



TUMACÁCORI N.H.P.

Mission San José de Tumacácori

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Background

Mission San José de Tumacácori is one of three Spanish mission sites, along with Calabasas and Guevavi, protected as part of Tumacácori National Historical Park. Tumacácori N.H.P. has great significance as one of the oldest outposts of European civilization in the United States. Located within the fertile Santa Cruz River valley of northern Mexico and southern Arizona, each of the mission sites were economically and religiously connected settlements.

In 1691, Father Eusebio Kino arrived in what was to become southern Arizona to begin establishing mission settlements. The first Spanish missions in the Southwest were operated by the Jesuit Order of the Roman Catholic Church. The goals of the Spanish mission system were to create a self-sufficient community, convert local Indians to the Catholic religion, and generate revenue for Spain.

San Cayetano de Tumacácori

Indian knowledge of the Jesuits preceded Father Kino's arrival by decades. In January 1691 a delegation from an Indian village requested that Father Kino visit the village of Tumacácori. The Spanish re-named this Indian village *San Cayetano de Tumacácori*. The village was located on the east side of the Santa Cruz River, opposite the present site of San Jose de Tumacácori.



FACT SHEET



Photo Credit: National Park Service Historic Photograph

Missions were established at Indian villages. The mission grounds were an institutionalized landscape with a highly defined spatial pattern that divided and separated land for religious use, priest quarters, specialized work areas, Christianized Indian quarters, mission agricultural/live-stock lands, orchards and irrigation ditches (*acequias*).

The mission Indian population was mostly local O'odham Indians. Of the distinct O'odham groups identified by the Spanish most mission Indians were Sobaipuri, Papagos, and other Pimas. The Sobaipuri were Upper Piman Indians that lived along the Santa Cruz and San Pedro rivers.

Native settlements consisted of large villages of mud and brush houses and numerous smaller scattered villages and extended family habitations. One of the unfortunate results of Spanish colonization was the 50-60% reduction of native populations due to infectious diseases such as small pox and measles. Disease often spread in waves ahead of the Spaniards, decimating native villages before Spaniards arrived.

San José de Tumacácori

In November, 1751 the Pima Indians of southern Arizona revolted against Spanish oppression. Luis Oacpicagigua, a Spanish appointed Captain General of the Pima, led a group of Pima Indians against the Spanish. Sixty-four years of Jesuit and Spanish presence had fundamentally changed native social, political, and religious organization, and had instituted a growing dependence on introduced non-native goods.



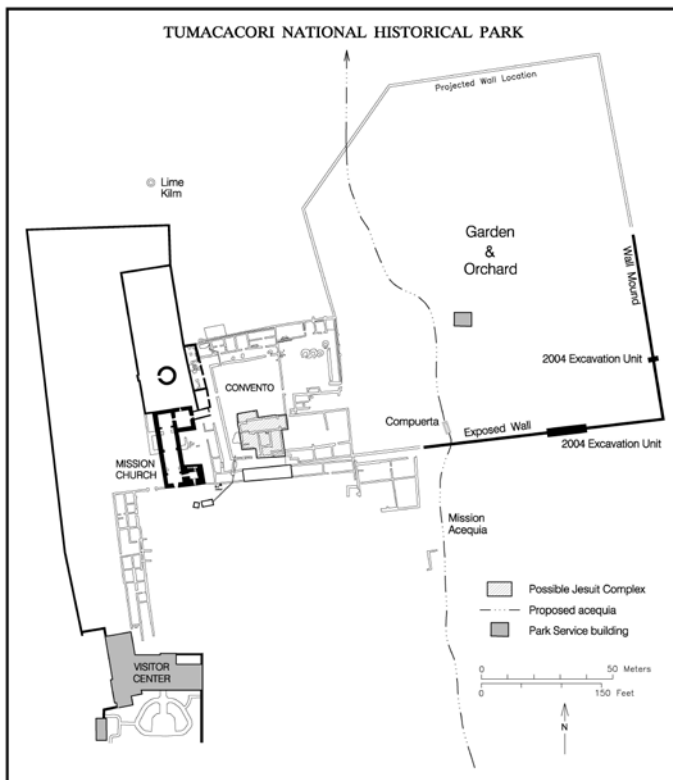
Fact Sheet - Mission San José de Tumacácori



NPS Photo

Mission church at San José de Tumacácori

The Pima Revolt of 1751 is a landmark event in the history of Spanish-Indian relations in southern Arizona. It resulted in the consolidation of both Indian and Spanish populations. The Tumacácori Indian population was moved to the west side of the river to the present location of park headquarters and a presidio, or military post was established at Tubac, just four miles north of Tumacácori. With the establishment of the new Tumacácori the settlements' patron saint was changed and the site renamed *San Jose de Tumacácori*.



Archaeological Map of San Jose de Tumacacori

By 1757 a small adobe church was built at Tumacacori. All foundations were made of large river cobbles while the walls were adobe bricks covered with lime plaster. In 1767 the Jesuit Order was expelled from the New World by the King of Spain due to accusations of greed and corruption, and the Jesuits growing influence and weighty demands. The Franciscan Order took over in 1773, and Tumacacori was designated a *cabecera*, or main mission.

Tumacacori reached its architectural and religious zenith between the 1780's and 1828. Construction of the large Franciscan church began sometime between 1799 and 1802. The church was designed by architects from Spain, but the newly converted Pima and Papago Indians were the builders of the mission churches. The church was dedicated in 1822, but the two-story bell tower was never completed and construction continued intermittently until the last padres departed in 1841.



NPS Photo

Archeology

Unfortunately, the original site of San Cayetano de Tumacacori has not been located. It is difficult to identify the site archaeologically since there were many villages in the area during the time of Kino's arrival. Many archaeologists claim to know the location of the original site of San Cayetano de Tumacacori, but today the site remains elusive and difficult to identify.

The most extensive archaeological investigations at San José de Tumacácori were conducted by NPS archaeologist Paul Beaubien who discovered the foundations of the original adobe church at this site in 1934. After Beaubien, small scale excavations were carried out periodically mostly associated with stabilization/preservation efforts and exposing features for interpretation. Beaubien's excavations revealed construction sequences of the Franciscan church, the priest quarters (*convento*), the room blocks housing newly converted Indians, and various domestic features. Beaubien's goal was to uncover all wall outlines and features outside of the Franciscan church so they could be mapped. Therefore, he only collected rare artifacts and did not screen the fill removed from rooms. Most of the rooms Beaubien excavated had previously been disturbed by treasure hunters looking for rumored Spanish gold and silver. Treasure hunting has resulted in severe damage to the archaeological integrity of missions in the southwest.