

DATA SHEET PH011902

Form 10-300
(Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: California
COUNTY: Orange
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE APR 21 1975

1. NAME	
COMMON:	MONTANEZ ADOBE
AND/OR HISTORIC:	

2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: 31745 Los Rios			
CITY OR TOWN: San Juan Capistrano		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 39	
STATE California	CODE 06	COUNTY: Orange	CODE 059

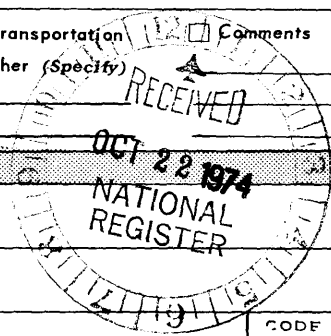
3. CLASSIFICATION				
CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)				
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY			
OWNER'S NAME: Mr. & Mrs. Forest Dunivin			
STREET AND NUMBER: 26285 Amapola Lane			
CITY OR TOWN: Mission Viejo, 92675		STATE: California	CODE 06

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION			
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Orange County Recorder			
STREET AND NUMBER: 630 N. Broadway			
CITY OR TOWN: Santa Ana		STATE California	CODE 06

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS			
TITLE OF SURVEY:			
DATE OF SURVEY: Dec. 10, 1875 <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local			
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Orange County Recorder			
STREET AND NUMBER: 630 N. Broadway			
CITY OR TOWN: Santa Ana,		STATE: California	CODE 06

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)

Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated Ruins Unexposed

(Check One)

Altered Unaltered

(Check One)

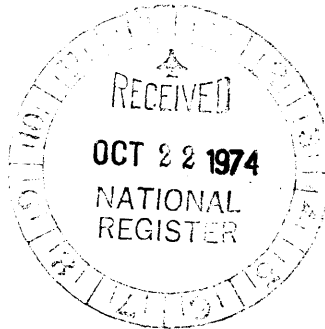
Moved Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

One story adobe house with medium gable roof of corrugated metal. A porch at ground level extends the width of the original adobe. The pillars supporting roof of porch are of 4" x 4" timber. The floor of porch is original terrā cotta tile on dirt.

Two rooms of the original adobe is main part of the house. It has dirt floor with some original tile that is now covered with removable plank floors. The ceiling is of 2" x 4" beams over planks. The walls are 20" thick adobe construction. Original recessed door ways with very heavy old plank doors. The recessed windows have new windows. The north wall of main room was destroyed when the old chapel was destroyed by earthquake. This wall is replaced by windows and board and bat wall. Two rooms of board and bat were constructed on back of original adobe with terra cotta tile floor in early 1900. House is in fair condition.

The Montanez Adobe was donated to the Historical Society of San Juan Capistrano with a 99 year lease in 1973. There are plans for restoration and proposed use as a living museum and library for school children and tours groups.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

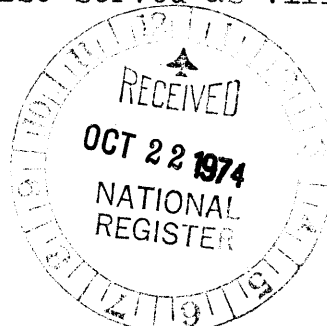
The Montanez Adobe is one of eleven remaining adobe structures in San Juan Capistrano. It's exact date of construction is unknown, but its alignment, location, and similarity to a nearby adobe suggests that it was one of 40 adobes constructed by mission Indians in 1794.

One historian, C.E. Parker, believes it may even be older. He suggests that this structure was the original dwelling place for early Franciscan priests who resided there while the mission was built on its new site in 1778. A letter confirms that a dwelling unit was one of the first structures built.

The Montanez Adobe has a great deal of spiritual significance to the city. Between 1886 and 1910 Mission San Juan Capistrano stood open and empty, a victim of early politics, looters, and eroding rain. The tiny chapel in the Montanez Adobe became the village sanctuary and Polonina Montanez, its owner, became the spiritual leader of the community.

Polonina was born in 1829, the third daughter of an early mission carpenter, Tomas Gutierrez. We know she lived to be well over 80 because of her friendship with Father St. John O'Sullivan who didn't come to the mission until 1910. During the years the mission was abandoned the chapel in Polonina's house was used for special religious services. A pious woman who became a widow in 1850, Polonina became the "captain" of the community, the person in charge of the religious instruction and regimen of all the children in the village. During her life she also served as village midwife and nurse.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. Unpublished - a. Letter from Father Pablo Mugarregui to Father Junipero Serra dated April 18, 1779, Museo Nacional, Mexico City (copy in Bancroft Library, Berkeley, California.)
- b. Many unpublished documents still lie untranslated in the Archives of Santa Barbara Mission. We hope San Juan's mysteries will someday be solved by them.
2. Published - a. Engelhardt, Rev. Zephyrin OFM, Mission San Juan Capistrano, Los Angeles, 1922.
- b. Parker, C.E., Orange County Illustrated Magazine, 1965.
- c. Saddleback Ancestors, Orange County Genealogical Society, Orange, Calif., 1965

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

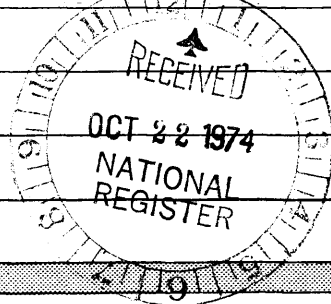
LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		33° 30' 5"	117° 39' 50"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

11/438 350
3706 900

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **one half acre**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: **Mrs. W. W. McKinley**

ORGANIZATION: **Historical Society of San Juan Capistrano** DATE Revised **2/75**
May 1974

STREET AND NUMBER: **P.O. Box 471**

CITY OR TOWN: **San Juan Capistrano 92675** STATE: **California** CODE: **06**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: [Signature]

Title: **State Historic Preservation Officer**

Date: **August 26, 1974**

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

[Signature]
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 4/21/75

ATTEST:

[Signature]
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: 4.18.75

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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DATE ENTERED	APR 2 1 1975

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SUPPLEMENTAL STATEMENT OF DESCRIPTION, MONTAÑEZ ADOBE

The Montañez Adobe is believed to be one of more than forty houses constructed on Occidental Street (now 31745 Los Rios Street) in the 1790's under the direction of Father Santiago, by and for the Mission's Juanefio Indian Neophytes. Originally, the two-room structure, with its twenty-inch thick walls, had a flat roof of poles, tules and pitch, typical of the period. It also had a front porch, supported by wood posts, extending along the frontal East side which faced the gardens then stretching between this row of houses and the Mission (about a block away). A plank door opened onto the porch from each room. Similar doors opened to the rear of the house, and there is another between the two rooms to join them, making the total size about 16' x 40'. Today, the adobe is one of only a few still standing. However, in spite of great neglect, a great deal of the structure is intact and original. During the mid-19th century, an 'American Period' pitched roof was added. The 2x4 beams are currently covered with corrugated metal. Subsequently, one room had old tiles from the Mission laid for flooring while the other had removable planks. Several wooden rooms were also added as need required and the North wall of the original adobe was partially rebuilt after the 'Long Beach Earthquake of 1933'. The old porch remains, although a part of it was enclosed for bath facilities. California State University at Fullerton has recently completed an archaeological excavation under the direction of Professor Zahniser. Their findings will be published in a report due this Spring. Based on their suggestions, the well-known archaeologist, Professor Franklin Fenenga of California State University, Long Beach, has agreed to assist in a proper restoration similar to the one he directed at the Avila Adobe on Olvera Street in Los Angeles. He has stated that it will be the only 18th century adobe in California preserved in its original form. All later additions will be removed, leaving intact only the original two-room structure which will be properly furnished and displayed in conjunction with the Historical Society Museum and Library. It is hoped that the project can be completed in the Bicentennial year. It will be the most important focus of the Historic Los Rios District recently designated by the City Council. Though less is known of the other adobes, it is hoped that the entire Los Rios Street area can be nominated for the Registry after more research.

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SUPPLEMENTAL STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE -- MONTANEZ ADOBE

In addition to its great age, the adobe is also significant for the colorful history of San Juan Capistrano, known as "The Cradle of Orange County." It is the county's oldest community and boasts of "The Jewel of the California Missions," founded in the same year as our nation, 1776, by Father Junipero Serra.

Although continuously inhabited, its most famous occupant was Dona Polonia Montanez. Born about 1829, Polonia's maiden name was Gutierrez. She is believed to have married three times, the first at age seventeen in the Mission's Serra Chapel (however, the Mission's records are destroyed). Her father was listed in Bancroft as being a Mission carpenter in 1797. She appears in the 1850 census as living with her father and there is no mention of either husband or children. Bancroft also mentions Gutierrez as being a recipient of two hundred square yards of land, distributed by a Government Official, Augustin Olvera, in 1841. By 1876, the deed was in Polonia's name.

After the secularization of the Missions in 1830, and its subsequent decline and eventual abandonment in 1886, Dona Polonia took charge of many religious duties, particularly those for the children of the pueblo when there was no resident priest. In Capistrano Nights, written by C. F. Saunders and Father St. John O'Sullivan, a chapter is devoted to this dynamic woman who had a chapel at the end of the corridor in her adobe house. During the long drought of the 1890's, the despairing ranchers of the area appealed to Polonia to pray for rain. For three days, her little band of faithful formed a colorful religious procession which crossed the parched countryside singing and praying. On the third day a "miraculous" sudden rain-storm gathered, of such magnitude that a rescue party was formed to deliver the grateful pilgrimage back to safety in the Mission village. Dona Polonia was still living when Father St. John O'Sullivan came to San Juan Capistrano in 1910 to begin the restoration of the Mission. Subsequently, he recorded much of her life as nurse, mid-wife, and spiritual leader for several generations of the community. Her headstone in the old Mission cemetery states that she died at the age of 92 (in 1921).

(Continued)

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE CALIFORNIA	
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	APR 21 1975

(Number all entries)

#9/BIBLIOGRAPHY/CON'T

D. CAPISTRANO NIGHTS, CHARLES SAUNDERS AND FATHER ST. JOHN O'SULLIVAN,
McBRIDE & Co., N.Y. 1930

#8/SIGNIFICANCE/CON'T

THE PARTICULAR TRIBE OF "MISSION INDIANS" IN THE CAPISTRANO AREA WERE NAMED "JUANEÑO" BY THE SPANIARDS, BECAUSE THEY CAME UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE MISSION AT SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO. (THE MISSION "GABRIELINO" INDIANS CAME UNDER MISSION SAN GABRIEL;"DIEGUENO" UNDER SAN DIEGO, ETC.) THE INDIANS WERE A LABOR FORCE FOR THE SPANIARDS AND BUILT THE ADOBES OF SAN JUAN UNDER DIRECTION. THESE DWELLINGS WERE USED TO HOUSE THE INHABITANTS OF THE PUEBLO.

ACCORDING TO THE SPANISH CHARTERS BY WHICH THE MISSIONARIES ORIGINALLY OPERATED, THE NATIVES OF AN AREA WERE TO BE SCHOOLLED IN THE "VIRTUES OF CHRISTIANITY" SO THAT THEY "CIVILIZE" THEIR WAYS. ONCE THIS MISSION HAD BEEN ACCOMPLISHED, THE PADRES WERE TO LEAVE THESE AREAS AND CONTINUE TO CARRY "CIVILIZATION" TO OTHERS IN NEED; THUS RETURNING POSSESSION AND GOVERNING OF THE LANDS TO THE NATIVE PEOPLE, WHO WOULD NOW BE CAPABLE OF SUCH RESPONSIBILITIES. THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT, WHICH CAME INTO POWER IN 1821, MOVED TOWARD SECULARIZATION (RELEASE OF THE LANDS FROM CHURCH HANDS) BECAUSE IT DID NOT HAVE NOR DID IT CARE TO EXPEND THE MONEY NECESSARY TO SUPPORT THE MISSION CAUSE. BY 1834, SECULARIZATION OF THE MISSION WAS WELL UNDER WAY. HOWEVER, INSTEAD OF RETURNING THE LANDS TO THE LOCAL INDIAN POPULATION; THE SOLDIERS WHO HAD FOUGHT ON THE SIDE OF MEXICO DURING THE REVOLUTION OF INDEPENDENCE FROM SPAIN WERE REWARDED WITH RANCHO GRANTS OF THE FORMER MISSION LANDS, AND THE INDIANS CONTINUED IN A LABORING AND SERVANT CAPACITY.

THE CHURCH AT SAN JUAN GRADUALLY DECLINED AS THE RELIGIOUS AND ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER OF TOWN UNTIL 1910, WHEN ITS RESTORATION WAS BEGUN BY THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. IT WAS DURING THIS PERIOD OF THE LATE 19TH CENTURY THAT POLONIA LIVED IN THIS ADOBE, POSSIBLY ONE OF THE OLDEST CONTINUALLY INHABITED DWELLINGS IN CALIFORNIA. IT SERVED AS A RELIGIOUS AND EDUCATIONAL CENTER, MAINLY FOR THE CHILDREN OF THE PUEBLO. SHE HAD PREVIOUSLY LIVED IN OTHER ADOBES IN TOWN, AS DOCUMENTED IN THE 1850 CENSUS. POLONIA WAS MOST PROBABLY OF MEXICAN (INDIAN AND SPANISH) DESCENT.

