

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Ernest & Emily Renzel House

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 120 Arroyo Way not for publication

city or town San Jose vicinity

state California code CA county Santa Clara code 085 zip code 95112

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

Signature of certifying official Date

Title 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

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.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	district
0	0	site
0	0	structure
0	0	object
1	0	Total

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)

Domestic: Single Dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Modern Movement: Ranch Style

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: Concrete

walls: Brick

Wood:Siding

roof: Composition

other: Chimney: Brick

Narrative Description

(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

See Continuation Sheet

Narrative Description

See Continuation Sheet

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)

Property is:

- 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.

Period of Significance (justification)

See Continuation Sheet

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

See Continuation Sheet

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

B: Politics/Government

C: Architecture

Period of Significance

1939-1950

Significant Dates

B: Politics/Government 1944-1948

C: Architecture 1939-1940 (Construction)

C: Architecture 1949-1950 (Addition)

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

Renzel, Ernest (City Council, Mayor San Jose, CA 1944-1948)

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Root, Chester (Original Construction, 1939-1940)

Gibson & Wheeler Inc. (Contractor, 1939-1940)

Kress & Gibson (Addition, 1949-1950)

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

See Continuation Sheet

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

See Continuation Sheet

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

N/A

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Maggi, Franklin., Form DPR523 for Ernest & Emily Renzel House, 120 Arroyo Way

Form DPR523 (above) called out the following sources:

- Barrett, D., *A Century of Service*, 1977.
- Douglas, J., *Historical Footnotes of SCV*, 1993.
- Down, H.J., The Historical Background of Keystone Coffee, *Santa Clara County Business*, May-June 1978.
- San Jose Building Permits.
- San Jose City Directories, 1939-1978.
- Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, 1939-1962.

Santa Clara County Clerk-Recorder, Deeds, and Maps.

Mineta, San Jose International Airport Presentation: The New Airport, A Major Upgrade for Silicon Valley

Mineta, San Jose International Airport Presentation: Airport Facts and Figures

Various San Jose Newspapers including the San Jose Mercury News

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 # _____

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): _N/A_

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Approximately 2/3
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	<u>10S</u> Zone	<u>599892</u> Easting	<u>4133459</u> Northing	3	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
2	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing	4	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

See Continuation Sheet

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

See Continuation Sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Donald Lieberman
organization N/A date 9/5/09
street & number 120 Arroyo Way telephone 510-979-3203 (Daytime)
city or town San Jose state California zip code 95112
e-mail dlandpl@comcast.net

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.
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)

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:

City or Vicinity:

County:

State:

Photographer:

Date Photographed:

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1 of ____.

Ernest & Emily Renzel House
Name of Property

Santa Clara, California
County and State

Property Owner:

(complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name Lieberman/Long Revocable Trust (Donald Lieberman and Patricia Long)
street & number 120 Arroyo Way telephone 408-286-1890
city or town San Jose state California zip code 95112

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.

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property: Ernest & Emily Renzel House

County and State: Santa Clara, California

Name of Multiple Property Listing (If applicable)

Section number: 7 page: 1

Narrative Description

(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

This house embodies, through its form and detailing, a distinctive early Ranch-style residence with a compatible Ranch-style addition. Ranch-style houses became extremely popular after World War II, but had their roots in custom regional design of the late 1930s. This house is a very early example, utilizing brick and wood siding, Modernist steel corner windows, and horizontal proportions beneath the deep eaves. Chester Root, a well-known local architect, used this mix of Modern and traditional materials and forms to create a distinctive, unified composition for the main house in 1939-40. The 1949 addition, by Kress & Gibson, is harmonious with the original design in massing, materials and features. The property is surrounded by much of its historic residential setting, including surrounding properties, of a similar scale and setback, mature trees and other landscaping, and adjacent houses of similar age and scale although of differing styles. The house, a two story structure enclosing a space of roughly 4700 square feet (including partial basement, garage and enclosed patio), is located at the extreme eastern border of the Naglee Park area of San Jose.

Narrative Description

The immediate setting for the house is a wooded, sloped lot along Coyote Creek. The land slopes steeply down from Arroyo Way to the creek at the rear of the property. The long, rectangular footprint of the house follows the brow of the hill; it is one story at the front and two stories at the rear. The parcel includes a moderately shallow, level front yard that faces Arroyo Way (nominally west). There is no sidewalk along the curving street frontage, and a recent split-rail fence follows the curb. An earlier section of grape-stake, split-rail fence remains near the northwest corner of the parcel. The front entrance of the house is roughly centered in the width of the house; the recessed porch is accessed by a wide, exposed aggregate-concrete walkway; a brick stoop is recessed at the porch. Most of the front yard is landscaped with shrubs and low plants set between mature trees, including redwood, birch, laurel, and pine. Stepping stones and a brick walkway meander through the landscaping. A brick retaining wall and steps provide access to the lower floor near the south corner of the house, and a concrete bench accents the path. A wide concrete driveway serves the two-car garage at the northern end of the house. The north side yard features a brick patio within a large, wooded open space at approximately street level. Terraces wrap the corner of the house and step down to the rear yard. To the south of the house is a relatively large side yard that includes a tall wood retaining wall; a set of steps leads to the rear yard. The rear yard includes an expansive concrete patio in a Modernist curvilinear form, interrupted by two small planting islands and discrete foundation planting areas. The patio is edged by the riparian landscape along Coyote Creek. The parcel crosses the creek and includes paths to the water.

The house is set into the hillside. The main wing is one story and strikingly low in proportion at the front, and an expansive two stories at the rear, with a unique two-story room that spans the main rear façade and extends toward the creek with an original shed-roof projection. The front of the house is shallowly "U"-shaped; it includes a main volume that is flanked by an original, projecting bedroom wing to the south and a projecting garage wing to the north.

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Narrative Description (continued)

The house is covered primarily by a low-sloped hipped roof, but the north end features a gable that connects to the hipped roof over the garage wing at the northwest corner of the house. At the south end of the original house is a large two-story addition. The front grade is somewhat lower at the addition, so the massing is more exposed. The addition features a walk-out, fully recessed corner room that was once an open, brick patio.

The deep eaves are boxed with v-groove soffits. The soffits project directly above the window line of the house, creating archetypal Modern low, horizontal wall proportions. The ends of the eaves incorporate integral metal gutters in a fascia shape. The roof is covered with new composition shingles. The central section of the original house is clad in full-height brick. In elegant contrast, the bedroom wing is clad in vertical wood siding above a brick wainscoting; the full-height brick wraps the corner and drops to the wainscot level under a corner window. Because of the wainscoting and soffit design, the windows in this wing are accentuated in a band. The garage and rear wings are clad in wide, horizontal wood lap siding. The southeast rear corner of the original house and the south addition are clad at the lower floor in horizontal lap siding, and at the main level with vertical siding; this design is a successful blending of the two end wings of the original house. The sill band that separates the vertical and horizontal siding is built up from simple flat boards in a 1930s stepped Modern pattern. The house is set on a concrete foundation, partially a slab. There are two large, brick chimneys; one partially projects from the rear two-story room and one from the front of the south addition. At the rear of the house are two sections of exposed rafter tails that project from the boxed eaves, at the two-story living-room wing and beneath the gabled roof at the north wing of the house.

Entry is through a low, recessed porch that features lap siding on the side walls inset within the brick front wall. The porch floor is brick and tile, and the ceiling is set only slightly below the level of the eaves. The front entry door is a simple mahogany flush door with a decorative knocker; it is flanked by unusual glass-block sidelights. The glass block has a horizontal ribbed pattern. Within the main wing, to both sides of the porch, are modest steel casement windows. One of the windows is a tripartite unit; another is paired, and a third is a single sash. At the prominent northwest corner of the bedroom wing, near the front door, is a corner window; this consists of a steel corner post, a tripartite unit facing front and a paired unit facing the side. Corner windows are Modern features that were first championed by Frank Lloyd Wright. This focal window is balanced by a simple paired unit to the south and a tripartite window around the corner, facing south. The original garage wing has a high, glass-block window facing south, toward the front door, and a single wood faced overhead door. The north side of the garage has a single window and a five-panel door. The north side of the house, the kitchen wing, includes an additional window, placed asymmetrically, and a corner window wraps from the north side to the rear of the house. More centered in the north wing of the rear façade is a tripartite window, at the main level. At the lower level is a five-panel door. The original, projecting rear wing is distinctive. A two-story room, with its shed roof, has a pair of asymmetrical full-height corner windows. These custom-designed and fabricated windows feature pipe columns at the outer corners and a large, 1x4 unit facing each side. At the north corner of the rear façade is a 3x4 unit, at the south corner facing rear is a 4x4 unit. A four-lite French door faces south, adjacent to the tall window unit. The upper story of the bedroom wing has a distinctive corner window (four sash facing rear and a tripartite unit facing the side) and a small paired unit facing the rear. At the lower level are paired units facing rear and side and a tripartite unit facing rear. The south addition steps back in plan at the rear, and features a full-width recessed porch, enclosed with glass in the early 1960s. The upper level has similar, but slightly different window patterns to the original bedroom wing; facing rear are high casement windows; facing the south side is a centered four-sash unit. The front of the addition features a wide brick chimney flanked by a high, small paired unit with textured glass and a larger casement unit to the south side. The front of the addition includes a two panel lower-level door sunk into the grade; it is accessed by a brick garden stair. The interiors include many exceptional original features, including main spaces that are integral with the character of the house. The paneled, two-story living room has a high sloping ceiling and is open to the upper public areas via a cantilevered,

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County and State: Santa Clara, California

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Narrative Description (continued)

angled balcony and a paneled straight stair. Beneath the balcony is a built-in cabinet area, with Moderne curved shelves and built-in full-width lower cabinet. The line of the lower cabinet flows into the minimalist design wide brick fireplace at a recessed firebox. The brick is very thin, and lay in a Modern stretcher bond with narrowly overlapping ends. The wall paneling and cabinetry consist of hardwood sheets with narrow battens. The dining room, an area open to the living room, also has built-in cabinets. It and the entry foyer share the same wall paneling as the living room below. There is pine paneling in the kitchen, original doors and trim throughout the house, and details include unique, original retracting screens, and a built-in brick barbeque wall in the addition.

Integrity and character-defining features: The property maintains its historic integrity as per the National Register's seven aspects of integrity. The house maintains its original location on Arroyo Way, in a small 1930s neighborhood between Coyote Creek and Naglee Park. The property is surrounded by a traditional residential setting to the east of downtown San José, including surrounding properties of a similar scale and setback and adjacent houses of similar age, scale, and design. The subject property, including both the original house and the addition that was built a decade later, retains its 1930s and 40s residential scale and feeling and continues, through its low massing and Modernist detailing, to illustrate its associations with the architectural work of the locally significant firms of Chester Root and Kress & Gibson. This residence has a distinctive character and composition that is expressed through its preserved materials, workmanship, and eclectic design.

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Name of Multiple Property Listing (If applicable)

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

Politics and Government

Ernest Renzel commissioned architect Chester Root to design the house at 120 Arroyo Way in 1939. He lived there during his tenures as a member of the San Jose Chamber of Commerce, member of the San Jose City Council and Mayor of San Jose. As a member of the Chamber of Commerce, in 1938, Ernie Renzel first envisioned a municipal airport for San Jose, and formed a committee of civic leaders to advocate for its development. He located 483 acres of the Crocker Estate north of the downtown, which had the capacity to serve this use, and on May 30, 1939, negotiated a purchase option at \$300/acre. He lead a voter campaign in 1940 that passed the first voter-approved bond issue in San Jose since 1911, to fund acquisition of the land for the future airport. Ernest Renzel became Mayor of San Jose in 1944 and served 5 years until 1948. Under his leadership, the City exercised the option for the airport land, and by 1946 the first airplanes had landed. The San Jose Municipal Airport was dedicated the year after he left office in 1949. The existence of an airport infrastructure before the commercialization of the transistor and the invention of the integrated circuit was an important constituent in the ingredients that led to San Jose becoming the "Capitol of Silicon Valley" and one of the most creative and important economic centers in the world. In 2004, the City of San Jose recognized Ernie Renzel's visionary role in the early development of the airport by dedicating the "Ernie Renzel Airfield" in his honor. He is recognized today as "Father of the San Jose International Airport." A bust of Mr. Renzel is presently located inside one of the terminals of the airport. As of 2002, the San Jose Airport generated 70,000 jobs, \$4 Billion a year in direct business spending in the local community and \$136.6 Million per year in operating revenue. By 2004, 50 Silicon Valley companies with market capitalization exceeding \$1 Billion were clustered within a 12 mile radius of the airport and 29 of the nation's 100 fastest growing companies were located in Silicon Valley. As of June 2008, 13 airlines flew 174 daily flights to 30 non-stop destinations serving 10.7 million passengers and 183 million pounds of cargo.

Architecture

The house at 120 Arroyo Way, designed and built in the period between 1939 and 1940 and then enlarged in the period between 1949 and 1950 is an Identified Structure (IS) to the Naglee Park Conservation Area and sits within a distinguished neighborhood of early-twentieth-century residences. The building has a distinctive character that is expressed through its preserved materials and overall design. The Renzel House represents a very early local implementation of a Ranch-style house within the early Modern Period. The house was featured in the local newspapers in 1941. The Renzel House is prominent within the context of houses in Naglee Park, and is a distinctive early modern house within greater San Jose. It remains today as a clear representation of its period, in both design and detailing, and is distinguished among many fine houses built with the neighborhood. The house clearly has historic, architectural, and aesthetic value of an historical nature. Its quality derives primarily from its distinction as an important architectural work due to its style and design.

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

Politics and Government

Ernest Renzel, Jr.'s grandfather, Conrad Renzel - who had arrived in California from Hannover, Germany in the 1850s - was an early San Jose baker and grocer who founded a wholesale grocery firm in 1885, later to be known as C. Renzel & Son. Following Conrad's death in 1898, his son E. H. Renzel continued to operate the company until

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1905, when it incorporated as the Keystone Company, with E. H. Renzel as president. In 1909, Keystone reorganized and appointed William G. Alexander as president and E. H. Renzel and vice president, as it went into a rapid expansion period, building one of the largest coffee roasting facilities on the West Coast while also expanding its wholesale grocery business. In July 1922, E. H. Renzel, who had been heading the grocery division of Keystone, left the company with F. W. Withycomb to create a separate wholesale grocery operation, known as the E. H. Renzel & Co. The two companies remained separate until 1956, when Keystone re-entered the grocery business by acquiring the E. H. Renzel Company, which by then had become specialized in institutional and restaurant food supply. Ernest (Ernie) H. Renzel, Jr. (1907-2007), went to work for E. H. Renzel & Co. after graduating from Stanford in 1929, married his wife Emily in 1930, and eventually rose to be president of the company. In the late 1930s, then working as a manager for the company, Ernie became actively involved in community issues. As a member of the Chamber of Commerce in 1938, he first envisioned a municipal airport for San Jose, and formed a committee of civic leaders to advocate for its development. He located 483 acres of the Crocker Estate north of the downtown, which had the capacity to serve this use, and on May 30, 1939, negotiated a purchase option at \$300/acre. He led a voter campaign in 1940 that passed the first voter-approved bond issue in San Jose since 1911, to fund acquisition of the land for the future airport. During most of the *Interwar Period* (1919-1945), construction of city infrastructure had lagged far behind urban growth. It has been well documented and was publically known at the time that local politics during this period was controlled by an outside political boss, Charlie Bigley. The new city charter that took effect in 1916 eliminated the position of mayor and vested authority under a council-appointed city manager, and Clarence Goodwin, who would take office as manager for 24 years, was appointed in 1920. During the early years of the Second World War, a young generation of reformists formed the "San Jose Progress Committee" to develop a slate of candidates for the San Jose City Council, which at that time had six of seven seats open for election. With Roy Rundel, Fred Watson, James Lively, Benjamin Carter, and Albert J. Ruffo, Ernest Renzel, Jr. joined to form a slate and reformist platform, advocating for more investment in the city's inadequate infrastructure, and long-range planning for growth in the post-war period. Renzel was top vote getter, and was soon appointed as City Council president, a position that he moved to have renamed mayor at the end of his term. Under Renzel's leadership, the long-term public safety officials were removed as well as City Manager Goodwin. Under new acting City Manager John Lynch, the City quickly reconstituted itself to prepare itself for the rapid expansion that would later occur during the City's management under Anthony "Dutch" Hamman. After his term as Mayor of San Jose, Ernest Renzel continued his involvement with the airport, as the Chamber's Airport Committee evolved into the future Airport Commission, on which he was appointed until 1977, serving for 28 years. In 2004, the City of San Jose recognized Ernie Renzel's visionary role in the early development of the airport by dedicating the "Ernie Renzel Airfield" in his honor. He is recognized today as "Father of the San Jose International Airport."

While a visionary in the development of the airport, and a reformer during a time of change in local politics, Ernest Renzel, Jr. and his wife Emily are also both recognized for their contributions to the community in many areas. They were both instrumental in the establishment of Kelley Park, loaning the City of San Jose money to insure its timely purchase, and Ernie is also responsible for the formation of the City's Historic Landmarks Commission during his term in office. They were both active in fund-raising for local nonprofits, and were strong supporters of the arts and protection of the valley's natural environment.

Architecture

The house located at 120 Arroyo Way was constructed in late-1939-early-1940 for Ernest H. Renzel, Jr. and his wife Emily. The property is a portion of Lot 25 of Tract 39 (Arroyo Terrace) which was surveyed by the Herrmann Bros. in 1936 (Maps 1:26 & 27). This survey covered an easterly part of the neighborhood known as Naglee Park (east of South Seventeenth Street, South of San Antonio street, and to the center of the Coyote Creek), and was owned by the Naglee Park Improvement Company in 1905 when sold to Thomas Derby (Deeds 290:189). Naglee Park is a 140-acre neighborhood that was once the estate of General Henry M. Naglee, a veteran of the Civil War and local

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property developer during the later part of the nineteenth century. Although originally platted within the 84-block unrecorded Naglee & Sainsevain's Addition, the estate was re-surveyed in the early twentieth century. The first phase, between East Santa Clara and East San Antonio Streets was subdivided by the Naglee Park Improvement Company; Thomas Robins as president at the time of the recording of the tract. Established as a prestigious urban residential subdivision with many architect designed homes and recorded deed restrictions governing use, house siting and cost, it was mostly built-out by the beginning of World War II. During the late 1970s, it was identified as a potential conservation area by the City of San Jose, and designated as such in the 1980s.

The Firm of Higgins and Root

Chester Root is the architect of record according to a family informant. The firm of Higgins and Root (William L. Higgins and Chester Root) was formed in the 1930s in San José and is attributed to a significant body of work throughout the county in the post-World War II period through the 1970s. In the 1930s, William L. Higgins went to work at his father's firm of Wolfe & Higgins. Following the death of his father in 1936, Higgins brought in Chester Root, who joined the firm as the architect of record. In the five-plus years prior to the beginning of World War II, the firm established itself as one of the earliest "modernist" firms in the area, and after the war developed a substantial body of work including many local school buildings, churches, banks, public and industrial buildings and structures. Chester Root was educated in architecture at the University of California, Berkeley and earned a masters degree at Harvard in 1930. He worked for a time in New York for Grosvenor Atterbury and returned west in 1935. During his career, he was a long-time civic leader, serving on numerous non-profit boards, and was the first architect appointed to the Santa Clara County Planning Commission. He became a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects, and helped form the local AIA chapter in Santa Clara Valley, and was their first president after serving as the president of the Central Coast Counties Branch Chapter of the AIA. The work of Higgins and Root during the thirty years following the war was rooted in the evolving modern movement in architecture. Buildings designed by the firm have a strong sense of functionalism and are related to the Second Bay Region style.

Period of Significance (justification)

Politics and Government: 1939-1948, the period in which Ernest Renzel was a member of the San Jose City Chamber of Commerce followed by his tenure on the San Jose City Council and as Mayor of San Jose. During this period, he was instrumental in the creation of the San Jose International Airport.

Architecture: 1939-1940, the period in which the residence was designed by Chester Root and built by the firm of Gibson and Wheeler. 1949-1950, the period in which the residence was expanded in size by architects Kress & Gibson.

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Name of Property: Ernest & Emily Renzel House

County and State: Santa Clara, California

Name of Multiple Property Listing (If applicable)

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Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

Beginning at 2" x 3" stake set in the Northern line of Arroyo Way distant thereon N. 73° 20' E. 154.73 feet from the point of intersection of the Easterly line of Seventeenth Street with said Northerly line of Arroyo Way as shown on the Map of Tract No. 39, Arroyo Terrace recorded in Vol. 1 of Maps, Page 26 and 27 in the office of the County Recorder of Santa Clara County, California, said point of beginning being also the Westernmost corner of Lot 25 as shown on said Map, running thence Southeasterly along the Northerly and Easterly lines of said Arroyo Way as shown on said Map, curving to the right on a curve of 152.39 feet radius (the center point of which curve bears S. 16° 40' E. 152.39 feet) through an angle of 64° 48' for an arc distance of 172.35 feet to a 2" x 3" stake marked "BC", thence tangent to said curve S. 41° 52' E. 110.44 feet to a 2" x 3" stake marked "EC", thence curving tangentially to the right of a curve of 538.50 feet radius through an angle of 16° 04' for an arc distance of 151.01 feet to a 2" by 3" stake marked "BC"; thence leaving said line of said Arroyo Way and running N. 69° 48' E. 127.88 feet to a point in the centerline of the Northwesterly along said centerline of said Coyote Creek and along said Easterly line of said Lot 25 as shown on said Map the two following courses and distances: N. 32° 28' W. 272.75 feet and N. 48° 42' W. 105.89 feet to the Northernmost corner of said Lot 25; and thence leaving said Creek and running Southwesterly along the Northerly line of said Lot 25, S. 73° 20' W. 234.71 feet to the point of beginning and being a part of said Lot 25 of said Tract No. 39, Arroyo Terrace as shown on said Map recorded as aforesaid.

Excepting therefrom that portion described as follows:

Beginning at the stake marked BC standing on the Northeasterly line of Arroyo Way, at the most Southerly corner of that certain Parcel of land described in the Deed from Charles C. Derby and Mary C. Derby, to E.H. Renzel, Jr. dated July 24, 1936, and recorded August 12, 1936 in Book 785 of Official Records, Page 165, Santa Clara County Records, running thence along said line of Arroyo way on a curve to the left from a tangent bearing N. 25° 48' W. with a radius of 538.50 feet thru an arc distance of 151.01 feet to a stake marked E.C> thence leaving said line of Arroyo Way and running parallel with the Southeasterly line of so conveyed to Renzel, N. 69° 48' E. 130 feet, more or less, to the Northeasterly line of Lot 25, as shown on the Map of Tract No. 39, Arroyo Terrace, of record in Book 1 (one) of Maps, Pages 26 and 27, Santa Clara County Records, California, thence along the Northeasterly line of said Lot 25 and center line of Coyote Creek as shown on said Map, S. 32° 28' E. 147 feet, more or less, to a corner in said Northeasterly line of said Lot 25, and most Easterly corner of land so conveyed to Renzel; thence leaving said center line and running S. 69° 48' W. 127.88 feet to the point of beginning, being a part of Lot25, of said Tract No. 39 Arroyo Terrace, as shown on said Map recorded as aforesaid.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The described boundaries delineate the parcel associated with the structure in the property tax records:

Santa Clara County Assessor's Parcel Number: 467-29-027,
Northeast side of Arroyo Way, East of South Seventeenth Street.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

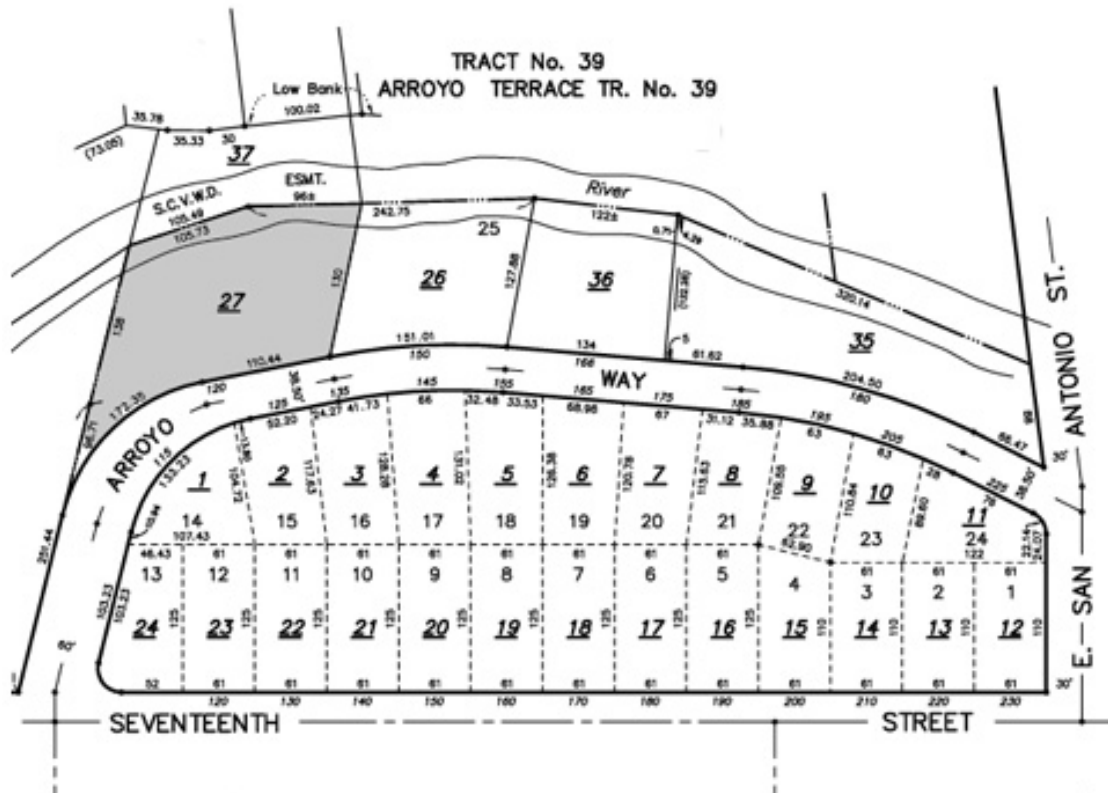
Name of Property: Ernest & Emily Renzel House

County and State: Santa Clara, California

Name of Multiple Property Listing (If applicable)

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Section number: 10 page: 2



**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property: Ernest & Emily Renzel House

County and State: Santa Clara, California

Name of Multiple Property Listing (If applicable)

Section number: Additional Documentation page: 9

Index to Photographs

All color and black and white photos were taken by Donald Lieberman
There are no negatives; all were photographed with a digital camera.

Color photos 1->6 and Black and White photos 1->9 were taken at:

120 Arroyo Way, San Jose, CA 95112
Santa Clara, County

Black and White photo #10 was taken at:

Mineta San Jose International Airport
1661 Airport Blvd, San Jose, CA 95110

Color Photographs (6 Photos):

Color Photo 1: 9/6/09, 120 Arroyo Way, Front, Approximately Viewing East
Color Photo 2: 9/6/09, 120 Arroyo Way, Front, Approximately Viewing North
Color Photo 3: 9/6/09, 120 Arroyo Way, Front Door, Approximately Viewing North-East
Color Photo 4: 9/6/09, 120 Arroyo Way, 1949-1950 Addition, Approximately Viewing North-East
Color Photo 5: 7/26/09, 120 Arroyo Way, 120 Arroyo Way, Rear, Approximately Viewing North-West
Color Photo 6: 7/26/09, 120 Arroyo Way, 120 Arroyo Way, Rear, Approximately Viewing South

Black & White Photographs (Set 1 and Set 2 are identical, 10 photos each)

B&W Photo 1: 7/26/09, 120 Arroyo Way, 1939 Architect's Rendering, Front
B&W Photo 2: 9/6/09, 120 Arroyo Way, Front, Approximately Viewing East
B&W Photo 3: 9/6/09, 120 Arroyo Way, Front, Approximately Viewing North
B&W Photo 4: 9/6/09, 120 Arroyo Way, Front Door, Approximately Viewing North-East
B&W Photo 5: 9/6/09, 120 Arroyo Way, 1949-1950 Addition, Approximately Viewing North-East
B&W Photo 6: 7/26/09, 120 Arroyo Way, 120 Arroyo Way, Rear, Approximately Viewing North-West
B&W Photo 7: 7/26/09, 120 Arroyo Way, 120 Arroyo Way, Rear, Approximately Viewing South
B&W Photo 8: 7/26/09, 120 Arroyo Way, 1939 Architect's Rendering, Interior Great (Living) Room
B&W Photo 9: 7/26/09, 120 Arroyo Way, Interior Great (Living) Room
B&W Photo 10: 8/16/09, Bronze Bust, Ernest Renzel, On Display at San Jose Airport

120 Arroyo Way, Front, Approximately Viewing East



120 Arroyo Way, Front, Approximately Viewing North



120 Arroyo Way, Front Door, Approximately Viewing North-East



120 Arroyo Way, 1949-1950 Addition, Approximately Viewing North-East



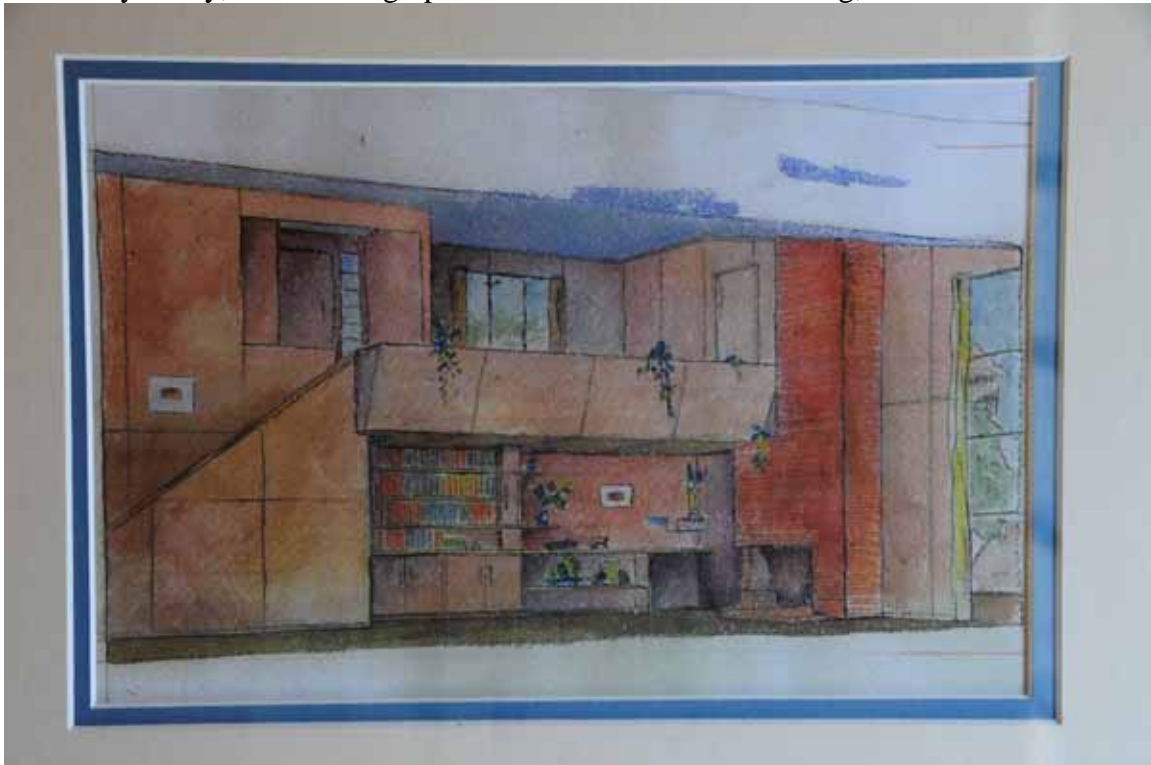
120 Arroyo Way, Rear, Approximately Viewing North-West



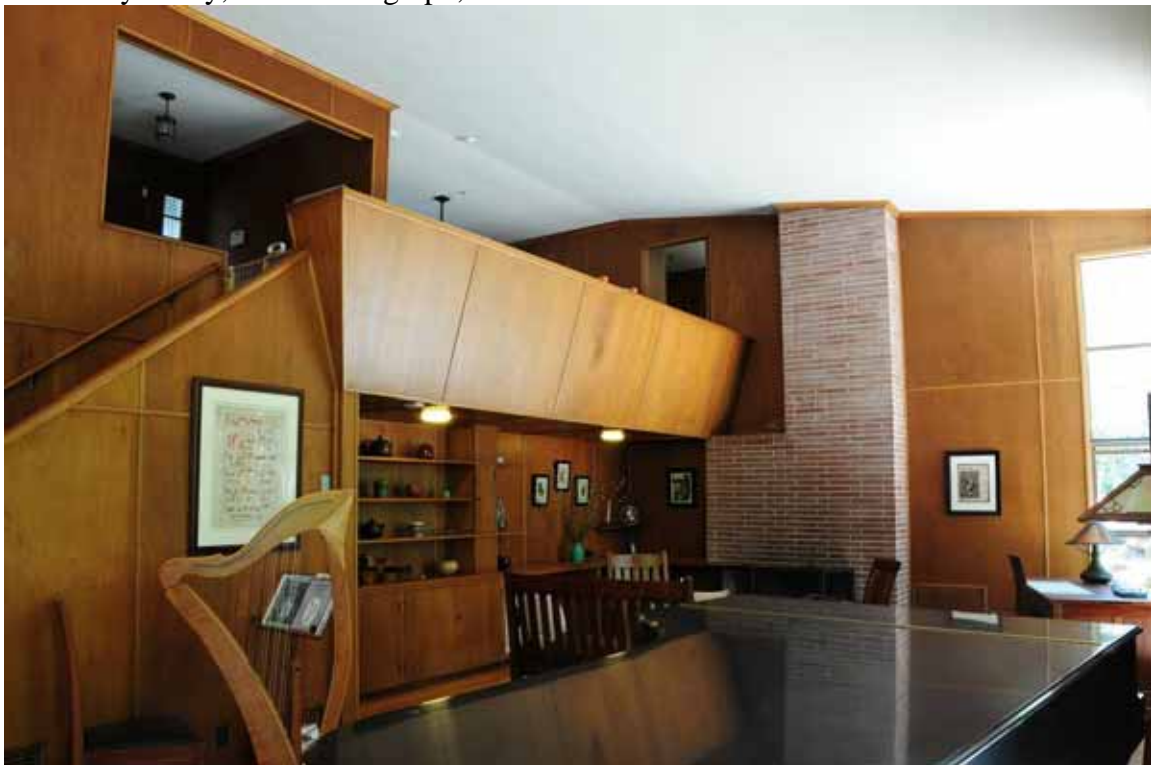
120 Arroyo Way, Rear, Approximately Viewing South



120 Arroyo Way, 2009 Photograph of 1939 Architect's Rendering, Great Room



120 Arroyo Way, 2009 Photograph, Great Room



120 Arroyo Way, 2009 Photograph of 1939 Architect's Rendering



Ernie Renzel Bust, San Jose Airport

