

# **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. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property
historic name El Toyon
other names/site number N/A
2. Location
street & number not for publication
city or town Auburn N/A vicinity
state California code CA county Placer code 091 zip code 95603
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 statewidelocal
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government
In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
Signature of commenting official Date
Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government
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

El Toyon Name of Property

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Regis ation arm
NPS Form 10-900

El Toyon
Name of Property

(Expires 5/31/2012)

Placer County, CA	
County and State	

5. Classification				
Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply.)  Category of Property (Check only one box.)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)			
X   private   X   building(s)   district   site   structure   object	ContributingNoncontributing12buildingsdistrictsitestructureobject1Total			
Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)	Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register			
N/A	0			
6. Function or Use				
Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)	Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)			
DOMESTIC	DOMESTIC			
7. Description				
Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions.)	Materials (Enter categories from instructions.)			
Shingle Style	foundation: Brick			
	walls: Shingle			
	Stone			
	roof: Asphalt			
	other:			

Places Regis ation (mr. OMB No. 1)24 1018

(Expires 5/31/2012)

Placer County, CA
County and State

**Narrative Description** 

El Toyon

Name of Property

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

## **Summary Paragraph**

El Toyon, an example of the Shingle Style of architecture constructed in 1889, is a three story, single family residence, which incorporates all of the irregular shapes and multi levels associated with the Shingle Style and brings harmony to the overall affect with uniform shingle sheathing and subdued additional decorative detailing. The building sits on the east edge of Auburn on the rim of the American River Canyon amidst 1.6 acres of landscaped gardens, which features ponds, a defunct lawn tennis courts, a greenhouse, and views of the American River Canyon. The property contains two noncontributing buildings, a four-car garage and a small guest house north of the garage. The property retains sufficient historic integrity to convey its significance as a fine local example of the Shingle Style of architecture.

# **Narrative Description**

El Toyon sits on a brick and masonry foundation over a brick and masonry lined basement. The house is conventional wood frame construction. The core of the structure is two-stories with an attic and rectangular in shape. Various turrets, bays, porches, balconies, and one story units extend from the central core. The building is sheathed in running coursed wood shingles that wrap corner edges and unifies the various protrusion of the complex structure. The exception to the wood shingle sheathing is a one-story unit extending on the south side which features stone siding construction and incorporates a stone exterior chimney. Two double-storied turrets on the northwest and northeast corners add to the complexity. Two second-story bays are located on the east end of the house. The moderately pitched hipped roof is interrupted by cross gables, towers, three gable dormers and is of varying levels. An interior brick chimney rises up through the roof's north-slope and is topped with rows of brick forming a clean and simple pattern. Roofing material is asphalt shingle. Unadorned boxed eaves and simple, flat, six inch frieze trim add to the smooth look of the exterior. Windows are wood sash and predominantly double hung, but several casements, a few of which are leaded decorated in a diamond pattern, dot the exterior. All windows are trimmed with simple flat architraves and minimally protruding sills.

The prominent primary entrance is covered by a flat roof supported by classic columns and accessed by two brick steps leading to a brick platform. A dentil course bands under the porch roof soffit and is one of the few added decorative elements on the building. The entry door is of wood and has raised panels.

A flagstone veranda runs along the east and north sides of the building. The roof is supported by classic columns, and forms a second floor balcony which also runs along the east and north sides of the building. The balcony is enclosed by a simple square-cut railing. Additional porches and balconies off the back of the house mimic the classic columns and simple railings. While this is a complex building, the architectural detailing is minimal and the overall appearance is one of continuity characteristic of the Shingle Style.

The restoration history of the building indicates that while several internal renovation projects were undertaken by different owners, the external structure historic integrity. Alterations undertaken in the

dates Registration (mm)
OMB No. 1024 1018

(Expires 5/31/2012)

Placer County, CA
County and State

El Toyon
Name of Property

1920s replaced the windowless wall of the west (rear) end single story unit with a row of casement windows and a sun-porch through which could be seen an extended view of the American River Canyon. This alteration was discussed in a typed manuscript prepared circa 1960 by the then property owner, which discussed numerous maintenance and upkeep projects undertaken during the forty year of house ownership. This alteration was updated when the building was restored in the early 1990s.

A comparison between site and floor plans of the 1990s restoration project and photographs and lithographic images and the original structure indicate no major alteration to the external footprint of the building. During reconstruction many individual elements underwent updating. Crumbling foundation was reinforced with brick and mortar materials. Wood sash windows were replaced in kind; original window openings were not altered. Leaded casements were not altered. Original trim detail was retained or replaced with in kind. The two original eyebrow dormers were replaced with gable dormers during the 1990s renovation. Original porch roof support columns, balcony and porch railings were retained.

El Toyon

Name of Property

Pla es Regis atic porm OMB No. 024 0018

(Expires 5/31/2012)

Placer County, CA

County and State

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

# 8. Statement of Significance **Applicable National Register Criteria Areas of Significance** (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property (Enter categories from instructions.) for National Register listing.) Architecture Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high **Period of Significance** artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack 1889 individual distinction. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. **Significant Dates Criteria Considerations** (Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.) **Significant Person**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation** 

Architect/Builder

Unknown

A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or grave.

D a cemetery.

purposes.

Property is:

E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

F a commemorative property.

less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Period of Significance (justification)

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)



(Expires 5/31/2012)

Placer County, CA
County and State

El Toyon

Name of Property

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

El Toyon meets National Register eligibility at the local level of significance under Criterion C for its architecture. It is a distinctive local example of the Shingle Style of architecture.

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

Architectural Significance

El Toyon is a fine local example of the Shingle Style of architecture. Although the term "Shingle Style" was popularized in the 1950s, in the 1880s and 1890s, the style was a popular choice for the New England summer homes of the wealthy. The large size and sprawling form of the Shingle Style were particularly suited to open, natural settings.<sup>1</sup>

The style spread throughout the United States including California, although the style never reached the popularity of its contemporary, the Queen Anne. Shingle Style borrows several characteristics from the Queen Anne style, including an asymmetrical, large, rambling form, shingled surfaces, and wide porches, although generally the Shingle Style presents a smooth and flowing surface with horizontal lines in contrast to the more angular and vertical massing and cluttered detailing of the Queen Anne. Character defining features of the Shingle Style include wall cladding and roofing of continuous wood shingles; the absence of cornerboards; verandahs; rounded or polygonal towers; and projecting bays. Houses are usually set on heavy masonry foundations or stone. Construction materials incorporate muted wood and stone hues. Architectural detailing is simplified: classical porch columns, small-paned windows often in horizontal bands, and low-arched eyebrow dormers continue the smooth expression.<sup>2</sup>

El Toyon exhibits numerous character defining features of the Shingle Style. The distinctive running coursed wood shingles sheathing wraps corner edges. The two double-storied bays, one on the front west corner, the other on the rear of the house add to the complexity. The complex roofline is moderately pitched, emphasizing the horizontal lines of the Shingle Style, and is interrupted by cross gables, towers, three gable dormers and is of varying levels. Simple ornamentation detailing is exhibited in the classic columns supporting the veranda covering and the entry pediment; the unadorned boxed eave: the flat frieze trim.

El Toyon is an excellent example of the Shingle Style in the City of Auburn. While other shingle-cover houses exist, El Toyon has the distinction as the only example dating constructed during the 1880s still surrounded by estate grounds and retaining its original use as a single family dwelling.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

El Toyon is located in the City of Auburn in the Sierra Nevada foothills. Originally settled in 1848 by placer miners mining in the Auburn Ravine Creek, the area quickly developed into a thriving mining

<sup>1</sup> James C. Massey and Shirley Maxwell, *House Styles in America*, (New York: Penguin Studio, 1996), 145.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Virginia & Lee McAlester, A field Guide to American houses, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000), 289-90; Massey, *House Styles in America*, 147-9.

Places Regis ation arm OMB No. 024 1018

(Expires 5/31/2012)

Placer County, CA

El Toyon
Name of Property

camp, and Auburn became the county seat of Placer County in 1851. Mining continued to be the primary industry in the Auburn area during the nineteenth century, although mining techniques evolved from individual placer mining to industrialized hydraulic and deep-vein quartz mining operations requiring a large work force. By the 1880s mining operations were still a major employer in the Auburn area. During this period, Colonel Walter Scott Davis purchased the Mammoth Bar Mine on the Middle Fork of the American River and relocated to Auburn.

Walter Scott Davis was born in Milton, a suburb of Boston Massachusetts, .on July 15, 1837 into a long established Boston family. Walter's father, William, a successful wool merchant, was able to provide his family with a good life and Walter went to the best local schools, graduating from the Chauncey Hall School of Boston in 1854. Walter entered into the family business where he stayed until war broke out in 1861. With military tradition in his family (his grandfather, John Davis, had been a Revolutionary War patriot and father fought in the War of 1812) Walter enlisted in August of 1861 and was appointed 2nd lieutenant. His military service record earned him a rank of Brevet Lieutenant Colonel when mustered out of the army October 17, 1864. Davis retained the title of "Colonel" for the rest of his life. After the war Davis returned to the wool business, married and started a family. Perhaps restless from his military experiences, in 1874 he moved his young family to Southern California where he raised oranges in Anaheim. This successful enterprise ended in 1879 when Davis sold out and moved to Placer County in search of new adventures.

Colonel Davis purchased the Mammoth Bar Mine and subsequently ran one of the most successful mining operations in the area with the help of his son from the late 1880s up until his death in 1908. An 1890 mining report listed the output of gold for the Mammoth Bar Mine during summer operations as reaching one thousand dollars daily. It was during this time that Colonel Davis and his wife acquired the land where they were to build their home "El Toyon."

On September 21, 1887 Mrs. Davis, purchased twenty acres of land just outside the city of Auburn and overlooking the American River, from neighbor Jennie Hughes. The land was part of a one hundred eighty acre homestead patented to Jennie Hughes and her husband William the previous year. Ellen Susan Rich Larkin was also a native of Massachusetts, her father Charles being a successful Boston merchant and her maternal grandfather, Benjamin Rich, wealthy ship owner. Ellen was one of four sisters, and while she was the only one to move to California, Ellen kept close ties to her family, returning often to Boston for visits as well as entertaining her sisters in California. The close connection with their Boston families and the East is evident in the design chosen for their California home. Work on "El Toyon," named for the Toyon (a small evergreen tree native to the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains) started soon after the property was purchased. The style chosen by the Davis', a Shingle Style is closely associated with New England. The choice is reflective of the connection to family in the East and indicates a familiarity with contemporary east-coast architectural trends. There is some evidence to suggest that when the Davis' purchased their property, a small three room house was already in existence. Both architectural structure and a narrative description offered by a subsequent owner support the idea that the core of the Davis house was present before they began work on their new residence. While no county or city records survive permitting the residence to be built, both newspaper accountings and entries in Colonel Davis' journal chronicle the progress of house construction culminating in an 1889 journal entry stating the family would be moving into the new house the next day. Several views of the residence when occupied by the Davis family exist today. A lithograph produced in 1893 identifies "La Toyon" as the residence of

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(Expires 5/31/2012)

Placer County, CA

El Toyon
Name of Property

Col. W. S. Davis and is a fair representation of the house as it currently exists. An article in the May 1905 issue of *Overland Monthly* gives an overview of the property. Besides the house, the twenty acre estate property included a carriage house and stables, a green house, tennis court, orchards and vineyards, and was extensively landscaped. The property was described in the 1906 publication, *History of the State of California and Biographical Record of the sierras* as follows:

Colonel Davis has rounded out the years of a well-spent life by establishing in the evening of his days on e of the most beautiful homes in this portion of California; he owns one hundred and sixty acres of fine land adjoining the city of Auburn, known as "El Toyon," and here he has had erected an attractive residence, complete in all points of beauty and comfort, and eloquent of the refinement and culture which distinguish its occupants. Much attention has been given to the cultivation of the grounds (the training of the most superb flowers that the climate of California affords, the rarest plants, beautiful shrubbery and stately trees.<sup>3</sup>

Although originally a twenty acre property, the majority of the landscaping and outbuildings were confined to the three acres surrounding the house. When the Federal government purchased back the majority of the acreage in the 1970s as part of the Auburn Dam project, house and grounds retained their original orientation. The property passed out of the Davis family in 1918.

After Ellen Davis died in 1915, the Davis daughter, Elizabeth Roumage, sold the house to Frank Stanley and his wife Eleanor. The estate remained in the Stanley family, through three generations of owners until the current owners purchased and restored the estate during the 1990s. Through careful and thoughtful restoration, the building has retained the distinctive characteristics as originally constructed in 1889.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, many Americans came to California in hopes of acquiring wealth. Some chose to stay and to build new lives. Along with a spirit of adventure, they brought with them ties to their past. For the Davis' these ties are reflected in the architectural style chosen for their home. This bridge between East and West through architectural style gives another perspective of the people who came to California. El Toyon began as the residence of a successful mine owner. This success was manifested in the Davis' lifestyle. Though they lived lavishly, both Davis' participated in community affairs. Col. Davis and his wife Ellen were prominent, well respected members of the Auburn community, lending their support to local charities and public improvement. The obituaries of both Colonel and Mrs. Davis listed their generosity to the community with their time and money as well as their leadership in local concerns. The Davis estate was a showcase, described as "one of the handsomest in Northern California." While the estate no longer is the extensive twenty acres it once was and the carriage house and stables are gone, the current approximate two landscaped acres provides enough of the pastoral setting to retain the sense of a country estate and preserves the necessary integrity to be of significance in its historical context.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> J.M. Guinn, *History of the State of California and Biographical Record of the sierras*, an historical story of the state's marvelous growth from its earliest settlement to the present time, (Chicago: Chapman Co., 1906), 293-295.

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(Expires 5/31/2012)

Placer County, CA
County and State

El Toyon

Name of Property

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

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- Johnson, Susan Lee. *Roaring Camp: The Social World of the California Gold Rush.* New York: W.W. Norton and Co., Inc. 2000.
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- Massachusetts. Adjutant-General's Office. *Massachusetts Soldiers, Sailors and Marines in the Civil War.* Boston: Northwood Press, 1931-.
- McAlester, Virginia and Lee McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000.
- Placer County Deeds. UU: 684-685; 92: 193; 495: 194-195; 495: 194-195.. Placer County Archives and Records Center. Auburn, California.

Places Regis atic parm OMB No. 024 1018

(Expires 5/31/2012)

Placer County, CA
County and State

El Toyon

Name of Property

Probate File 2271,1915, Ellen S. R. Davis. Placer County Archives and Records Center, Auburn, California.

"Residential Building Record for 211 Brook Road." Auburn Planning Department, Auburn, California.

Stanley, Frank. "Description of Stanley Property at Auburn." Photocopied reproductions of unpublished manuscript held by Cynthia Toffelmier.

United States Census, Population Schedule, 1880. Placer County, California. Micropublication T9, roll 70.

United States Census, Population Schedule, 1900. Placer County, California. Micropublication T623, roll 96.

United States Census, Population Schedule, 1910. Placer County, California. Micropublication T624, roll 91.

United States Census, Population Schedule, 1920. Placer County, California. Micropublication T625, roll 124.

Previous d	locumentation on file	e (NPS):	Prim	ary location of additiona	I data:			
prelim	inary determination of	individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been		State Historic Preservation	n Office			
reques	sted)							
previously listed in the National Register				Federal agency Local government				
previo	usly determined eligib	le by the National Register						
	nated a National Histo			University				
	,	an Buildings Survey #		Other				
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #				Name of repository:				
record	recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #							
Historic F	Resources Survey	/ Number (if assigned):						
10. Geo	graphical Data							
A	of Duomonto.	•						
	of Property 1							
(Do not inc	lude previously listed	resource acreage.)						
<b>UTM</b> Ref	erences							
(Place addi	tional UTM reference	s on a continuation sheet.)						
1 10	668238	4306885 3						
Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing			
	3	S .		J	5			
2		4						
Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing			

Pla es Regis atic parm OMB No. D24 1018

(Expires 5/31/2012)

Placer County, CA
County and State

El Toyon Name of Property

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

A portion of the NW1/2, NW 1/4, NW 1/4, Section 14, Township 12N, Range 8E, Mount Diablo Baseline and Meridian, 20 acres. Beginning at the northwest comer of said section and running south along stone wall 660 feet more or less thence east along center of stone wall and continuing along said line to the southeast comer of the Nw1/2 of the NW 1/4 of said section; thence north to north line of said section then west to the place of beginning. Except right of way 20 feet wide in described portion thereof: A parcel of land situated within the N ½ of the NW ¼ of the NW 1/4 of Section 14, Township 12N, Range 8E in the city of Auburn and more particularly described as follows: Beginning at the comer common to Sec 10, 11, 14, 15 and running along the line between sec 11 and 14 S 89 degrees 12' E 1295.7 feet to a point in line with a fence extending south. Then along line and fence south 312.7 feet; thence parallel to said line between section 11 and 14, n. 89 degrees 12' w. 1201.2 feet, thence s. 43 degrees 37' w. 67.4 ft, then s. 54 degrees 51 'w. 64 feet, to the line between sec 14 and 15 then along said line n. 0 degrees 37' e. 399.7 ft to the point of beginning, 9.74 acres. Excepting Parcel A of Parcel map Book 3, page 41 recorded Jan 18, 1973 Placer County, California. Excepting there from a tract of land in the nw 1/4 or the nw 1/4 of sec 14, TI2N, R8E being all that portion of that certain parcel of land described in the gift deeded to Kathryn A. Cosby from Eleanor Stanley dated May 28, 1960, Recorded Jun 22, 1960, Book 839, page 472 lying north of the S 1/2 of said nw 1/4 of the nw 1/4 and east of the following described line: Beginning at a point that bears south 00 degrees 03' west 1504.2 ft (1504.6 ft by deed recorded in book 92 of deeds p. 193) and north 40 degrees 23' east 564 feet from the NW comer of said Section 14 thence leaving said point of beginning, north 11 degrees 37' west 766.9 feet to a point on the north boundary of said parcel in the above said deed from which a brass cap, 20.70 feet south of the NW comer of section 14 bears north, 35 degrees 30' west 358.9 feet. Said tract contains an area of 8.2 acres more or less. PARCEL 2: A portion of the nw ½ of the nw Y1/4 of Section 14, TI2N, R8E, described as follows: Beginning at a point on the west line of Section 14 lies south 0 degrees 03' west 721.94 ft from NW comer of Sec 14, running thence south 89 degrees 37' east 19.96 feet and 272.54 feet along a stone wall thence north 11 degrees 37' west along said west line of Section 1467.29 feet to point of beginning.

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

Boundaries conform to the legal description found on the property deed and encompass house building and estate grounds.

name/title Terri Bastel and Shawn Bastel, with inform	mation provided by Cindy Toffelmier
organization	date November 2009
street & number 7615 Haley Drive	telephone 916-791-3605
city or town Granite Bay	state CA zip code 95746
e-mail	

#### **Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Maps: A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

(Expires 5/31/2012)

Placer County, CA County and State

El Toyon Name of Property

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**
- Additional items: (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

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(Expires 5/31/2012)

Placer County, CA
County and State

El Toyon

Name of Property

# Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: El Toyon

City or Vicinity: Auburn

County: Placer County State: California

Photographer: Justin Coupe

Date Photographed: 9/30/09

#### Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 01 of 12. CA\_PlacerCounty\_EIToyon\_001.tif. West facing facade, camera directed east.
- 02 of 12. CA\_PlacerCounty\_EIToyon\_002.tif. Northwest facing facade, camera directed southeast.
- 03. of 12. CA PlacerCounty ElToyon 003.tif. North facing facade, camera directed south.
- 04. of 12. CA\_PlacerCounty\_ElToyon\_004.tif. Northeast facing facade, camera directed southwest.
- 05 of 12. CA\_PlacerCounty\_ElToyon\_005.tif. East facing facade, camera directed west.
- 06 of 12. CA\_PlacerCounty\_EIToyon\_006.tif. Southwest facing facade, camera directed northeast.
- 07 of 12. CA PlacerCounty ElToyon 007.tif. South facing stone chimney, camera directed north.
- 08 of 12. CA\_PlacerCounty\_ElToyon\_008.tif. Interior of stone fireplace and chimney, camera directed
- 09 of 12. CA\_PlacerCounty\_EIToyon\_009.tif. Interior main entry, camera directed southeast.
- 10 of 12. CA\_PlacerCounty\_ElToyon\_010.tif. Interior detail of hand carved banister, camera directed west.
- 11 of 12. CA\_PlacerCounty\_ElToyon\_011.tif. Detail of Front Door Knocker, original to home, camera directed south at entry.
- 12 of 12. CA\_PlacerCounty\_ElToyon\_012.tif. Interior detail of basement, pick marks from original Chinese workers, camera directed south in basement.

Property Owner: (Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)				
street & number 7615 Haley Drive	telephone 916-791-3605			
city or town Granite Bay	state CA zip code 95746			

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 18 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.