



CORRALES HISTORICAL SOCIETY DOCENT PROGRAM GUIDE

Information in this packet will help you understand CHS and its activities. Docent volunteers are an important asset to the Society and essential to its activities. As a Docent, you serve as a host to provide a welcoming atmosphere. In many cases, you are the front line representative of CHS. You serve as interpreter of the history of the Old Church and give visitors a deeper understanding and appreciation of the history and present-day life of the Old Church. To enrich knowledge of our unique history, CHS Docents take tours to historic sites throughout New Mexico as well as in our local area. Each Docent brings special talents and abilities, all important to this organization. Fun and satisfaction await you as you participate in the growth of CHS as a Docent!

SECTIONS

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2 — VISUAL TOUR OF THE OLD CHURCH



The Historic Old San Ysidro Church is named for the patron saint of Corrales and of farmers, San Ysidro. Our goal is to be open for tours on available Saturdays throughout the year—unless a rental/event is scheduled at the Old Church. Every Docent is required to “sit” the Old Church once during the year. Generally, two Docents work together. Besides giving tours, the Docents staff Shop in a Basket, our “pocket” gift shop.

WELCOME VISITORS

INVITE VISITORS TO...

- sign our Guest Book
- walk around and enjoy the church
- allow you to give a brief history
- browse the items in Shop in a Basket
- consider joining Corrales Historical Society

WHAT DOES A TOUR INCLUDE?

- History of the Old Church
(*Read Section 2, History of the Old Church*)
- Description of significant features

REVIEW OF HISTORY BASICS

Old Church built to replace the c. 1750 church built on the Rio Grande that was swept away in the flood of 1868. Timbers and bodies rescued from the river. Bodies buried under church and in cemetery across the road. Timbers used in this church. Now 150+ years old.

Structure: Adobe (clay, sand, straw, pebbles), pine timbers. Built in cruciform shape with nearly three-foot-deep walls. Buttresses/towers of *terrón* construction.

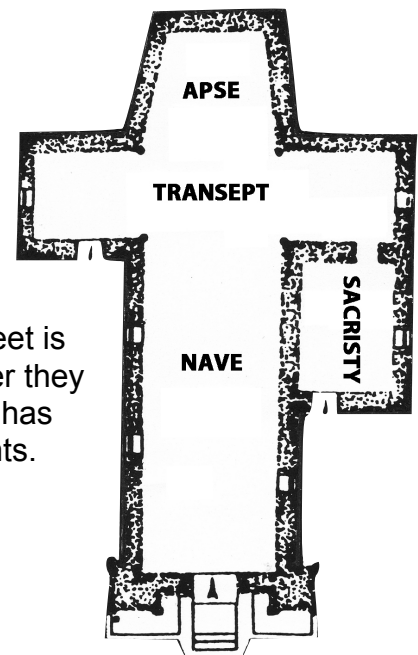
Management & Ownership: While the Village of Corrales owns the Old Church, it is managed and maintained by Corrales Historical Society. Casa San Ysidro across the street is owned and managed by the Albuquerque Museum. Together they are considered the Historic Heart of Corrales. While its role has changed, the Old Church remains a hub of community events.

Old Church Awards:

- 1979 **State Register of Cultural Properties**
- 1980 **National Register of Historic Places**
- 1990 **The Governor’s Awards for Excellence in the Arts / Historic Preservation**
- 2016 **Heritage Preservation Award / NMDCA**

Welcome sign placed outside the front door on the porch

Set up and display Shop in a Basket table



Original Church

When finished (c. 1870), the Old Church had a **flat roof** covered with dirt. Dirt (and critters) could sift through and rain down on the people, who might be seated on woven rugs on the packed **dirt floor**. Eventually, families brought their own pews or benches.

The church had an **arched gable façade** with an **espadaña** (bell gable) with one or two bells, typical design throughout the southwest. Bells were rung as a means of communication in the village; a messenger on horseback delivered details.



As the model shows, the church had two windows on the north side of the nave as well as on the south. (A total of **7 windows**.) A potbellied, **wood-burning stove**, located in the nave midway on the south side, provided warmth in winter. The stove had to be fired up a couple of days before a service to get the church warm. As a **mission (visita) church**, another church (Sandia Pueblo and later Bernalillo) supported this church. San Ysidro Church had no permanent priest but one would visit about once a month, coming by horseback. Later, he could come more frequently by automobile.

A **choir loft** that held about eight people, a small organ and an organist was in the northeast corner of the nave. "Precipitous" stairs led to the loft.

Interior **walls were white**, painted with gesso. The fourteen stations of the cross hung on the walls. The altar was at the back wall of the apse.

Major Changes

In 1905 a **tin pitched roof** was added and a sacristy was erected. The *espadaña* was covered over, as well as the window nearest the north transept where the sacristy was placed. The sacristy afforded the priest a place to hear confessions, store vestments, and have a bed and washstand if he chose to stay overnight. It was an honor for someone in the community to host the priest as well.

Twin towers/buttresses were added in 1930 to support the sagging front wall, and a **hard stucco** was applied to the exterior walls. At the same time, a **stamped tin ceiling** was installed in the church along with **wood flooring**. Daylight, kerosene lanterns, and candles provided light for many years until **electricity** was connected in 1939. In 1957 **wall heaters** were installed and the stoves removed.

In 1961, the parishioners had grown in number and they built a **new San Ysidro Church** on Corrales Road. This **old church was desanctified** when they moved.

From 1963 to 1987 (nearly 25 years), the **Adobe Theater** used the Old Church for its productions, adding risers and seating, painting the stage area black, and using the transept windows for stage exits. In 1973 **Corrales Historical Society** was formed and purchased the Old Church property from the Archdiocese of Santa Fe. Many **renovations began in 1976** to restore the Old Church to its beautiful simplicity. The Old Church is a **classic example of New Mexico religious village architecture** of the 18th and 19th centuries.

Interior Old Church Features

Stained Glass Window added 2003 to honor Dulcelina and Vincent Curtis; donated by children Evelyn Losack and Dorothy Trafton. Designed by Dyanne Strongbow, it depicts San Ysidro and his helpful angels in plowed fields. Look for the timber overhead with “1853” carved into it—probably salvaged from the first church.



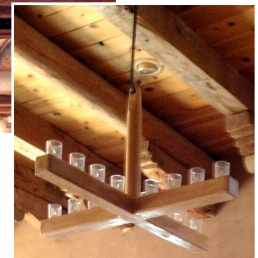
Ceiling features pine *vigas* and corbels topped by tongue-and-groove decking. Some timbers are from the first church (c. 1750), but which ones are unknown. Some are rounded and others flat edged. Original ceiling had *latillas* topped with dirt rather than pine decking. The corbels feature rounded “apples” that once were chopped off when a stamped tin ceiling was installed in 1930. The apples were restored when the tin ceiling was removed in 1981.



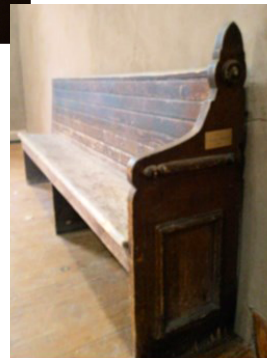
Arañas de Madera (chandeliers), added 2011 by Docents. Traditional New Mexican style, local craftsman.



Windows indicate the wall depth of approximately three feet.



Pews are original to the church, returned by local families. We have four. The smallest, an acolyte's bench, has two armrests. Invite visitors to sit on the narrow seats.



Table, usually on the apse wall, made from the original front door threshold of the church. Base constructed in Spanish Colonial style by Martha Trainer.



Old Weathered Cross possibly from old steeple of this church



Washstand, now by the side transept door, original to the church. It would have been placed in the sacristy and used by the visiting priest from Sandia Pueblo and later the Bernalillo church.



Sacristy Features

Door from church into sacristy not original. Constructed by local craftsman Pete Smith, CHS member, in traditional New Mexico style.

Door frame is probably from the main door of the first church destroyed in the 1868 flood, per Dr. Alan Minge. Note the scars [see red arrows] left from the original hinges.

Quote by Alexander Pope on inside top of door frame is a remnant from Adobe Theater days.

Trastero (tall cabinet) not original. Built in true Colonial Spanish style with pegs and mortise and tenon joints. Hide glue used (odor like old gym socks). Design by Pete Smith; built by Martha Trainer and Gay Betzer, CHS members. Cabinet stores files and artifacts for the Society.

Priest's Chest, large low cabinet on back wall, thought to be made by Bernalillo carpenter Carlos Sena, c.1900.

Model c. 1870 Church, showing flat roof and, when top is removed, *vigas*. Note flat arched-gable façade and *espadaña* (bell-gable) with bells. Buttresses/steeples added years later and *espadaña* muddled over.

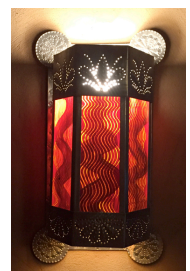
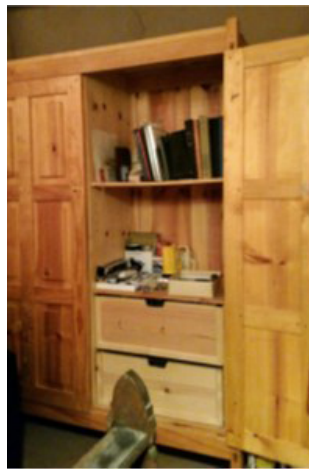
San Ysidro *Bulto* & Case not original. Carved wood figure of San Ysidro dates late 1700s. Oxen and angel carved later but possibly by same *santero*. Note beard on angel—not unusual to repurpose figures. Original natural pigments overpainted. Pete Smith modeled case after early 19th century NM table.



Stations of the Cross original. Eleven of 14 returned to Old Church and restored and stabilized.

Window Shutters & Two Wall Sconces

Not original. **Shutters** are ponderosa pine panels, beaded, and traditional hardware. **Sconces** made for Old Church by G&T Tinworks, Ann Kerscherff designer and comb painting by Annie Romero of Santa Fe.



Exterior Old Church Features

Main Doors (c. 1870), added 1987-88, are from a church in Los Abeytas. Donated by Alan and Shirley Minge.



PLAQUES & MARKERS

National Register of Historic Places — on front façade south of front door



Old Church Burial Plaque — on front façade north of front door. List of those buried under the church floor after the 1868 flood destroyed the first cemetery, as well as others

Alary Grave Marker — in front of south steeple. Josephine de Alary (1883) buried in church courtyard



New Mexico Register of Cultural Properties — next to south transept door



This section is a condensed version of information gathered by CHS Docents over many years. This visual guide was initiated by Jan Kunz, Docent Training Coordinator. Updates added in May 2022 by Alice Glover, Jannie Dusseau, Denise O'Connor, Carolyn O'Mara, Nan Kimball, and Debbie Clemente. This is information we know about the history, artifacts and details of the Old Church, gathered from historical written and oral accounts. It is hoped the photographs will act as visual stimulation and will help Docents give tours comfortably.

3 — ARTIFACTS IN THE OLD CHURCH

This section provides details concerning each artifact in the Old Church, including the donor or the craftsman (when known), and details about the markers on, in and around the church.

SAN YSIDRO BULTO

This wooden figure represents San Ysidro Labrador, a saint from Spain. It is not original to this church but was donated to CHS in 1994. Its specific origins are unknown and we continue to research its place in New Mexico history. The current information we have is that this figure of San Ysidro is from the late 18th century and done in the Rio Abajo style—possibly from the Socorro/Mesilla Valley region. The figures of San Ysidro and the angel may have been done by the same *santero*, however the angel figure may have originally represented something different and was later adapted to be an angel. The wings appear to have been added at a later time and the beard is perplexing! Each of the figures has been overpainted more than once.

DISPLAY CASE FOR SAN YSIDRO BULTO

The design for this case was suggested by Nancy Allen of the Museum of New Mexico. Pete Smith of Corrales modified the design and constructed the case in 2001. The design was inspired by an early 19th century New Mexican table. Two detachable handles on each side of the case are available for moving it. *Bultos* are often carried on a litter in processions.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

We have 11 of the original 14 Stations of the Cross. Many were donated back by Chuck and Betty Reed; other individuals brought back single Stations of the Cross. The wooden-framed print images are fragile. Some are in very poor condition due to inadequate storage over the years. Numbers I, VIII, and XIV are missing. Conservation work was done by Jen Northup. She donated the conservation of numbers III, V, and XI, and the remaining work was paid for by Corrales Historical Society in 2001 and 2002. Further information is in the archive files.

MODEL OF THE C. 1870 SAN YSIDRO CHURCH

Handmade of alder wood, this scale model was constructed in the woodworking shop of Pete Smith by Gay Betzer, Martha Trainer and other volunteers. The scale of the model equals half-inch to one foot. Note the flat roof and single arched gable with *espadaña* (bell gable).

OLD WEATHERED CROSS

The exact origin is not known but may have been from an old steeple of this church.

POTTERY

Santo Domingo Dough Bowl (1880-1900)—Shards were found by Frank (Pancho) Sandoval along the south side of the Old Church property. The pot was restored by Andy Goldschmidt of Corrales in 1997-98. The shards were donated by Dr. Alan Minge.

Casa Grande Pots—Old Mexican pots donated by Alan Minge. (Current location unknown.)

INTERIOR DOOR TO THE SACRISTY

Pete Smith made the door as a replacement in 2001. According to Dr. Alan Minge, the door frame was probably the main door of the first church in Corrales, which was destroyed by the 1868 flood.

SACRISTY SHUTTERS

Constructed of ponderosa pine, these shutters have panels and are beaded. The shutters were made by George Navarro in Pete Smith's workshop. The hardware is traditional.

MAIN DOORS (*LAS PUERTAS MAYORES*)

Double doors originally from the Los Abeytas church south of Belen (circa 1870). Donated by Alan and Shirley Minge.

STAINED GLASS WINDOW

Dedicated on January 11, 2003 in memory of Dulcelina and Vincent Curtis by their family. Designed by Corrales artist Dyanne Strongbow and manufactured by The Tatkoski Studio in Albuquerque with money from the Curtis Memorial Fund.

FURNITURE

Church Pews

- Returned by Dorothy Colborne in 1987 (in sacristy)
- Returned by Ruth Bibb in 1993 (in temporary storage)
- Returned by Jasper and Ella Dee Koontz in 1993 (in temporary storage)

Acolyte Bench—Original bench with two armrests donated by María de La Luz Moreño in 1988.

Washstand—Original washstand donated by María de La Luz Moreño in 1988.

Priest's Chest—(large, low cabinet in sacristy against east wall). Used to hold priest vestments and ceremonial supplies. It is thought to have been made by Bernalillo carpenter Carlos Sena at the turn of the 20th century. Donated by Mr. and Mrs. Ignacio Perea.

Trastero (in sacristy against west wall)—This large storage cabinet was made in the Spanish style. Designed by Pete Smith and constructed by Martha Trainer and Gay Betzer in 1994.

Tables and Chairs

- Two tables made by Bill Mowry in traditional New Mexico style (Hagaman Memorial Fund—the Hagaman Memorial Fund was set up in memory of Lyn Hagaman Ortega).
- One table in Spanish Colonial style was constructed and donated by Martha Trainer (in storage).
- "New/Old" table was made in traditional style by Martha Trainer in 1996. The rustic table top is the original threshold of the Old Church.
- Five chairs made by George Navarro in traditional New Mexico style: four are side chairs; one arm chair, called a "Priest's Chair" in New Mexico (in storage). Donated by Hagaman Memorial Fund.
- Two traditional side chairs made by Mick Harper (in storage). Donated by Hagaman Memorial Fund.
- Two traditional side chairs made and donated by Dorothy Hawkins (in storage).

WOODEN DONATION AND BROCHURE BOX

Made by Mike and Maria Gandy, Corrales woodworkers, in early 1990.

LIGHTING

Two Tin Sconces—(in the sacristy) made by G&T Tinworks of Albuquerque in 1998. They were designed by Ann Kerscherff. Comb painting by Annie Romero of Santa Fe.

White Ceiling Fixture—(hanging in the sacristy) was donated by Pat and Pete Smith.

One Glass Candlestick—original to the church, was donated by Erlene Ridling Coleman who purchased the candlestick from Matilda Palladini in the 1980s. It is stored in the large *trastero* to the left of the sacristy door.

Two Arañas de Madera (Wooden Chandeliers)—(hanging in the nave). Traditional New Mexican style. They were purchased and donated by CHS Docents in 2011.

SMALL WOVEN RUGS

These were not original to the Old Church but are typical of the kinds of weavings that people would have used for seating in the absence of pews or chairs. The small general area rug was donated by Yvonne Wolfenden, c. 1930-1945. Handspun wool with synthetic black and orange dyes and natural carded brown and white wool. Wool warp. The small Navajo rug was purchased from Andrew Nagen. It is a Gallup throw rug (c. 1950) of handspun wool with red and turquoise synthetic dyes. Grey and white natural wool and cotton warp. The rugs are stored in the large *trastero* to the left of the sacristy door.

CHURCH MARKERS

Official Scenic Historical Marker—by Old Church Road, northwest corner of church

National Register of Historic Places—plaque on wall by front doors

State Register of Cultural Properties—plaque by transept door

Wooden Plaque—on annex wall, carved by Lucy Sandoval and dedicated in July 1988

Plaque honoring Meliton Cordova—on annex wall. Inscription:

Corrales Resident who volunteered tirelessly in his retirement to look after the Old Church, the cemetery and the Corrales Senior Center.

He was born in 1918 and died in 1991.

Pat Smith of Corrales did the plaque honoring him on the annex.

Stone Grave Marker for Josephine Cocne de Alary—outside near the main doors.

Inscription:

*In memory of Josephine Cocne de Alary
who died at the age of 44 on January 18, 1883.*

*En memoria de Josephine Cocne de Alary
que murio a la edad de 44 años el dia 18 de enero 1883.*

Plaque honoring Ward Alan Minge—inside church to the left of the main doors

4 – HISTORY OF OLD SAN YSIDRO CHURCH

1710 Francisco Montes Vigil petitioned the King of Spain for land and was given possession of a tract of land (the Alameda Land Grant) which included Corrales. He was unable to fulfill the conditions of ownership so in 1712 conveyed his land grant to Captain Juan Gonzales.

circa 1750 The first church in Corrales, *L'Iglesia Jesus, María y José* (the Church of Jesus, Mary and Joseph) or *La Sagrada Familia* (Holy Family), was situated on the west side of the Rio Grande about half a league (1½ miles) from what is today called Sandia Pueblo. It was a long structure consisting of a nave with a small door and no windows. It was a *visita* church, meaning that it needed support from a larger Catholic church. A priest from the Sandia mission church would visit once a month or so to celebrate Mass and distribute communion, hear confessions, and conduct marriages and baptisms.

1857 Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church in the town of Bernalillo became a parish church and the Holy Family Corrales church became a *visita* of that parish. As before, a priest visited monthly to conduct services.

1868 Construction of the present Old San Ysidro Church began. On July 7, a rampaging flood of the Rio Grande swept away the Corrales church. Some timbers (lintels and *vigas*) were salvaged. Some coffins and bodies were saved. A translation of the article in *The New Mexican*, July 7, 1868: “The Rio has left its course in Rio Abajo [*Lower River, Rio Grande south of Santa Fe*] and is causing serious damage to inhabitants along its banks. Few things have withstood the current crest and in Corrales it carried off the Church in that plaza.”

1869-The Napoleon Gutierrez family donated land for a *campo santo* (cemetery). Plans as early as 1864 had been made to move the church to higher ground and out of the flood plain. The Gutierrez, Gonzales, Martin and Lucero families donated land. Whether a new church was begun before the devastating flood is not known, but the salvaged lintels and *vigas* were used in the new building. The lintel over the east window has the date of 1853 carved into it—probably a timber salvaged from the flood. Coffins found floating in the river were reburied both in the church yard and in the church. The new church had a flat roof, dirt floor and seven windows—a classic example of the New Mexico Hispanic religious village architecture of the 18th and 19th centuries.

Old San Ysidro Church is cruciform in shape. The massive masonry adobe walls are nearly three-feet thick and hand-plastered with adobe on both the exterior and interior. The adobe blocks are made of clay, sand and straw, and measure approximately 20 inches by 10 inches by 5 inches. Hand-hewn corbels support the *vigas* while hand-adzed lintels rest above the doors and windows. The original building had a flat earthen roof, an arched-gable façade with an *espadaña* (bell gable) over the main entrance, and a single door facing the east. The floor was packed earth. Interior mud-plastered walls were whitewashed with gesso. Today we have a wooden model depicting how the original adobe building may have appeared.

The Church As It Was

When parishioners attended Mass in the church, they sat on woven blankets—Indian or Hispanic weavings—on the packed dirt floor. Later each family provided their own bench, called a *tarima*, a plank with four legs that was low, portable, and had the family name inscribed on it. Four original pews remain in the church today; the smallest was donated by the Emilio Lopez family. The *sacristána* (keeper of the church, who for many years was Bruna Gutierrez Sandoval) would start a fire in the large, potbellied wood-burning stove (located midway on the south side of the nave) a full day or two before the service in winter. Fourteen stations of the cross hung on whitewashed walls. Today, 11 of the original stations have been cleaned and stabilized and are hung in the sacristy. The whereabouts of the remaining three is unknown.

Older parishioners have told us that seven windows provided light. Monthly services were held during the day. At night, candles and kerosene lamps might be used. (Corrales did not have electricity until the late 1930s.) Wooden steps led up to the east door. A bell hung over the front entrance with a rope attached to the door frame but out of reach of children. The *sacristána* would pull the bell slowly and the solemn sound would announce the death of an adult. A faster pealing bell would mean a child had died. A young person on horseback would ride out and carry the news to the people of the village. Ancestors of many current Corrales families are buried in the Old Church, in the courtyard to the east, and in the *campo santo* to the west across Old Church Road.

To the left of the main entrance, a small table held a basin of Holy Water. A small choir loft in the northeast corner of the nave had precipitous stairs leading up to it. The loft accommodated about eight choir members and an organist and small organ. A large altar filled the back wall of the apse, and in each transept was a side altar. The main altar was covered with white linen and held the tabernacle and was flanked by candles on shelves above. A *bulto* of San Ysidro, the patron saint of the village of Corrales, sat between them. On the north transept side altar stood a statue of the Virgin Mary. (While being restored, it was found to be a representation of St. Margaret originally; it was common practice to adapt *bultos* to present needs. Some of these original *bultos* and artifacts can be found in the new San Ysidro Church today.) A bench on the east wall next to the sacristy was used by those waiting for confession.

Located to the right of the sacristy entrance was a confessional booth. The long cabinet that is today at the back wall in the sacristy held the priest's vestments and a supply of candles. It was made by Carlos Sena of Bernalillo. The room was furnished with an iron bedstead, a washstand (now to the right of the side transept door) and a stove.

Barbed wire enclosed the plaza of the church. In about 1900, two cottonwood trees were planted to the north. They furnished shade for the horses tied there during summer.

Renovations and Modernizations

- 1905** A pitched tin roof was added, *canales* removed, bell gable filled in, the sacristy added along with a shallow Victorian porch, which would be removed not long after.
- 1930-** Twin buttresses (with steeples) were built to support the weakened east façade, built by
- 1932** José Antonio Lucero and helpers [*per Barbara Pijoan in 1999 who spoke with Lucero's son and daughter, Pedro and Julia, who visited the Old Church*]. It is reported that the buttresses were constructed with *terrones* cut from the river bottom. A pitched “tin” roof of corrugated steel and a hard stucco exterior were added. Concrete skirting four inches thick and 30 inches deep was poured around the base of the exterior walls to protect them from water runoff from the roof. Concrete steps leading to the entrance were added and double doors installed. Inside, a stamped tin ceiling was added, which covered up and damaged the corbels and *vigas*. The earthen floor was covered with Arkansas yellow pine tongue-and-groove planks. (Some accounts place this in 1910.)
- 1939** Rural Electric Association (REA) program brought electricity to Corrales—electric lights replaced kerosene lanterns in the church.
- 1950** Money for a new church building was being raised. The building began to deteriorate because repairs were not being made.
- 1957** Two gas wall heaters replace the wood burning stoves just prior to the building of the new church on Corrales Road.
- 1959-**With the building of the new church, the Old San Ysidro Church was abandoned and
- 1961** eventually desanctified. Corrales became a parish with a priest in residence year-round.
- 1963-**The Archdiocese allowed the Adobe Theater to use the Old Church for nearly 25 years.
- 1987** The building was modified to create a theater with a stage, a slanted floor with theater seats and a light booth. (Black paint is still found on the posts and *vigas* by the stage.) Transept windows were used as stage exits/entries with stiles built outside the windows. The sacristy was used as a dressing room. The quote by Alexander Pope written over the sacristy door, “Act well your part; there all the honour lies,” dates back to this time.
- 1973-**The Old San Ysidro Church was sold by the Archdiocese of Santa Fe to the Corrales
- 1974** Historical Society for the price of \$9500. The contract contains certain reservations and restrictions, including respect for burials and the history of the building.
- 1974** Screen Gems, a Hollywood film company, contracted with CHS to film a part of “Nakai,” a pilot for a television series, at the Old Church. They paid \$1500 (another report says \$3000) to stage a spectacular *ree/* fire which became a *real/* fire! Charred rafters on the outside of the south transept are evidence of the event. The money provided the down payment for the purchase of the property. (In the attic, charred beams reportedly are the result of a lightning strike unrelated to the film.)

- 1976** CHS deeded the ownership of the Old Church to the Village of Corrales under an agreement by which the Society would manage the Old Church. The hard exterior stucco was removed and the exterior walls were refinished in traditional adobe plaster.
- 1979** The Old San Ysidro Church was placed on the State Register of Cultural Properties.
- 1980** The Old San Ysidro Church was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- 1981** The tin roof was repaired. An adobe wall was built around the front (east) to create a small plaza. The stamped tin ceiling was removed, exposing the original *vigas* and corbels. The original ceiling decking, rotted beyond repair, was replaced with new decking. New wiring was installed. The building was re-mudded inside and out by volunteers. The sacristy had a new ceiling, walls were repaired and wiring updated.
- 1987-** The Adobe Theater lease was not renewed. Corrales Historical Society began extensive
- 1989** remodeling and preservation of the old building. The theater seats, risers and other remains of the theater were removed. The annex, designed by Gay Wilmerding, was built, providing restroom, kitchen, office and storage facilities. A well, septic, and heating systems were installed. Many citizens donated time, materials, and money. Community organizations and individuals donated trees and plants for landscaping. Old windows were replaced (Pete Smith) with double-pane glass replicas of the original windows. Historic doors, c. 1870, from a church in Los Abeytas (south of Belen) were donated by Alan and Shirley Minge and replaced those installed in the 1929-30 renovation in the east entrance. The sagging lintels over the entrance were replaced. New floor installed. Interior walls were mud-plastered. Recessed ceiling lighting replaced the wall lighting. A door was cut into the south transept, and an old, blocked door was uncovered in the sacristy. Since the building was to be used for public events, these exits were needed. Certain compromises with historic authenticity had to be made in order to accommodate building codes.
- 1998** The floor in the nave and transepts was replaced.
- 2001** The floor in the apse was replaced; Dorothy Hawkins and Mick Harper made four more chairs to match the ones made by George Navarro.
- 2002** Sacristy door was replaced, more lighting added, the “apples” on the corbels were restored (they were chopped off when the stamped tin ceiling was installed in the 1930s and then removed during restoration in the 1980s), a wooden downspout was added on the south outside wall, and a ramp with rails was installed inside the door of the south transept.
- 2003** Window above the main entrance replaced with a stained glass window, designed by artist Dyanne Strongbow, donated in memory of Dulcelina and Vincent Curtis, parents of Evelyn Losack (matriarch of Corrales) and Dorothy Trafton. The small window at one time displayed a handmade *colcha* (wool embroidery) design of Our Lady of Guadalupe.
- 2011** Two *arañas de madera* (wooden chandeliers in nave) were donated by Docents.

- 2013** A severe hail and rain storm exposed not only cosmetic but major structural damage to the church exterior.
- 2014** New tin roof added.
- 2015** Extensive repairs made after exterior walls were stripped down to adobe bricks due to 2013 storm. The sacristy walls had to be jacked up, adobe brick walls repaired, and professional re-mudding needed for the entire building. Through the use of FEMA funds, secured by Fire Commander Tanya Lattin, and monies entrusted to CHS by members and friends over the years, as well as help from the community at large in a successful fundraising campaign, all needed repairs were made and CHS had a financial base to build on for future preservation efforts.
- 2016** Heritage Preservation Award by New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs recognized restorations made after the devastating 2013 storm damage.
- 2017** Interpretive Sign designed and placed at the southeast corner of the courtyard for visitors arriving when the church is closed.
- 2018** Community celebrated the Sesquicentennial (150th anniversary) of Historic Old San Ysidro Church.
- 2019** Roof issues addressed through a Capital Improvement Project grant approved in 2018. Old insulation and debris removed, fire (c. 1974) damaged rafters replaced or supported, drainage around steeples addressed, siding on cupolas replaced and “crickets” added, attic vented to alleviate heat buildup, and new corrugated galvalume metal roofing laid overall. New insulation added in attic.
- 2020** The COVID-19 Pandemic canceled all indoor group activities. Creative means of replacing income lost from rentals, art shows, concerts, and other in-person events were put into play. Ten trees donated by Trees of Corrales planted along south boundary behind annex.
- 2021** COVID continued to play havoc with rentals and other activities for income. The downtime, however, allowed an uninterrupted opportunity to replace the deteriorating floor with a new one. A subfloor (5/8-inch plywood) was put in for the first time (to strengthen and give longevity to the floor), and historically correct ponderosa pine tongue-and-groove boards were obtained from the South Dakota Black Hills. The “supply chain” issues throughout the world, due to the pandemic, made obtaining materials difficult. Volunteers removed the old boards, CHS sold the best planks, and volunteers put in the new floor. Some of the old 1930 floor planks were salvaged and used to make new radiator covers in the nave. Transept door railing no longer necessary with the raised floor.

Some activities were allowed live during downturns in COVID cases, with masks being required as well as social distancing.

- 2022** CHS returned to normal activities, with caution.

This information was compiled by Martha Trainer, Gay Betzer, and Barbara Pijoan in 1996 with much input from Alan Minge. Mary Harrington and Hope Grey updated in 2004 and Gay Betzer in 2011. Judy Hart has kept the Docent History and furnished this compilation in 2022 with events up to 2013. Updates throughout and from 2013 to 2022 were added by Alice Glover, Jannie Dusseau, Denise O'Connor, Carolyn O'Mara, Nan Kimball, and Debbie Clemente. This is most of the information we know about the history of this building and property. It is gathered from historical information and oral accounts. As we learn more, we make changes accordingly. Our purpose in this document is to "paint a picture of the Old Church to the best of our knowledge based on the facts we have about the Old Church." —*June 2022*

5 – OLD CHURCH TIMELINE

c. 1750	First church in Corrales, <i>L'Iglesia Jesus, María y José</i> , built near Rio Grande
1868	Devastating Rio Grande flood destroyed the first church
1868–1869	New church, named for San Ysidro, patron saint of farmers, built by community on higher ground (flat roof, 7 windows, dirt floor)
1905	Sacristy added, pitched tin roof added, <i>espadaña</i> covered over
1930	Major Additions: <i>Exterior:</i> twin buttresses, pitched “tin” (corrugated steel) roof, hard stucco applied <i>Interior:</i> stamped tin ceiling, wood flooring
1939	Electric lights added
1957–1961	Wall heaters added Church desanctified, parish moved to new church on Corrales Road
1963–1987	Adobe Theater used Old Church for its productions
1973–74	CHS purchased the Old Church property from the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, with additional monetary support from the Village of Corrales
1976	CHS deeded the property to Village of Corrales and continued as caretaker and manager of the Old Church Hard exterior stucco removed, refinished in traditional adobe plaster
1979	Placed on the New Mexico State Register of Cultural Properties
1980	Placed on the National Register of Historic Places
1981	Roof repaired, adobe wall added in front of church to create plaza. Stamped tin ceiling removed, decking replaced, walls re-mudded inside and out
1987–88	Adobe Theater lease not renewed; extensive remodeling begins: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • theater risers and stage removed • interior walls mud-plastered • annex added providing restroom, kitchen, office and storage facilities • well and heating systems installed • landscaping added
1989	Exterior sacristy door discovered under mud plaster and unblocked New exterior door cut in south transept to comply with building code New lighting added and new floor installed
1998	Floor in nave and transepts replaced
2002	Sacristy door replaced • additional lighting installed • “apples” on corbels restored
2003	Stained glass window (depicting San Ysidro) donated by Curtis family
2014	“Tin” roof replaced
2015	Major restoration and re-mudding of church following July 2013 severe rain and hailstorm that stripped mud plaster, revealing huge structural issues
2018	Year-long celebration marking Historic Old San Ysidro Church’s Sesquicentennial (150th anniversary)
2019	New “tin” roof added and rafters replaced and/or supported
2020	Ten trees donated by Trees of Corrales, planted along south fence line
2021	New ponderosa pine floor installed by volunteers; subfloor added for first time

6 – CHILDREN’S TOUR OF THE OLD CHURCH

Be sure to encourage questions and ask questions yourself.

FIRST CHURCH Before this church, there was another small church located down by the Rio Grande. It was adobe and was built somewhere around **1750** — nearly 275 years ago.

FLOOD In **1868**, before dams were made along the river to control the water flow, a huge flood swept away the first church. People ran into the river and saved timbers from the church and also bodies from the cemetery! See the difference in the *vigas* overhead?

NEW CHURCH After 100 years in the first church, the people had already decided to build a new church on higher ground—right here. So in 1868 they began this church, which is cross-shaped. It is now **over 150 years old!** It is made of big **adobe blocks smoothed over with adobe plaster**. The **walls are three-feet thick!** When you go outside, look closely at the adobe wall; you’ll see it is a **mixture of clay and sand, with pebbles and straw** added to provide strength.

CEMETERY & BURIALS Across the road is where they had planned a new cemetery. Since most of the people here spoke Spanish, it was called the **campo santo** (holy field). Those bodies that were recovered from the river were buried there and also under the church, which was a common thing to do in those days because it was considered very holy. Twenty-one people are buried under your feet.

DIRT FLOOR & ROOF When this church was finally finished, it had a **dirt floor and a flat roof**. *Latillas* were laid across these big *vigas* and dirt was poured on top of the *latillas*. You can imagine what might happen...dirt sometimes rained down on the people. We’re told that creepy critters and even snakes worked their way down as well.

COMFORT? Since the floor was dirt, families would bring **blankets to sit upon**. Later on people made **benches or pews** and brought them to the church. We have a few original benches. Please sit on one...can you imagine sitting for an hour on this narrow seat? A potbellied wood-burning **stove** sat midway on the south nave wall. The church caretaker had to fire it up two days before a service in the winter in order to heat this space. It probably wasn’t very comfortable.

BELLS & GABLES When the church was built, it had **one arched gable** in the front of the church that had an **espadaña** or **bell-gable**—an opening where one or two bells were hung. There were no telephones for many years, so the **bells were rung in different ways** to make announcements. For example, a fast toll told of the death of a child; a slow peal announced the death of an adult; and it also announced that the priest was arriving. Then a rider went out on horseback through the village to give details.

MISSION CHURCH / VISITA This church did not have a priest here all the time; it was a **visita**. That means it was a mission church and was supported by a bigger church which sent its priest to visit here. At first a priest from Sandia Pueblo visited and later one from the Bernalillo church. The priest would come, in the beginning, maybe once a month to hold Mass, perform baptisms, weddings, funerals, and hear confessions. He travelled by horseback. Later on, he was able to come by car more frequently. It was an honor for a family in the community

to provide a room and meals for the priest when he visited. In 1905, the sacristy—the little room around the north side—was built so the priest could stay overnight there, if he chose, and it provided a place to hear confessions.

TWO TOWERS The front wall began to sag, so around 1930 (about 90 years ago) two **buttresses—the towers**—were built at either corner of the front of the church in order to hold the wall in place. The **espadaña / bell-gable had already been mudded over**. A **tin pitched roof** replaced the dirt. **Electricity** finally arrived in Corrales; no more kerosene lamps!

CHURCH TO HISTORIC BUILDING Now the Old Church has been “**desanctified**” (no longer a Catholic church) and the Village of Corrales owns the property. **Corrales Historical Society takes care of the Old Church** and keeps it in good condition so you, YOUR children and grandchildren will be able to enjoy it. Now we rent it for weddings, concerts and such, as well as have talks here about New Mexico history, and we give tours. We do a lot of fun things to earn money to take care of this Old Church’s needs. It needs to be re-mudded most years, and we’ve recently given it a new hat and new shoes (roof and floor).

SAN YSIDRO THE MAN The name is “San Ysidro Church.” Who was San Ysidro?

Ysidro was born in **Spain more than 1000 years ago**. He was a **farm worker for a big landowner**. Ysidro was very devoted to God. He **prayed so much, it is said, that angels were sent to do his plowing**. His fellow workers were amazed that his fields were plowed three times as fast as theirs and yet he seemed to spend a lot of time at the cathedral. Many **miracles** were attributed to him. In one telling, a miraculous spring once appeared at Ysidro’s feet and watered his fields (so he is prayed to in times of drought). He died on May 15, 1130 and was **named a saint** by the Catholic Church many years later. He is the **patron saint of farmers, gardeners and laborers**, and of course of **Corrales and the Old Church**—as well as the new church on Corrales Road. His **feast day is May 15**, and his statue is carried in processions in villages and sometimes into farm fields. There is a ceremony most years, on or near May 15, here on the steps of this church and a fiesta is held at the new San Ysidro Church.

The **bulto** we have of San Ysidro is typical of how he usually is depicted in New Mexico. He is dressed in Spanish Colonial garb—a blue, gold-trimmed jacket, knee breeches and boots, and a black flat-topped, broad-brimmed hat. The angel is plowing with a pair of oxen.

WORDS TO KNOW:

Apse — part of church that houses the altar

Bulto — a carved wooden painted statue, usually of a saint

Buttress — a projecting support against a wall of a building

Campo Santo — cemetery (holy field)

Corbels — the decorative, carved wood supports for the vigas. In traditional New Mexican architecture, corbels are carved into a curving profile usually with a circular terminus resembling an apple or pomegranate, the latter a vestige of Islamic design.

Desanctify — declared no longer sacred

Espadaña — Bell gable where bells hang

Lintel — the horizontal support across the tops of doors and windows

Latilla — a narrow peeled log pole

Nave — the long, rectangular portion of a church that accommodates the congregation

Sacristy — a room in a church where a priest prepares for a service and where items used in worship are stored

Transepts — the two arms of a cross-shaped building, projecting at right angles from the nave

Viga — a large peeled log that supports the ceiling or roof

7— GLOSSARY

Adobe—a combination of clay, sand, straw and water that is shaped into bricks, sun-dried and used as a building material. A building made of adobe can be referred to as an adobe structure. The tradition was introduced to Spain by the Moors and later came to New Mexico.

Adze—a wood-working tool that scrapes a log to create a relatively flat surface. When lumber mills were established in New Mexico, logs were milled to form truly flat boards.

Apse—the part of the church that houses the altar. In the Old Church, it is the polygonal “top” of the cross and has a raised floor.

Araña (or Araña de Madera)—a wooden chandelier. In the Old Church the *arañas* in the nave are wooden crossbars holding candles and suspended from the ceiling by wrought iron hooks. The word *araña* means spider, *madera* means wood. The two *arañas* were installed in 2011 as a gift from the Docents.

Bulto—a carved wooden statue that is usually of a saint or religious personage and are often painted. The Old Church has *bultos* of San Ysidro Labrador and his angel in the case in the sacristy.

Buttress—a projecting support against a wall. On the Old Church a pair of terróne buttresses were added to support the weakened east façade. The tops of the buttresses house the steeples.

Campo Santo—literally sanctified ground. The term refers to a cemetery, such the San Ysidro Cemetery across the street from the Old Church.

Canale—a drain on a flat roof that projects from the roofline.

Colcha—a New Mexican style of wool embroidery where most of the wool is on the front of the piece.

Corbels—projecting timbers that support the *vigas*. In traditional New Mexican architecture, corbels are carved into a curving profile usually with a circular terminus resembling an apple or pomegranate. (The pomegranate form is a vestige of Islamic design.)

Comb Painting—on the two tin sconces in the sacristy, the reverse painting on the glass panels is referred to as comb painting. A dry brush is drawn across the back of a glass panel with oil paint to create a linear or marbled effect.

Cruciform—in the shape of a cross: a long central nave, an apse and two transepts (wings or arms) that create a cross-shaped building. The Old Church has a cruciform design which is customary in Catholic churches, whereas the first church was a simple rectangular building.

Desanctified—when a Catholic church is formally abandoned as a place of worship by a superior in the Catholic church, usually a bishop. The process requires the removal of sacred items. In the case of the Old Church, the items were moved to the new San Ysidro Church. (Also called “deconsecrated”)

Decking—the milled wooden boards that span above the *vigas* to form the ceiling of the Old Church.

Espadaña—bell gable. The *espadaña* in the Old Church was covered over when the pitched roof was installed in 1905.

Las Puertas Mayores—the main entrance doors.

Latilla—a peeled sapling that is laid above the *vigas* to form the ceiling in traditional New Mexican construction. The *latillas* were removed and replaced by milled decking.

Lintel—a horizontal beam that spans the opening for a window or door to support the wall above. In the Old Church, they extend across the window openings in the three-foot-deep walls.

Matachines—costumed and masked dancers who lead a religious procession during the Feast Day of San Ysidro (May 15) to and from the Old Church. The *Matachine* dance has its origins in Moorish Spain, but in New Mexico, the tradition combines Hispanic and Native American influences.

Mission Church—see *Visita*.

Morada—a building that is the meeting place of *Penitentes*.

Mud—the term used here refers to the plaster composed of clay, straw, soil and water that covers the adobe bricks and protects them from deterioration. Adobe buildings need regular “mudding” inside and out. Mudding is the process of applying the plaster. Originally, the Old Church had whitewash over the interior mud plaster.

Nave—the long, rectangular portion of a church that accommodates the congregation.

Penitentes—a lay society of Hispanic men in Northern and Central New Mexico known for their ascetic practices, especially during Holy Week. They meet in *moradas*.

Posts—supportive vertical timbers. In the Old Church there are four large pine posts at the corners where the transepts meet the nave and the apse.

Retablos—two dimensional depictions of Catholic saints, traditionally painted on a wooden base with natural pigments over gesso (a white compound used for sizing a surface for painting).

Rio Arriba—literally the “upper river” and refers to everything north of Santa Fe. It refers to the upper Rio Grande.

Rio Abajo—literally the “lower river” and by Mexican law referred to everything south of Santa Fe. It refers to the lower Rio Grande.

Santero/a—a craftsperson/artist who creates devotional art depicting Catholic saints. Santeros make *bultos* and/or *retablos*.

Santo—image of a saint. They adorn homes, chapels, churches and *moradas*.

Sacristáno/a—the person who takes care of a church and prepares for services.

Sacristy—a room in a church that is used to store the priest’s vestments and sacred objects. In the Old Church, the sacristy was added for that purpose and as a room where the visiting priest would hear confession and sleep, if he was staying overnight.

Tarima—low, movable bench (a plank with four legs).

Terrones—literally clumps of earth or sod cut from a damp area and dried in the same way as an adobe brick. Roots in the soil acted as a binder like the straw in adobe. Some of the building material in the Old Church are *terriones* that were cut from the river bottom.

Transepts—the two “arms” of the cross-shaped building. The transepts project at right angles from the nave. In the Old Church each transept held a side altar.

Trastero—a tall cabinet used to store items, often with shelves.

Viga—a rough roof timber. Traditionally, *vigas* were peeled logs; sometimes they were adzed to a rectangular shape. Later, when lumber mills were established in New Mexico, *vigas* were milled. The Old Church contains peeled pine *vigas* as well as adzed *vigas*.

Visita—the term for a church that did not have its own priest and a visiting priest would come once a month or so to perform Mass and other sacraments. At San Ysidro, a priest would come from Sandia Pueblo and later from a parish church in Bernalillo. *Visitas* were also called mission churches.

8 — OPENING & CLOSING THE OLD CHURCH SETTING UP FOR VISITORS & TOURS

Opening the Church

1. Shop in a Basket Coordinator and/or Docent Chairperson will open and close the Old Church, restrooms, and kitchen (if used). Contact numbers will be placed in the **Docent Instruction Guide folder**. There are separate keys for the office, the Old Church, and the kitchen.
2. Turn lights on.
3. Place **OLD CHURCH OPEN** A-frame signboard on Old Church Road (near free-standing State Historic Marker). Make sure it is visible from both directions. This sign is in the storage room.
4. OPTION—use small **OPEN** sign (stored in the long, low cabinet on the east wall in the sacristy). Hang on the nail on the tree near the free-standing State Historic Marker.

Setting Up

1. Go to the sacristy—open door and turn light switch on (located on the right-hand wall by door).
2. Move wooden model of Old Church to the center of the church nave.
3. Move the pew and acolyte bench out of the sacristy into the transept.
4. Hang wooden cross on the nail on the west wall of the apse (stored in locked tall cabinet in sacristy). Key for cabinet is on a nail on left side of the cabinet.
5. Set up the piece of the altar rail on apse by step (white wood rail stored in the sacristy).
6. Move a wooden table out of sacristy for Shop in a Basket. Table is usually positioned at front door of church.
7. Go to the cabinet on the west (back) wall of the sacristy. Shop in a Basket items are located in the cabinet and in the rolling cart. Find the turquoise tablecloth and place on the table; drape the Shop in a Basket banner (stored in cardboard tube) across the center of the table so the image is hanging to the front.
8. Set out Shop in a Basket items and the guest book (in cart) on the table by front door.
9. Place cash box, located in locked tall cabinet in the sacristy, on Shop in a Basket table or on top of cart. Key for cabinet is on a nail on left side of the cabinet.
10. Prop open two front doors of the church with rocks.
11. Place Welcome Sign outside door (stored in sacristy).

You are ready to greet visitors!

Visitors

1. Please greet everyone who comes in the door.
2. Ask them to sign the guest book.
3. Offer your guests a tour including brief history of the Old Church. Make sure every visitor gets an Old Church brochure.
4. Some people may just want to look around and others may want you to give them an explanation of something they see in the Church. Ask if they have questions. (Refer to the **VISUAL TOUR OF THE OLD CHURCH** guide in your Docent folder.)
5. Point out items for sale on the Shop in a Basket table.
 - a. When an item is sold, create a receipt only if asked (receipts in cash box). Record every sale in the receipt book provided as a running list of sales for the day. If needed, replace items from stock in cabinet in the sacristy. **Record specific items, e.g. Large San Ysidro wooden retablo, Snowy Church notecards.** We use this information for inventory purposes.
 - b. The credit card machine is in the annex office. Ask the customer if using a credit or debit card. If it is a debit card, the customer must come into the office to enter their PIN. Refer to the Credit Card Instructions in the **Docent Instructions Guide folder.**

Closing

1. Reverse the above procedure. Put everything away where it came from.
2. **Call the Shop in the Basket Coordinator or Docent Chairperson to come lock all the doors and secure the alarm** after you have closed and barred the front doors. Then close restroom and kitchen doors and put away all Shop in a Basket items. Return model, pew, acolyte bench, piece of altar railing or other artifacts to the sacristy. Turn off the lights. *Do not leave until coordination or chair arrives.*
3. Phone numbers for Shop in a Basket Coordinator and/or Docent Chairperson can be found in the **Docent Instruction Guide folder and on left side of tall cabinet in sacristy.**

9 — SERVING REFRESHMENTS

Bring and set up the following:

1. **Table**—If not already in place, get one from the storage room. Usually someone sets up a table when setting up the chairs.
2. **Tablecloths**—Tablecloths are in the kitchen or you can bring one from home.
3. **Table decorations**—Plant, dried flowers, fresh flowers, or seasonally appropriate decorations—you bring.
4. **Napkins**—Standard napkins in the kitchen – for special ones, you bring
5. **Food and Beverages**
 - Bring cookies or snacks. For Docent meetings, bring enough for 35 to 40 people. For Speaker Series or other events, may need more, depending on expected attendance.
 - Beverage suggestions: cider, apple juice, lemonade, water, coffee. If serving hot cider, a separate pot in the kitchen is reserved for heating cider. Bring bottled water for drinking (1 gallon). Tap water in kitchen is good for making coffee or tea.
6. **Donation Basket**—Set out small basket labeled “Donations.” Put in a dollar bill to encourage donations. At the end of the event, place donations in the envelope provided in the **Docent Instructions Guide** folder. Mark the envelope “Donations from Speaker Series” (or other event) and place in the Shop in a Basket cash box. Cash box is located in locked tall cabinet in the sacristy. Key for cabinet is on a nail on left side of the cabinet.
7. **Trash and Recycling**—Put out trash and separate recycling containers.

Make and set up coffee:

1. Coffee and coffee pots are in the kitchen. We have a Keurig, a 12-cup coffeemaker, and a large capacity percolator. Tea is also available by the cup; heat in microwave.
 - Tap water in kitchen is fine for making coffee and/or hot tea.
 - Make up to 12 cups of coffee, depending on weather and expected turnout. Directions are on the pot.
 - Only decaf provided, except for Keurig
2. Coffee is set up on the small washstand by the transept door. Place a towel under the pot to avoid damaging the surface..

Refill or re-supply beverages and snacks as needed during the event.

After the event:

1. Clean up and put pots, trays, etc., away in the kitchen.
2. Place leftover cookies and snacks in freezer bags and leave in refrigerator, along with opened leftover cider, apple juice, lemonade, etc. Freezer bags are in kitchen.
3. Remove trash bags from trash and recycle containers. Empty recyclables **directly** into the recycle bin (white top), then put recycle bag into the other trash bin. Both trash and recycle bins are located outside near the southeast corner of the annex. Place new trash bags in the containers. Trash bags are in the kitchen.
4. Return table to storage room and lock the storage room (usually done for you by whomever is taking down chairs).
5. If you choose to be reimbursed for expenses, complete the reimbursement form, include event name, attach receipts for refreshments and send to

CHS Treasurer
PO Box 1051
Corrales, NM 87048

Forms are in the Docent Instructions Guide folder.

10 — SAN YSIDRO LABRADOR BIOGRAPHY & LEGENDS

Ysidro de Merlo y Quintana was born around 1070 in Madrid, Spain, of poor parents. At a very young age, he entered the service of a wealthy landowner named Juan de Vargas as an indentured farm laborer and remained with him his entire life.

According to legend, Ysidro was a model of Christian perfection—a devout man who rose early to attend Mass and prayed often through the day. Fellow farm workers complained to their master that Ysidro was often late for work in the mornings. On investigation, de Vargas found Ysidro praying and an angel plowing for him—and completing three times the work as other workers. Another version tells of a figure clothed in white, leading a team of snow-white oxen, doing Ysidro's work, and that as de Vargas approached to question Ysidro about this, the ghostly oxen disappeared. Another legend: upon discovering Ysidro working on Sunday, the Lord plagued him first with grasshoppers and then flooded his fields. Ysidro finally gave up his Sunday labors.

Ysidro married a young woman as simple and devout as himself, Maria Torribia. She kept a pot of stew on the hearth for hungry strangers Ysidro brought home. After serving many one day, she told him the pot was empty. He insisted she check the pot again, and she was able to feed them all. They had a son who died as a child, but one of the miracles attributed to both of them involves the boy, who had fallen into a deep well. Through their prayers, the boy was rescued alive and healthy when the well waters rose to ground level. At that point, Maria and Ysidro took vows of celibacy and lived apart. They would both be named saints, the only husband and wife to be so honored. In Spain, Maria is celebrated as “Maria de la Cabeza,” and her head is often carried in procession; Ysidro as “Labrador,” laborer, and his feast day (May 15) is highly celebrated in Spain as well. His feast day has been celebrated for centuries all over the world.

More accounts exist of Ysidro sharing what he had, not only to the poor but to animals too. Carrying a large bag of wheat to the mill, he saw a flock of starving birds and spilled out half the wheat for them on the frozen ground. Upon reaching the mill, the bag was full and the grain yielded double the expected amount. It is also reported that he brought back from death the daughter of his master. De Vargas at some point made Ysidro custodian of his entire estate in Lower Caramanca.

Because a miraculous spring once broke through cracked dry earth at Ysidro's feet and watered his fields, he is prayed to in times of drought. In paintings (*retablos*) of Ysidro, the stream is often depicted, as well as the angel, oxen, plow and planted fields. In statues (*bultos*), Ysidro's large figure, holding a tall staff or ox-goad in one hand, often towers above the yoked oxen. In New Mexico, he usually wears Spanish Colonial garb, a dark coat or jacket with gold buttons and trim (yellow paint since gilt was not available), with matching breeches, as well as boots and a flat-topped, broad-brimmed hat. In other Latin American countries and in Spain, he is often depicted dressed in simple farmer's clothes, kneeling in the field with his hands clasped in prayer, while the angel walks behind the oxen doing the plowing. (There is a large example of this hanging at Casa San Ysidro museum across the street from the Old Church.)

Ysidro Labrador died on May 15, 1130 at about age 60. In March 1622 he was canonized as a saint in the Catholic Church, given the report of many miracles worked through his intercession. He is the patron saint of farmers, gardeners and laborers, and also of course, of Corrales and of the Old Church as well as the new San Ysidro Church on Corrales Road. In times of insect plagues or drought, as well as on his feast day, his image is carried in procession in villages and often into the fields. This feast day ceremony, led by the San Ysidro Parish, still takes place every year in Corrales, on or near May 15, outside of the Old Church as *Matachines* dance through the streets. Corrales Historical Society's Heritage Day is marked on the Saturday nearest May 15.

This commentary was first entered January 2005 as part of the Docent Program. Additions and edits made 2022, following further research, by Carolyn O'Mara, CHS Docent and Marketing Committee member.

11 — THE CHS BULTO OF SAN YSIDRO

Santos, Catholic devotional images of saints or angelic personages, come in two forms—either **bultos**, which are hand-carved three-dimensional wooden sculptures, or **retablos**, often hand-adzed, painted wooden panels. The **santeros**, woodcarvers and painters of religious images, were regarded by the villagers as master artists. *Santos* adorned home chapels, churches, and *moradas* (**Penitente** meeting places).

This New Mexican *bulto* represents San Ysidro Labrador (Saint Isadore), the farmer saint of Spain. (See San Ysidro biography and legends in this folder.) This *bulto* was not original to this church. It was donated to Corrales Historical Society in 1994 for use in the Docens educational program. Its specific origins are unknown and we continue to research its place in New Mexico history.

The current information we have is that this figure of San Ysidro is from the late 18th century and done in the “Rio Abajo” (lower Rio Grande) style—possibly from the Socorro-Mesilla Valley region. The gesso face and details of the clothing (collar and buttons) and the fashion of the coat are typical of this style and similar to other images of San Ysidro from Socorro and the Mesilla Valley.

The San Ysidro and angel figures may have been done by the same *santero*. However, the angel originally may have represented something different and later adapted to be an angel; the wings appear to have been added at a later time and the beard is perplexing!

The *bulto* is a composite of figures from different time periods. The carved and painted oxen appear to have been made later than the figures of the angel and San Ysidro. The plow and yoke are unpainted wood and appear to be fairly recent replacements. All the figures have been reassembled on a newer base which is made of mesquite. The figures were probably carved from cottonwood root.

It is impossible to know what has happened to this *bulto* over the years—it is just part of its history. Each of the figures has been overpainted more than once. This is typical of New Mexican religious statuary. Wood fires and candle smoke in homes where religious figures were kept often subjected them to smoke damage; their owners had them repainted from time to time. Sometimes the owner might refurbish the piece himself as an act of devotion to a beloved saint or in payment of a promise to the saint. The multiple layers of paint evident in this work are a part of its unknown historical trajectory and do not detract from the value of the work. (For additional detailed information, see Conservator Bettina Rafael’s “Condition Summary and Treatment Proposal and Conservation Report” on the subject of the San Ysidro *bulto*.)

The display case for the *bulto* was initially designed by Nancy Allen, an exhibit designer for the Museum of New Mexico in Santa Fe. Pete Smith, well known woodworker and craftsman in Corrales, modified the original design and did the carpentry work. The arches of the case are soft maple. The *bulto* case sits on a table made of pine. The table design is inspired by an early 19th century New Mexican table pictured in *New Mexican Furniture, 1600-1940* by Lonny Taylor and Dessa Bokides (plate 76). Four handles (decorative only) were added to the table as a reminder that *bultos* are carried on a litter in processions. To this day in Corrales and other small villages in New Mexico, San Ysidro *bultos* are carried in processions down the roads and often into the fields to bless the crops on or around the May 15 Feast Day of San Ysidro.

This commentary is based on research done 1999-2001 by Donna Erickson, Corrales Historical Society Acquisitions Committee Chair, who conferred with Robin Gavin of the Museum of International Folk Art, conservator Bettina Raphael, Andrea Gillespie of the Albuquerque Museum, and Ray Dewey of Ray Dewey Galleries in Santa Fe. CHS Docent Program. Re-entered 2022.