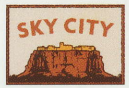




New Mexico State Monuments



CULTURAL CENTER
AND HAAKU MUSEUM

Historic New Mexico Spanish Missions

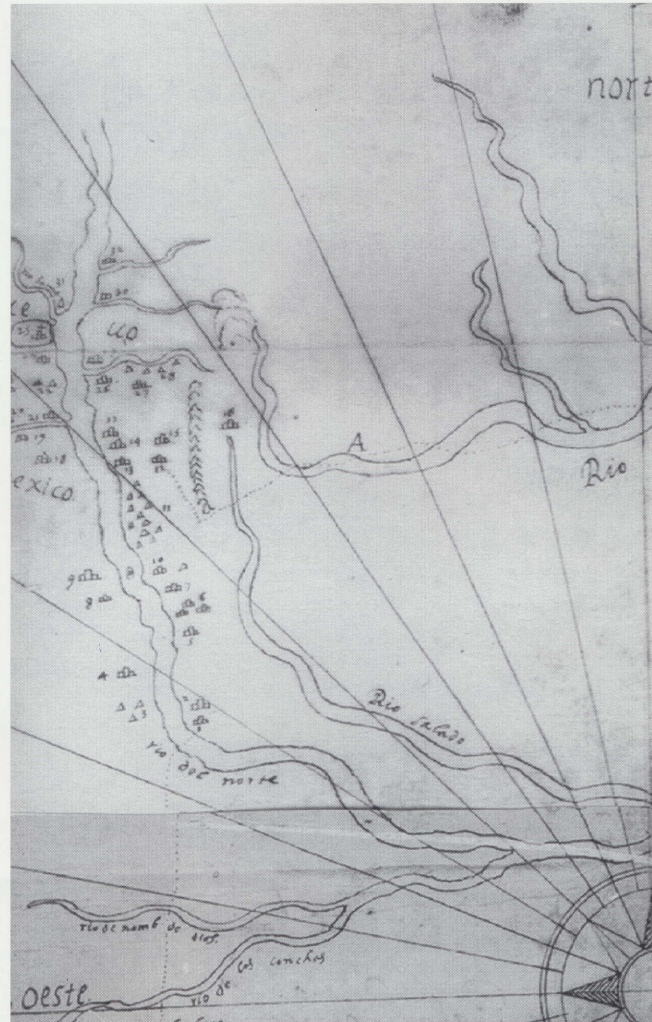


Painting by Roy Anderson
Courtesy of Pecos National Historical Park

Spanish Missions Of New Mexico In The Seventeenth And Eighteenth Centuries

Within three decades of Juan de Oñate's founding of New Mexico in 1598, Spanish missions stretched from Taos in the north to Isleta in the south and from Zuñi in the west to Pecos and Las Salinas in the east. By the late 1640s, the missions of New Mexico would be in full bloom extending southward to Socorro and El Paso. The history of the Spanish missions of New Mexico had begun nearly sixty years before Oñate's settlement. In 1540, an expedition led by Francisco Vázquez de Coronado entered New Mexico from the southwest by way of Sonora and present Arizona. Despite hostilities at Zuñi and Tiguex, Coronado's friars surmised that the Pueblo Indian villages along the Río Grande could be converted to Catholicism once Spanish sovereignty was established. In 1542 the expedition returned to Mexico City where Coronado and his men reported to officials on the people, flora and fauna in the far north.

In 1598, the Spanish returned to settle, this time with Juan de Oñate, who had a royal contract to govern the Province of New Mexico. Fray Alonso Martínez and nine Franciscans also made the arduous trip northward to the pueblo world. Governor Oñate assigned these missionaries to several pueblos and Pecos Pueblo became one of the first missions. The first Pecos priest, Fray Francisco de San Miguel, was an elderly man, and like many Franciscans he was accustomed to the rigors of frontier life. His assignment not only included Pecos but a vast area that stretched from Pecos to the Sandia Mountains and southward to the "pueblos of the salines" along the Manzano Mountain range. Like other missionaries of his time, little is known about his work among the Pecos, who doubtless tolerated his ministry.



A portion of the Enrico Martínez 1602 map of the New Mexico Pueblos along the Río Grande and Pecos River

The history of mission activities at Pecos, Las Salinas, Jémez, and Acoma parallel those of the other seventeenth century missions. While, some small chapels at the missions had been constructed during the early 1600s, earnest construction of churches began in the 1620's. In 1621 massive church construction projects were initiated at Pecos and at the Jémez pueblo of Giusewa. At Pecos, Fray Andrés Suárez had, with Pecos labor, constructed a "church of peculiar construction and beauty..." The church, dedicated to Nuestra Señora de los Angeles de Porciúncula, served "1,189 souls" and was probably the largest European structure north of the Old Mexico frontier.

In his Memorial of 1630, Friar Alonso de Benavides offered a view of the early missions in the New Mexico province. Regarding the missions of Las Salinas in the Manzano Mountains, he counted "fourteen or fifteen pueblos in the area, which must have more than ten thousand souls." Those missions were called "los pueblos de las salinas" because of the nearby salt beds. Today, the remains of mission churches and conventos at Las Salinas still stand at Quarai, Abó, and San Buenaventura—known as Gran Quivira. At Jemez, two seventeenth century missions at San José de Giusewa and San Diego de la Congregación (sometimes called San Diego del Monte) were established. Of Mission San José, whose church and convento still stand, Benavides remarked that it had "a very sumptuous and attractive church and friary." At Acoma, construction of the impressive San Esteban del Rey church and convento was initiated at this time.

The New Mexico missions were nothing more than programs for conversion of Pueblo Indians to Christianity. Spanish officials supported the

missions because it was a way of pacifying a given area for settlement purposes. At the mission, neophytes learned different techniques of masonry and carpentry, skills that would also prove useful in the construction and upkeep of the church structures. Old World farming methods and husbandry also formed part of the mission curriculum. Missionaries, nonetheless, felt that the most important role of the mission was the Christian salvation of the natives. While the missionaries hoped that mission Indians would one day become full-fledged Roman Catholics, this was never fully realized. Instead, most Indians took from Christianity whatever could be spiritually useful for them; but they did not relinquish the beliefs of their ancestors. Indian Neophytes were often pressured by both their Spanish missionary and their tribal headmen, because, generally, Pueblo Indians viewed Christianity and Spanish culture as threats against the "old ways" of life and as sources of resentment throughout the Pueblo world.

In the late 1600s, the Pueblos had begun to reevaluate their relationships with Spaniards. Longstanding grievances caused by an oppressive colonial policy which undermined the religious, political, and social traditions of the Pueblos reached a breaking point between 1675 and 1680. Out of the turmoil emerged an Indian leader known to the Spaniards as Popé. He would lead a rebellion known as the Pueblo Revolt, which resulted in a twelve-year rule by the pueblos. During that time, the Spaniards of New Mexico lived in exile at their outpost at El Paso del Norte.

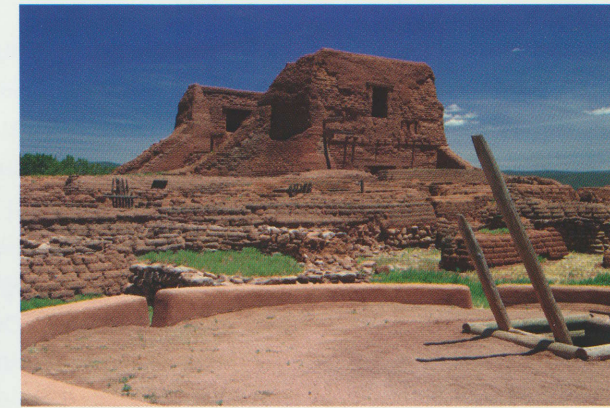
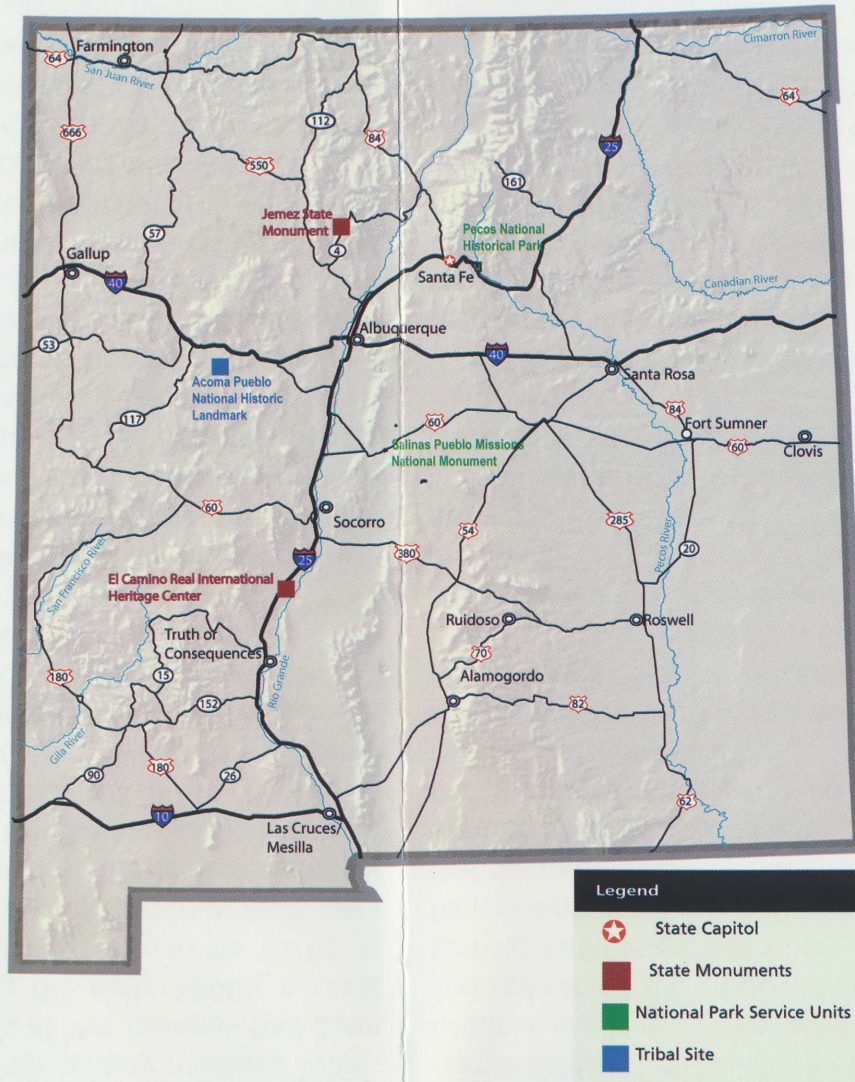
The eighteenth century opened with the Reconquest of New Mexico (which had begun in 1692) by Governor Diego de Vargas. Franciscans that accompanied de Vargas soon reestablished mission programs among the pueblos. But the revolt had

changed the pueblos. The Salinas pueblos and their missions, which had been abandoned prior to the revolt, were never reestablished. After 1700, the rebellious Hopi, thwarting all missionary advances, fell out of the system. When the Pecos mission was reestablished, the new church, constructed over the ruins of the old structure, was much smaller. In the Jemez area, the San José de Giusewa mission remained abandoned, although Mission San Diego was reestablished

There were, thus, fewer missions in the eighteenth century than in the previous century. Shortly after the Reconquest, for example, the multiple pueblos of Jémez and Zuñi each consolidated their populations into one pueblo, thereby reducing the need to one priest at each site. The drop in the number of missions also coincided with a decline in the Puebloan population, which, by the end of the century, numbered fewer than 20,000 people. After 1700, disease, famine, and war with raiding tribes took their toll. Throughout the eighteenth century, the Spanish population increased, eventually surpassing the native population. The upshot was that friars shifted their attention to ministering to Hispanic communities while attending less and less to the Pueblos.

During the Mexican Period (1821-1848) many of the missions were secularized, that is, their properties reverted to the Mexican State. After the United States' occupation of New Mexico Territory following the Mexican War of 1846, the remaining mission properties fell under the jurisdiction of the American Catholic Church. Today, the Catholic Church holds legal title to very few mission churches in the Greater Southwest. Presently, old mission churches represent the last vestiges of the mission programs that once existed in the Spanish Colonial Period.

HOW TO GET THERE...



Pecos National Historical Park

Pecos preserves 12,000 years of history, including the ancient pueblo of Pecos, two Spanish colonial churches, Santa Fe Trail sites, the 20th-century ranch history of Forked Lightning Ranch, and the site of the Civil War Battle of Glorieta Pass.

The Pecos National Historical Park visitor center contains exhibits (text in English and Spanish), book sales, and 10-minute introductory film available in English. The park has a 1.25 mile self-guiding trail through the Pecos pueblo and mission ruins. Guided tours are available to groups with advance reservations. Tours of the Glorieta Battlefield are also available with advance reservations.

Visitor Information:
505-757-6414
www.nps.gov/peco

Visitor Center Hours:
September - May 8:00 am - 4:30 pm
June - August 8:00 am - 6:00 pm



Jémez State Monument

Located in a setting of remarkable beauty, Jémez State Monument preserves the ruins of the San José de los Jémez Spanish mission and Giusewa Pueblo, an ancestral home of today's Jémez People. In the native Towa language, "Giusewa," signifies "of the hot place," and refers to nearby natural hot springs. The Jémez established the pueblo around AD 1500.

In 1541 the residents of Giusewa were contacted by envoys from the Francisco Vásquez de Coronado party. The Spanish constructed a mission chapel at Giusewa in 1601. This chapel was assimilated into the San José de los Jémez mission church in 1621. With eight-foot-thick walls and a rare, octagon-shaped bell tower, the San José church is an impressive structure indeed. It is also considered to be the second oldest mission church in New Mexico.

Hours of operation: 8:30 am-5:00 pm
(last tour at 4:30 pm)

Open: 7 days per week: May 1 to October 31
Closed Tuesdays: November 1 to April 30

Visitor Information: 505-829-3530
www.nmmonuments.org



Salinas Pueblo Missions NM

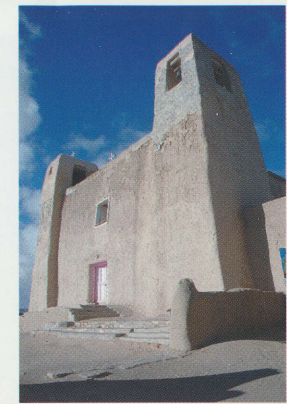
Once, thriving American Indian trade communities of Tiwa and Tompiro-speaking Pueblos inhabited this remote frontier area of central New Mexico.

Early in the 17th century, Spanish Franciscans found the area ripe for their missionary efforts. However, by the late 1670s, the entire "Salinas District," as the Spaniards had named it, was depopulated of both Indians and Spaniards.

What remains today are austere yet beautiful reminders of this earliest contact between Pueblo Indians and Spanish Colonials: the ruins of three mission church sites, at Quarai, Abó, and Gran Quivira; and the partially excavated pueblo of Las Humanas, or as it is known today, Gran Quivira.

Visitor Information:
505-847-2585
www.nps.gov/sapu

Visitor Center Hours:
Memorial Day - Labor Day 9:00 am - 6:00 pm
September - May 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Headquarters All year 8:00 am - 5:00 pm



San Esteban del Rey Mission

Construction of the San Esteban del Rey Mission and Convento began in 1629 and continued through completion in 1640. Built atop a 370 foot mesa, the 21,000 square foot adobe mission complex represents an extraordinarily arduous construction process undertaken by the Acoma ancestors. Clearly, the continued attachment of the Acomas to the structure and their dedication to its maintenance is an important part of the Acoma legacy. Both the Pueblo and San Esteban del Rey Mission are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Tours are available daily every hour on the hour except June 24 and 29, July 10-13 & 25, the first and/or second weekend of October and the first Saturday of December. All dates and times are subject to change. Please call ahead to confirm hours and dates of operation.

Hours:
November-March 8:00 am - 4:30 pm
April-October 8:00 am - 6:00 pm

The last tour of Sky City leaves one hour before closing. Prices and hours are subject to change without notice.

Call 800-747-0181 for group reservations.