

United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Egan, Richard, House  
 Other names/site number: Harmony Hall  
 Name of related multiple property listing: N/A  
 (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)



### 2. Location

Street & number: 31892 Camino Capistrano  
 City or town: San Juan Capistrano State: CA County: Orange  
 Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
 I hereby certify that this \_\_\_ nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.  
 In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:  
 \_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide \_\_\_ local  
 Applicable National Register Criteria:  
 \_\_\_ A \_\_\_ X B \_\_\_ C \_\_\_ D

<b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>	

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
<b>Signature of commenting official:</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Title :</b>	<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>

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#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

##### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>1</u>	_____	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register \_\_\_\_\_

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic Single dwelling

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

work in progress

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Victorian/Renaissance/Renaissance Revival

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: \_

Wood -

Terra Cotta

Brick -

Asphalt shingles

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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**Summary Paragraph**

The Egan House, also known as Harmony Hall, was built 1883 and is located on Camino Capistrano near Mission San Juan Capistrano, built in the Renaissance Revival style. It is a one and one half story red brick building with a large, hipped asphalt shingled low pitched roof that covers the 2 inset dormers with windows that open to Juliet balconies on the North and West side and a small dormer on the south side. 4 metal finials are located on the roof. On the east side of the building is a wood/shingled structure that was added in 1996, used as a kitchen during the building's tenure as a restaurant. The west side facing Camino Capistrano has an open sitting porch with a roof that extends around the corner of the building to the south to a small vestibule. A wood railing and ramp, separate from the house, were later installed on this side of the house. Under the house is a basement that served as a wine cellar. It also had a tunnel that went underneath Camino Capistrano from the house directly to the jail that was located in what is today the El Adobe Restaurant. The tunnel no longer exists. Only the door frames in both buildings can be seen.

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## **Narrative Description**

The house was constructed for Richard Egan by William English, a contractor well known in San Juan Capistrano, in 1883. This large square red brick building (3000 square feet) is the only Renaissance Revival residence found in San Juan Capistrano (Photo # 1) It is located on 0.22 acres and faces Camino Capistrano, the main road that goes from Los Angeles to San Diego.

William English, a well-known contractor, designed and constructed this one and one-half story building using the left over bricks that came from the from the construction of another building, called Casa Grande. In 1882, Marco Forster, who had the property behind Egan's lot, had plans for building his home, known as the "Casa Grande." Forster asked Egan to order brick from San Diego. A slight miscalculation on the part of Richard Egan, ordering more bricks than needed for the Casa Grande, enabled Egan to use the surplus brick when he built his own home.

The upper part of the Egan house caught fire in 1897 that destroyed most of the upper floor and parts of the roof. William English rebuilt the upper floor and roof in the same style as the original in 1898.

The 4 walls on the first floor of the Egan House are solid brick. A brick frieze runs along all four sides of the house. Two wall dormers with Juliet balconies plus a smaller dormer are located on the lower part on the roof. (Photo 2)

The front of the house facing west on to Camino Capistrano shows a covered porch, which wraps around the southwestern corner of the building to the middle on the south side of the building. Seven wooden pillars support the porch roof. (Photo # 3) A protective wood railing was installed when Camino Capistrano was widened. The street, which originally level with the porch, was lowered by four feet, necessitating the railing's addition to the exterior of the house.

There are 2 front doors on the porch. The one on the left opens to a large room that connects with the "Judge's Chamber" located in the back. From the "Judges Chamber" a narrow stairway is located in the back for access to the upstairs rooms. The door on the right side is the entrance to a large entry parlor with fireplace. The door shows the original door knocker, door knob and glass panels held in place by soft lead. (Photo # 4 & 5)

The stairway on the south wall of the house goes to the second floor. (Photo # 6 & 7) On the south side where the porch extension ends is a small wood enclosed vestibule with a door and 5 large windows. That door connects to the room with the fireplace. (Photo # 8 & 9) Next to it is the entrance to the basement. The doors are basement cellar doors. Inside are the steps leading down to the basement. (Photo # 10 & 11) The basement was used for the wine cellar and was the entrance to the tunnel that went under Camino Capistrano to the Yorba Adobe (now the El Adobe Restaurant) which is now sealed off on both sides.

On the North side of the house are 3 windows and on the far corner is the door that opens to the Judge's Chamber. (Photo # 12 & 13)

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The walls on the second floor are partial brick and stucco. Photo # 14

There are 2 rooms upstairs with 2 bathrooms. The 2 dormers with Juliet balconies are located in the large room. One dormer overlooks Camino Capistrano, next to the stairs, while the other dormer in the same room faces north. Both dormers with Juliet balconies have a single hung window with 2 fixed glass panels on each side

Photo # 15

On the south side is the small dormer located on the wall of the large stairway going up from the living room to the second floor. It opens for ventilation and has 6 glass panels that are set in soft lead

Photo # 16

The roof of the Egan House is hipped and covered with asphalt shingles; the attic is accessible as a second floor of the building. Eaves are open with visible rafter tails. Wall dormers are located on the North and West side, each topped by a hipped roof, with a central door flanked by two small windows. The doors access small balconies enclosed by a wooden balustrade, framed by two wooden posts, each capped by a wooden finial. There is a smaller roof dormer on the south side of the roof, with only one window and no balcony. On top of the roof are 4 copper finials and a brick chimney that extends from the fireplace in the former living room on the first floor.

Photo # 1 & 2

On the east side of the building is a wood shingle building addition added in 1996 (30x11 feet) which was the kitchen when the Egan House was a restaurant. This accessory building is attached to the back wall of the Egan House. (Photo # 17) On the northeast corner is a small trash enclosure adjacent to the kitchen. (Photo # 18)

#### Specific Features:

The 8 supporting posts on the sitting porch are typical of the Renaissance Revival architectural style. They are 6x6 square wood posts with 45 degree chamfered edges. The posts are installed atop a 12 inch high 10x10 brick base.

The front door opening to the room with the fire place has 2 glass panels set in soft lead  
All the windows on the first and second floor are single hung with the exception of the vestibule that has 4 solid windows. The house still has the original mahogany floors

#### Historic Integrity

The building is un-altered and looks the same as seen in photographs of 1898 after restoration of the roof and the second floor, due to the fire in 1897 that destroyed the roof and parts of the upper floor. The 1990s addition to the building rear has resulted in some loss of integrity of design and materials, but the original house retains a high degree of integrity in all other aspects.

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### 8 .Statement of Significance

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

#### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1883-1923

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1883

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Egan, Richard

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

English, William

\_\_\_\_\_



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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Egan House is a single-family residence built in the Renaissance Revival style. The property is eligible for the National Register under Criterion B, at the local level of significance, for its association with Judge Richard Egan, an attorney, justice of the peace, and philanthropist significant to the community of San Juan Capistrano and San Juan Township. The property is directly associated with elements of Egan's working life. The period of significance is 1883-1923, spanning the year the house was built until Egan's death in 1923.

Richard Egan, born in Ireland came to San Juan Capistrano 1868.

A surveyor by trade he purchased large pieces of land which he cultivated .Besides farming he was the towns telegrapher, notary, agent for local landowners, keeper of rainfall records and dispenser of charity for the local towns people. During that time he was appointed to be one of the two justices of the peace for the San Juan Township from ca. 1870 to 1890.

This is the reason why he was called Judge Egan- a title he kept all his life.

He built the Egan House, which he called Harmony Hall in 1883 and was well known for giving lavish dinner parties for the rich and famous. In 1897 a fire destroyed the upper floor of the house. It was rebuilt in 1898 by William English, the same contractor that originally did the work in 1883. During his lifetime Egan held many positions and was much involved with County politics. Egan House is the only office and courthouse that Judge Egan used, and is therefore the only building that captures his historic significance. He died in 1923

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Richard Egan was born in County Waterford, Ireland in 1842. At the age of 10 he came to the United States with his uncle and lived on Long Island where he attended public schools Later on as a young man he travelled all over the world and lived for 1 1/2 years in San Francisco. Upon his return to southern California he travelled by stage coach from Los Angeles to San Juan Capistrano in 1868. He bought 160 acres north of San Juan Capistrano and later 600 acres just east of the Mission. On his ranch he planted several walnut groves and rented out the rest of the ranch to tenants that paid Egan by giving him one-fourth of the produce and one half of the walnuts.

At first Egan lived in an adobe on his farm land, and decided in 1883 to build the red brick house on Central Avenue, the road now known as Camino Capistrano. He named the house "Harmony Hall." Around Harmony Hall, Egan planted large eucalyptus trees and Lombardy poplar trees that can be seen on the photograph taken in the 1890s before Camino Capistrano was widened. (See Fig. # 1) Several of the original trees are still standing on the southwest corner of the property.

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According to Samuel Armor, editor of the "History of Orange County"<sup>1</sup> 1921 Egan was both a public-spirited man and a leader of wide and valuable business experience. He was a school board trustee in San Juan for 32 years. In addition, Egan served for four years as county supervisor of Los Angeles County, from 1880 to 1884. He was appointed this position due to his business experience. Fig. # 2 Egan was one of three men appointed as Commissioners to adjust disputed questions between the Counties of Los Angeles and Orange County when Los Angeles County was divided into the two counties of Los Angeles and Orange. He was also elected as one of two justices of the peace in what became Orange County, a position he held for many years.

During his time as justice of the peace from 1870 to 1890, Egan donated all fees for his services to the poor. He supported himself with his extensive agricultural landholdings throughout San Juan Capistrano.

In addition to being Justice of the Peace, Egan was employed by the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe railroad beginning in 1887, securing rights of way that made it possible for trains to travel from Los Angeles to San Diego, stopping in San Juan Capistrano, a great boost for Orange County as well as for Southern California. Due to his surveying experience, Egan was one of the Commissioners appointed by the Supervisors of Orange County to oversee the construction of the public highway system.

Egan was instrumental in the restoration of Mission San Juan Capistrano, working with the Landmarks Club in 1895, who helped finance the restoration. He spearheaded the local effort and carried out much of the physical restoration himself. He was a member of the Southern California Historical Society and kept many of the valuable records that after his death unfortunately were lost. It was due to Egan's unselfish work for the community that he was called "Judge Egan", a title that he held for life. Records show that he was a trustee for the local school board for thirty-two years. He was also known for his very fancy dinner parties at Harmony Hall. Among his frequent guests were Lewis F. Moulton, a well-known rancher, and Madame Helena Modjeska the famous polish actress who dubbed him "The King of Capistrano" Fig. ,# 3, # 4, # 5, # 6

During his life in San Juan Capistrano Judge Egan had a distinct and lasting impact on the Community and also the County of Orange. He died on Feb. 9, 1923, and the town lost one of its most beloved citizens. Throughout his life, Egan was repeatedly called upon to assume public trust as a justice of the peace, Los Angeles County supervisor, school board trustee, keeper of rainfall records, and director and right-of-way agent of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad. Harmony Hall, the Egan House, is a property where much of his work was carried out, and is thus directly associated with Egan's life under National Register Criterion B.

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<sup>1</sup> Ref publication

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### 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

- Armor, Samuel, ed. History of Orange County Los Angeles Historic Record 1921  
Hallan-Gibson, Pam 200 Years in Orange County, 1990  
Hallan-Gibson, Pam Ghosts and Legends of San Juan Capistrano, 1983  
Lee, Ellen - Orange Countiana Vol. 1- "The Irish Alcalde" 1973  
Los Angeles Times, California Local, "Old Time San Juan had clout also" Jan. 24, 1993  
Los Angeles Times, California Local, "O.C. Almanac" March 22, 1995  
McAllister, Virginia & Lee, A Field Guide To American Houses, Alfred Knopf N.Y. 1997  
San Juan Historical Soc., Images of Old San Juan Capistrano, 2005  
San Juan Historical Soc., Judge Richard Egan – "The King of Capistrano", 2008  
Santa Ana Register, from Santa Ana, California, pg.10, December 17, 1916  
Sleeper, Jim, Turn the Rascals out! 1973  
Tryon, Mary Ellen, A Guide to Historic San Juan Capistrano" Paragon Agency 1999  
Verdon, Adam, "Capistrano's Judge Egan: A Man of Many Talents", April 3, 2011, Website:  
<http://patch.com/california/sanjuancapistrano/capistranos-judge-egan-a-man-of-many-talents>

#### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested  
 previously listed in the National Register  
 previously determined eligible by the National Register  
 designated a National Historic Landmark  
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

#### Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other  
Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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## 10 Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** 0.22 Acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 33.499506 Longitude: -117.662364

### Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Egan House

That portion of lot 16, of tract No. 103, in the City of San Juan Capistrano in the County of Orange, State of California, as per map thereof recorded in book 11, pages 29 to 33 inclusive of miscellaneous maps, records of Orange County, California, described as follows:

Verbal Boundary Description cont.

Beginning at the northwest corner of said lot 16, thence south 84 degrees 52 minutes 00 seconds East 102.00 Feet along the northerly line of said lot to the northeast corner thereof: Thence south 2 degrees 31 minutes 00 seconds west 91.67 feet along the easterly line of said lot, thence north 89 degrees 00 minutes 30 seconds west 99.29 feet to a point on the westerly line of said lot, said point being south 0 degrees 59 minutes 30 seconds west 99.29 feet to a point on the westerly line of said lot, said point being south 0 Degrees 59 minutes 30 seconds west 99.00 feet from the northwest corner of said lot, thence north 0 Degrees 59 minutes 30 seconds east 99.00 feet to the point of beginning.

APN: 124-160-32

### Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated property includes the entire parcel that is historically associated with Richard Egan's home, Harmony Hall.

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### 11 Form Prepared By

name/title: Ilse M. Byrnes  
organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
street & number: PO 1029  
city or town: San Juan Capistrano state: CA zip 92693  
code: 059  
e-mail ; ilse.byrnes@gmail.com  
telephone: 949-493-4222  
date: March/April 2015

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

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### Photo Log

Name of Property: Egan House

City or Vicinity: San Juan Capistrano

County: Orange State: CA

Photographer: Ilse M. Byrnes

Date Photographed: March, 2015

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: See below

Photographs:

1 of \_18

- # 1 Front view of the Egan House facing West
- # 2 North/West corner of the Egan House
- # 3 Front Porch on the Westside of the Egan House looking North on Camino Capistrano
- # 4 Front door of the Egan House
- # 5 Original door knob on front door of Egan House
- # 6 Front door and stairs to the second floor from room with the fireplace
- # 7 View of fireplace from stairway
- # 8 Vestibule on South side
- # 9 View of Egan House on South side with Vestibule
- # 10 South side of Egan House with Vestibule and Basement Cellar Doors
- # 11 Closeup of Basement Cellar Doors
- # 12 Northside of Egan House with Juliette Dormer
- # 13 Northside with 3 windows and the door to the Judges Chamber
- # 14 Wall showing brick and stucco along stairs
- # 15 Juliette Dormer with side panels
- # 17 Small dormer located on the South side
- # 17 East side of Egan House showing the attached wood shingle kitchen -
- # 18 Northside trash can enclosure next to kitchen

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.