commonly used as fencing or rough siding as the sawmill sells them very cheaply. There is only one small entrance at the southeast corner of the building and the floor is currently covered with rotting hay. This suggests the barn was never used to house a tractor or other machinery but probably used for hay or livestock.

⁶ Interview with Tutania Romero, February 18, 1999.

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CONTINUATION SHEET**Section 8 Page 1**Introduction:**

When Benito Lujan began acquiring land in the Pojaque River valley, in what was then the New Mexico Territories, the area was beginning to undergo a profound change wrought by the recent arrival in nearby Santa Fe of the railroad. He was part of the predominately Hispanic culture that was being influenced by the arrival Anglo-American culture. The adobe house he built with its pitched tin roof is a blend of the two cultures and a virtually perfect example of an architectural style termed the Northern New Mexican Vernacular by architectural historian Beverly Spears. The Lujan family lived an independent lifestyle based on subsistence farming and specialty crop production (fruit orchards) very similar to that lived by other Spanish farmers for the previous two hundred years. By the time the house went out of the hands of the Lujan family in 1952 the valley had literally entered the Atomic Age thanks to the location of the nearby Los Alamos Laboratory, home of the Manhattan Project and the atomic bomb. The fact the house was then used for storage and no longer lived in resulted in its preservation as a good example of Northern New Mexican architecture as described in Beverly Spears publication, *American Adobes*.

Early Context:

This region of the upper Rio Grande valley has a long history. After the initial period of exploration Spanish exploration (1540–41), followed by the Pueblo Uprising (1680) and the subsequent return of Spanish settlers a method of land apportionment was developed to insure a successful outcome for settlers. Spanish settlement attempts concentrated on either vast land grants to influential individuals or on small defensible towns.

According to Alvar W. Carlson several factors led to the creation of a system of “long lots” that became so typical of northern Santa Fe County and neighboring Rio Arriba County.¹ Less than 2 % of this area was bottomland suitable for agriculture. Earlier settlements had relied on surplus foodstuffs from the nearby pueblos but with the increase in European population, this was no longer possible. The bottomland was apportioned so that each parcel contained frontage on a stream or on a major irrigation ditch or *acequia madre*. The parcels were narrow and at right angles to the ditch. Most were about twenty acres in size and between 275 and 400 feet wide. This allowed farmers to flood their land and for the excess water to flow back into the stream or river. Each family also received a *solare* or house site, drawn by lot, around an easily defensible plaza somewhere above the flood plain.

Early American Influence:

By the end of the nineteenth century several things had changed that affected agriculture in this area. This region was now part of the United States. The army arrived in Santa Fe in 1846.² The railroad arrived in 1880 bringing styles and manufactured building materials from the eastern United States. According to Beverly Spears, the first pitched roof appeared in Santa Fe in 1847 and by the 1880's Victorian architectural features and tin roofs were common. Most of the problems between Native Americans and settlers had been settled by confining tribes to reservations and the security of having the army present. Locally, by 1893, the once populous Pojoaque Pueblo had been reduced to only 5 men, 7 women, and 20 children. They had spent the last 4 years litigating against two New Mexicans who were farming land 1 mile down the Pojoaque River. The farmers had claimed the land under Old

¹ Carlson, 1975, page 45.

² Noble, 1994 page 145.

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Spanish law that entitled a person to claim land that was "unclaimed and unfarmed" for a certain period of time. The government granted the land to the settlers with no compensation to the Pojoaque Pueblo and the few remaining members moved in with relatives on surrounding pueblos³.

These new circumstances allowed farmers to live on their land and not have to build their homes in central plazas. They built their homes between the upland and the bottomland to be above the flood plain and not to waste any of the precious farmland. Houses formed line villages and roads followed the houses. While each family had its own fields and gardens, livestock was often allowed to wander freely and graze on lands considered to be held in common.⁴ Mutual assistance by close family members, neighbors, and fellow farmers went into the maintenance of the all important irrigation ditch.

Acquisition of the Land:

The Lujan/ Ortiz Adobe is on one of the parcels Benito Lujan began buying in the Pojoaque area in 1882, two years after the railroad arrived in New Mexico. The first deed with his name on it describes four parcels of land totaling "89 3/4 *varas*". The Spanish *vara* was a measurement about 33 inches in length.⁵ It was understood the land went from the hills to either the river or the *Barrancas*. It was only necessary to describe its width in *varas*. Subsequent deeds, still in Spanish, change the term to *yarda*, a sign of the growing American influence. He paid \$179.50 pesos for the land. Over the next 27 years he recorded 5 more deeds, buying out neighbors and consolidating his holdings. It was not until 1929 these claims were patented and surveyed using modern techniques.⁶ A 1935 survey details the holdings of Genara Lujan, now a widow. The family owned 14.75 acres in two long lots, each about 200 feet wide and between 1,800 and 1,900 feet long, divided by the road and crossed by two irrigation ditches. The house sits on a parcel above the road, patented as Exception 14, Private claim 51 and consisting of 3.6657 acres.

Building the House:

The house was built around 1900 at right angles to the irrigation ditch so as not to impede water flow across the land. Originally built were three rooms with thick adobe walls, locally cut *vigas* and a flat roof. Materials for adobes and plaster came from either on site or from nearby ruins or middens associated with the pueblos. Right from the beginning, the level of craftsmanship was exceptionally high and many fine details such as store bought doors and windows were included. In 1923 a fourth room and pitched tin roof was added to these three rooms reflecting the growing influence of the American presence and manufactured building materials such as corrugated roofing. During the Second World War two circuits of electricity were added. At the same time the original *manta* or cloth ceilings were replaced with gypsum board and new gypsum plaster. There was never any plumbing installed in the house. Water continued to be carried from the well, across the road and down the hill.

³ Ibid. page 53.

⁴ de Buys, 1985, page 194.

⁵ Carlson, 1975, page 50.

⁶ Patent claim 51, Exception 14, 1929

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According to local residents many homes in the area were without plumbing until the 60's.⁷ The house never had fireplaces, the traditional way to heat a house, but rather was heated with a woodstove in each room, another sign of the influence of the railroad.

Farm Context:

According to the 1935 United States Census of Agriculture there were 1,262 farms in Santa Fe County and 3,437 farms in Rio Arriba County. Both the number of farms and farm populations showed a marked increase from 5 years earlier. Family members performed over 90 % of the labor. In Santa Fe County the average value per farm was \$3,237. In Rio Arriba County where farms were smaller the average value was \$1,658.

An earlier census in 1930 described various types of small farms. The most common types of farms were the crop-specialty and the self-sufficing farms. Forty percent of crop specialty farms were less than 40 acres. Sixty percent of self-sufficing farms were of like size. Stock-ranch farms also were prevalent, containing large acreage and large dollar values but these were uncommon in the area around Jacona. The farm run by Benito Lujan and his extended family fits perfectly into the above profiles.

Life on the Farm:

An interview with one of Benito Lujan's great nieces sheds light on the history of the property and many facts about life on the family farm. Tutania Romero is now 86 years old. She remembers playing with the grandchildren of Benito and Genara Lujan as a child. She described a community of family and friends on a prosperous farm. Vegetables were grown on the bottomland across the road. These included carrots, onions and chile. Fruit trees surrounded the house. In the fall she remembers the women holding communal, marathon canning sessions. This fact was confirmed by the discovery of several pressure cookers and hundreds of canning jars in the house. They worked in a north facing building (destroyed in 1993) across the road from the Lujan/Ortiz adobe near the irrigation ditch, dug into the hill. They also kept pigs, horses, cows and chickens, as well as rabbits "that lived in the ground" inside a large enclosure. The farm produced enough excess fruit that "there was a machine that made boxes" in order to take it to market.

Effects of the War:

World War II brought the beginnings of change to the valley. The young men and several of the women went off to work in California. Because they felt their Spanish made them unsuitable for the army they chose instead to work in the shipyards of San Pedro. Electricity came to the valley. A family member working for a large property owner helped bring it to the house. As it was the only house with a radio the entire community gathered to listen to news broadcasts. The house continued to be heated with a wood stove in the middle of each room but plumbing was still too much of a luxury to afford.

The end of the war brought profound changes to this area. Most significantly Los Alamos National Labs provided many steady service and clerical jobs for the residents of the Pojoaque and Espanola Valley. Post war prosperity and the influx of cash into the subsistence economy enabled homes to be remodeled and modernized. Families no longer had to rely on the 10 -20 acre family farm for their subsistence. Roads improved and people

⁷ From interview with Lillian Ortiz Walker, 1999.

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commuted both to the lab and in and out of Santa Fe. In September of 1949 Genara R. Lujan, widow of Benito Lujan deeded the land containing the house to a daughter, Francisca L. Trujillo, and a son, Epifanio Lujan. In 1952 Avelino Ortiz obtained the property, including water rights of "18 hours in the Acequia del Barranco" and "10 hours in the Acequia Larga de Jacona". He never lived in the house or seriously farmed the land. Instead he commuted to the lab for many years.

Post-War Era:

Slowly these types of farm became smaller through inheritance. Gradually ownership was lost to the communal lands and later access to this unoccupied land was also lost, as it became part of the US Government public domain. Yet it was difficult for one person to acquire large parcels of property because every small farm had a dwelling associated with it. Families were able to keep the land associated with the original farms and this became an important factor in maintaining the stability and concentration of Spanish Americans in the Rio Grande Valley.⁸ Old adobes were either torn down or remodeled. New construction tended to be "fake adobes", built with wood framing and stuccoed to look like the older pueblo style homes. Very few homes were built with pitched roofs and mobile homes began to dot the old family pastures and orchards.

Recent History:

The Lujan/Ortiz adobe now was used only for storage. Its lack of plumbing was the major impediment to its use as a home. It was not up to the new standards brought by the post war prosperity. Yet even with little or no maintenance it has remained in remarkably good condition right up to the present day. This was due to two principle factors. The first was the high level of craftsmanship so clearly evident. The adobe walls were laid straight, plumb, and level over the 70-foot length of the house despite the gentle slope of the land. This is easily seen in the straight lines of the roof. Despite having no foundation the walls has remained vertical. No doubt the weight of the mud *torta* on the *vigas* greatly added to the stability of the walls.⁹

The second reason this house has maintained its integrity is less obvious but clearly relates to the mud plaster. The fact that this house avoided being "improved" by the addition of concrete stucco probably saved its life. While mud plaster allows walls to breath and to exchange excess moisture, concrete stucco traps the moisture and often leads to serious deterioration. Furthermore a *contra pared*, or concrete grade beam, often installed at the base of adobe walls in the mistaken belief they offer protection, was never added.¹⁰ This element is the 13th characteristic of rural adobes as outlined by Beverly Spears that was lacking. With fifty years of hindsight it was a very fortunate omission.

Conclusion:

⁸ Carlson, 1975, page 55.

⁹ Contreras, 1998, page 95.

¹⁰ Ibid. page 101

Lujan/Ortiz House
Name of Property

Santa Fe County, New Mexico
County and State

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

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Two simple facts illustrate the historical divide this house sits on. When Benito Lujan's widow Genara, deeded the property to her children in 1949 she signed the document with an X. She belonged to a generation of Spanish Americans, closely tied to the land, when it was not necessary for women to read or write. When Avelino Ortiz bought the property in 1952 his address was listed as 117 - V, Manhattan Loop in Los Alamos. He had crossed a huge cultural divide and now lived in the atomic age. Meanwhile, the house has remained untouched and unchanged down to the present day. There has been no significant change to the house since the addition of dropped ceilings in the 1940's. From the exterior it looks identical to the way it looked after the addition of the pitched roof in 1923. The mud plaster, while worn and cracked, is substantially intact, a testament to old-fashioned technology and craftsmanship. Its architectural style clearly reveals the blending of the Hispanic and Anglo cultures. The Lujan / Ortiz adobe house stands as a reminder of a time when families were self-sufficient, living off the land and inextricably bound to both their families and communities.

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12. **BibliographicalReferences:** Use a continuation sheet.

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2. Carlson, Alvar W.. *Long-lots in the Rio Arriba.*
Annals of the Association of American Geographers. Volume 65, No. 1, March 1975.
3. Contreras, Francisco Univa *Adobe Architecture Conservation Handbook.*
Santa Fe, NM: Cornerstones Community Partnerships, 1998
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Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1985.
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Interviews and records

10. Interview with Tutania Romero, 86, grand niece of Benito Lujan.
February 18, 1999 by Florence Agnew
11. Interview with Lillian Ortiz Walker, daughter of Avelino Ortiz.
February 18, 1999 by Florence Agnew.
12. Original Spanish deeds back to 1882, New Mexico Territory. On record at
Santa Fe, County Courthouse, 102 Grant Avenue, Santa Fe, NM 87501
13. Original Land Patent Claim 51, Exception 14. 1929. On file at Bureau of
Land Management, 1474 Rodeo Road Santa Fe, NM 87501

Name of Property

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All of "Tract 1" being a portion of Exception 14, Private Claim 51, of the Pojoaque Pueblo Grant, Sections 11 and 14, T. 19 N., R. 8E., N.M.P.M., County of Santa Fe, State of New Mexico, and being more particularly described as follows, to wit:

Beginning the northeast corner of the parcel herein described marked by a U.S.G.L.O. Brass cap common to A.P. 1, Exc. 14, P.C. 51 and A.P. 2, Exc. 15, P.C. 52, of the Pojoaque Pueblo Grant; thence from said point of beginning, S. 10° 5' 00" E., 197.33 feet to a point being the southeast corner; thence S. 79° 29' 44" W., 198.12 feet to a point the southwest corner; thence N. 10° 30' 16" W., 216.44 feet to a point being the northwest corner; thence N. 80° 02' 55" E., 197.67 feet to the point and place of beginning. All as shown on plat of survey entitled "PLAT OF SURVEY REQUESTED BY PAUL G. ORTIZ AND CAROL M. ORTIZ SHOWING LOT SPLIT TO CREATE 1, 2, 3, 4 LANDS BEING SITUATE WITHIN THE POJOAQUE PUEBLO GRANT..", filed for recorded as Document No. 987-819 in Plat Book 365 at page 002; amended and re-recorded as Document No. 1010-424 in Plat Book 397 at page 023, records of Santa Fe County, New Mexico.

Name of Property

County and State

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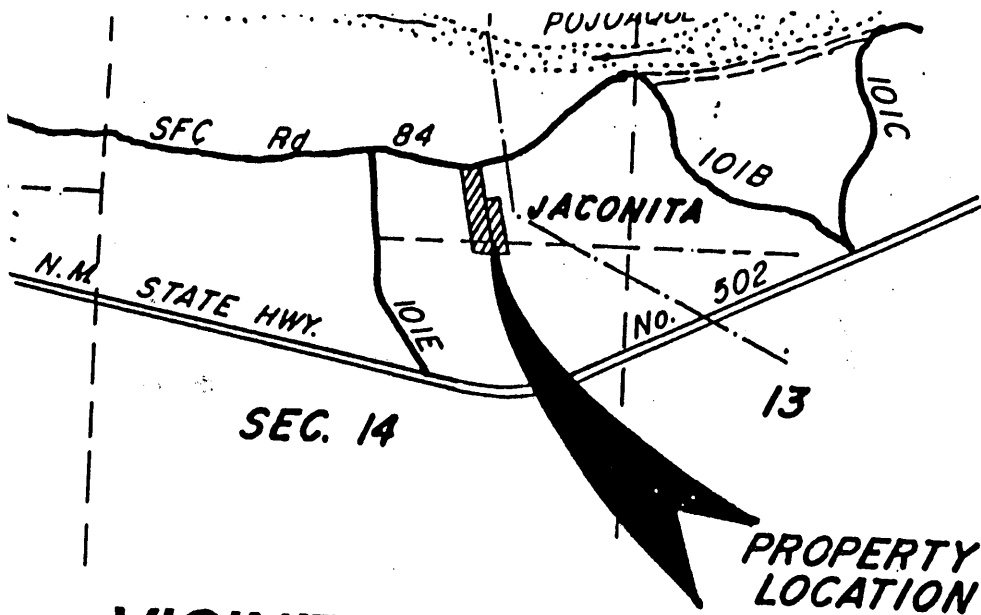
OMB No. 1024-0018

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1. LUJAN/ORTIZ ADOBE HOUSE - (VICINITY JACONITA)
2. SANTA FE COUNTY, NEW MEXICO
3. PHOTOGRAPHER: JAMES F. OBERLANDER
4. PHOTOGRAPHER JUNE 1999
5. NEGATIVES HELD BY WILLIAM C. AGNEW

DESCRIPTION OF PHOTOGRAPHS:

1. View from SE showing eastern elevation with covered portal and southern elevation. Note mud plaster, corrugated metal roof, and door to attic in gable end.
2. View from SW showing southern elevation and western elevation. Note Stovepipes on roof (one into every room plus one extra).
3. View from NW showing western elevation and northern elevation. Note windows on W elev. With pediments, corner board on NW corner, windows into attic room on N & W elevations. (Electric service is new June 1999).
4. Detail of door on East elevation to Room 1 (most southern), original kitchen. Note door with double arched windows and painted mud plaster.
5. Detail of window on West elevation. Note pedimented crown on window, straw in mud plaster and original 110V electric service.
6. Detail of interior of Room 2, original parlor. Note round wooden beams or vigas, thickness of exterior wall (+ 24"), line where 1940's ceiling removed revealing height of original cloth manta ceiling.
7. Interior view of Room 4, northern most room added in 1923. Note L-shaped stairs to room in the attic, beaded board on stairway, fiberboard and lath ceiling, narrow oak flooring added over original pine floor.



VICINITY MAP

NOT TO SCALE

Lujan/Ortiz House

SITE PLAN 1" = 30'

