

Bulletin ...

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The Ignacio de Roybal House

Photo courtesy of Hobart N. Durham, Jr.



THE IGNACIO DE ROYBAL HOUSE

One of the oldest residences in the Pojoaque Valley, the Ignacio de Roybal House is an excellent example of New Mexico's traditional Spanish Colonial architectural style. Situated south of the Rio Nambe at the southeast corner of Jacona plaza, it is a one-story, flat-roofed adobe structure with a tee-shaped floor plan. Although the plaza has been changed somewhat in recent years by the construction of the El Rancho road, the Roybal property has retained the atmosphere of the 18th century when it was the headquarters of a large hacienda. Set back from the road behind a low adobe wall, the house is shaded by huge willows and cottonwoods watered from an historic *acequia* which has irrigated valley farmlands for centuries. Spanish land conveyances show a dwelling on this location in the mid-1750s but its nucleus may date from 1705 when Don Ignacio de Roybal y Torrado purchased the land where it stands to augment his adjoining holdings. Because the same records indicate a much larger building in the 18th century, it is now believed that the present Trujillo residence, immediately to the north, was once connected to it, probably by a *zaguan*. A veteran of the Vargas re-conquest of 1693, Roybal was the progenitor of a large and important Santa Fe area family whose descendants retained possession of the house until recent times. Now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Robert A. Fisher the Roybal residence is significant both architecturally and historically, an important reminder of an earlier era.

Made of varying thicknesses of multi-layered adobe bricks the house walls are covered by the traditional layer of soft plaster reinforced with bits of straw. To drain the roof, long *canales* protrude just below the firewall extending well away from the building to prevent erosion of the walls and foundation. On the west a *portal* braced by log pillars and corbels shelters the kitchen, the living room (*sala*) and study which are arranged in tandem. The formal entrance consists of a pair of elegant paneled doors with heavy iron hardware which open into the sala but everyday access is through a small glass and wood door into the kitchen. Separated by a small hallway and bath, the dining room and master bedroom extend westward at right angles from the kitchen to form the short leg of the tee. A second bedroom of more recent construction has been added north of the kitchen. All doors and windows are topped by pedimented lintels characteristic of New Mexico's Territorial style. Heavy *vigas* support the ceilings which are made of split cedar *latillas* in the west wing and of pine boards in the sala. Heated by two small Pueblo fireplaces this room also has a pegged pine floor. Deep reveals enclose the doors and windows to accommodate the sash and trim to the massive walls.

A native of Galicia in northwestern Spain, Ignacio de Roybal was born C. 1673 at Caldas de Reyes, a village near the famous shrine of Santiago de Compostela. He was probably one of a group of soldiers recruited in the area by Don Diego de Vargas to participate in the Reconquest. Early in 1694, soon after the capture of Santa Fe, Roybal married Francisca Gomez Robledo, a member of a powerful but controversial 17th century New Mexico family. In the mid-1600s Francisca's uncle Francisco Gomez Robledo, her father Andres and other relations were accused by enemies of



Photo courtesy of Hobart N. Durham, Jr.

“Judaical tendencies.” During the trial conducted in Mexico City by officials of the Holy Office or Inquisition it was alleged that Francisco actually had a little tail, an abnormality which must surely signify inherent evil. Despite this damaging statement he was eventually able to disprove all charges and clear the family name but in later years the Gomez Robledos were often known as “Los Colitas.” Although Francisca’s father was killed at Santa Fe in the first days of the 1680 revolt, his daughters were the only members of this extensive clan to return to New Mexico with de Vargas.

Following his marriage Ignacio de Roybal assumed command of a military detachment charged with the surveillance of the Tano and Tewa pueblos north of Santa Fe. Still unreconciled to Spanish rule these Indians were among those who rose again in 1696 during the Pueblos’ final attempt at independence. As a reward for his services in this campaign Governor Pedro Rodriguez Cubero awarded a grant of land to Roybal in Santa Fe near the present site of Sena Plaza. At about the same time his brother-in-law Captain Jacinto Pelaez received a large tract north of the capital near the Pueblo of Jacona which had been abandoned during the hostilities. Roybal purchased part of this property from Pelaez and after the latter’s death, applied to governmental authorities for the rest of the Jacona grant which was conveyed to him in 1702. Three years later he further enlarged his holdings by buying $1\frac{1}{2}$ fanegas of adjoining farm land, part of another small grant which Cubero had made to Juan de Mestas. According to

documents from the settlement of Roybal's estate he traded "a good travelling horse" (*un caballo de camino bueno*) for the Mestas lands which extended to the Rio Cuyamungue. Although his title was later questioned by the Pueblo of Pojoaque, it was on this part of the Jacona rancho that Don Ignacio and Dona Francisca maintained their residence and raised their family of nine children.

One of New Mexico's leading citizens during the first half of the 18th century Roybal held municipal offices in Santa Fe and served as High Sheriff of the Inquisition despite the earlier problems of his wife's relatives. He was also a member of La Conquistadora Confraternity to which he made occasional contributions including elk and buffalo hides and other useful items. His eldest son, Santiago de Roybal, was educated in Mexico City where he prepared for the priesthood. After he returned to Santa Fe in 1730, the first native New Mexican to be ordained, he served as the personal representative of the Bishop of Durango with the title of *Vicario y Juez Eclesiastico* (Vicar and Ecclesiastical Judge). Following his father's death Santiago was responsible for the administration of the estate which included large numbers of livestock in addition to his real estate, weapons and personal belongings. Enumerated in the inventory were 200 head of beef cattle and 350 sheep and goats loaned at interest on *partido* for 30% of the wool, lambs and kids produced annually. There were also a band of mares running near Santa Cruz de la Canada and a number of oxen in the possession of Ignacio's sons. Evaluation of his estate indicated that the young soldier from Galicia had become wealthy during his 60 years in New Mexico.

In 1707, when Roybal was first establishing himself at Jacona, the adjoining Pueblo of Pojoaque, also abandoned in 1696, was reoccupied by member families who had been living in other Tewa pueblos or with hostile tribes. It then became evident that the property which Roybal had purchased from Mestas was in fact an encroachment on the recognized four-square leagues of Pojoaque lands. The matter remained in abeyance for over two centuries. In 1864, patent to a short four-square league "grant" was given to the Pueblo of Pojoaque which included the Roybal property.

About 1912 a speculative land company headed by D.C. Collier began acquiring both warranty and quit claim deeds to lands near Jacona from descendants of the original Spanish settlers and from the few remaining Pojoaque Indians who had moved from the area. The following year (1913) in the case of "U.S. vs Sandoval" the Federal Supreme Court finally determined that the Pueblo Indians, who had formerly been considered as citizens who could alienate their lands, were wards of the government. In an attempt to quiet title to pueblo lands which had been secured by non-Indians, the Pueblo Lands Board was created by Congress in 1924 to determine Indian title in each pueblo. Several Pojoaque families living in the Pueblo of Nambe claimed the grant, and the Collier title was challenged in federal court. The grant was reactivated but because of the long possession of the Roybal lands, pueblo title to them was declared extinguished. The Roybal and Trujillo families and their relatives continued to hold their properties by right of adverse possession, as they had for 200 years. On November 24, 1937 a patent was granted to Porfirio Roybal by the U.S. government for the property now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Fisher.

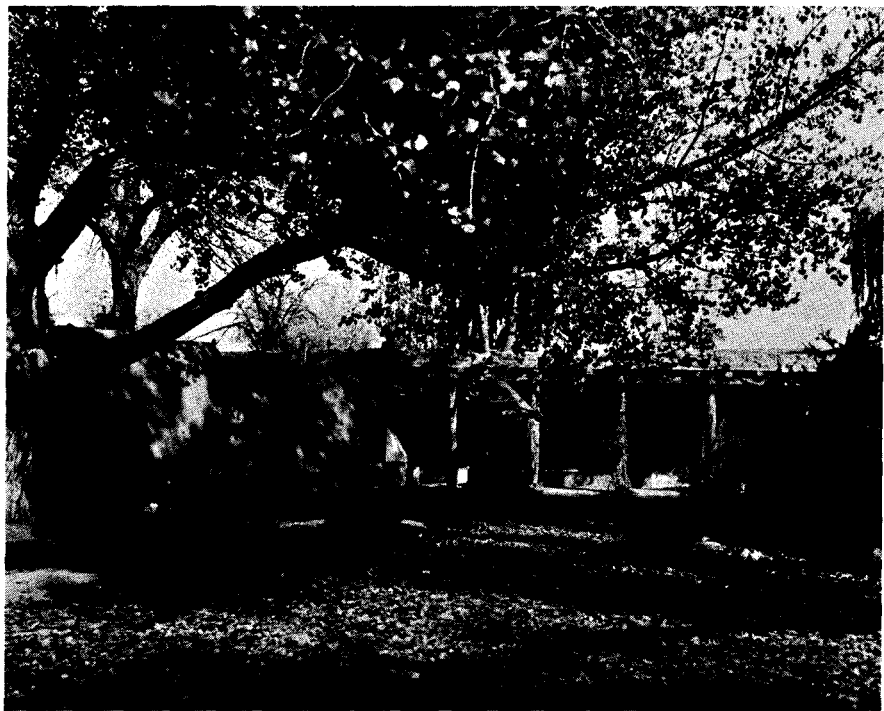


Photo courtesy of Hobart N. Durham, Jr.

Two years ago the Ignacio de Roybal House was placed on the New Mexico State Register of Cultural Properties in recognition of its historic importance.

Sources

Documents concerning Ignacio de Roybal estate in possession of Mr. and Mrs. Robert A. Fisher, Jacona, New Mexico.

Spanish Archives of New Mexico I, #735, 745, 1136 and 1261.

Records of Private Land Claims Adjudicated by the U.S. Surveyor General, #92.

Records of Private Land Claims Adjudicated by the U.S. Court of Private Land Claims, #35 and 237.

Chavez, Fray Angelico, "El Vicario Don Santiago Roybal," *El Palcio*, Vol. 55, No. 8, August, 1948.

_____. *New Mexico Families*. Santa Fe, 1954.

_____. *Our Lady of the Conquest*. Albuquerque, 1948.

John O. Baxter
October 18, 1979

Two Canyon Road Homes Featured at Foundation Open House

On August 26, 1979, the Historic Santa Fe Foundation held an open house at two historic homes located on Canyon Road, the Juan Jose Prada House at 519 Canyon Road and its neighbor, El Zagan. More than 150 members and their guests came to tour the houses, which were open from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m., and to enjoy the lemonade served on the west porch of El Zagan, overlooking the Adolph Bandelier garden.

The open house was planned as a part of the Foundation's continuing program to give members the opportunity of seeing some of the city's historic buildings not normally open to the public.

Renew Your Membership!

The Historic Santa Fe Foundation was founded in 1961 for the purpose of preserving sites, buildings and objects significant in the history and culture of Santa Fe and New Mexico, and of educating the interested public in their historical and architectural significance. The Foundation depends on its members to carry out these objectives of preservation and education — please remember to renew your membership for 1980.

Annual Membership Dues:

Individual	\$5.00
Husband and Wife	\$7.50
Commercial	\$10.00
Sustaining	\$50.00
Life	\$1,000.00

Please send dues to The Historic Santa Fe Foundation, P.O. Box 2535, Santa Fe, New Mexico, or stop by the Foundation's office in the rear of the Tully House located at the intersection of Grant and Griffin Streets, 9:00 to 1:00 weekday mornings. Membership dues are income tax deductible.

Terms to Know in Historic Santa Fe

santo: Image of a saint

camino: Road

zagan: Roofed space joining separate buildings or rooms

parroquia: A parish church as distinguished from a mission

cofradia: Confraternity; local church society approved by a bishop

Old Santa Fe Today

University of New Mexico Press
and The Historic Santa Fe Foundation

Sister Carlann Retires as Chapel Manager

A farewell dinner was held for Sister Carlann Herman at The Inn at Loretto on September 18, 1979, jointly sponsored by the Inn and The Historic Santa Fe Foundation. The dinner marked Sister Carlann's retirement as manager of the Loretto Chapel, a position she held for thirteen years, and was attended by many of Sister Carlann's family and friends, along with volunteers of the Foundation who have worked at the Chapel and other representatives of both the Inn and the Foundation.

A native of Las Vegas, New Mexico, Sister Carlann joined the Sisters of Loretto in 1930. She spent many of the next 35 years working at Webster College in St. Louis, Missouri, coming back to Santa Fe in 1966. Following her retirement from the Chapel in September, Sister Carlann returned to work with the community of the Sisters of Loretto in St. Louis.

Sister Rita Marie Romero has succeeded to the position of manager of the Loretto Chapel. Sister Rita Marie worked with Sister Carlann for many years and celebrated her fiftieth year with the Order of the Sisters of Loretto in 1977.



Historic Santa Fe Foundation Annual Meeting

Date: Monday, January 14, 1980

Time: 8:00 p.m.

Place: Sweeney Convention Center, Room 6

Program: After a brief business meeting, Dr. Myra Ellen Jenkins will present a program entitled "John Gaw Meem — Citizen of Santa Fe."