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30-160089

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

HARRISON HOUSE

AND/OR COMMON

same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

27832 Ortega Highway

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

San Juan Capistrano

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

40

STATE

California

VICINITY OF

CODE

06

COUNTY

Orange

CODE

059

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: Vacant

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

City of San Juan Capistrano

STREET & NUMBER

32400 Paseo Adelanto

California

CITY, TOWN

San Juan Capistrano

STATE

VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Orange County Hall of Records

STREET & NUMBER

630 North Broadway

CITY, TOWN

Santa Ana

STATE

California

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Inventory of Historical and Cultueally Significant Structures, Objects and Sites

DATE

Placed in 1975

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

San Juan Capistrano City Hall

CITY, TOWN

San Juan Capistrano

STATE
California

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Harrison House is a 1400 square foot single-story wood frame building constructed in approximately 1906. Situated above the floodplain on a low rise a short distance north of San Juan Creek, this was one of the ranch houses up valley from the mission settlement at San Juan Capistrano. The original property has been reduced in size to .18 of an acre. Modern residential development is now occurring on the valley floor below the house. The south side of the building overlooks the valley of San Juan Creek, while the north (front) side faces the present Ortega Highway which follows the early Spanish and Mexican routes of travel up the valley. The entire property has been surrounded by chain link fencing.

The front of the building is symmetrical with a central doorway flanked by two windows. The windows and doors are framed in wood and set outside of the single-wall clapboard construction of the walls. A dormer window is set above the front door and a porch extends along the front and west sides of the building.

Simple square-sawn posts and a balustrade enliven the porch design. Extended rafters provide an ample overhang on both the porch as well as the dormer roofline. A slight "Craftsman" flavor is provided by the gable bargeboard with curved end cuts, the shingled end gable and the louvered vent. Other than these few decorative features the design of the Harrison House is quite simple. The west side of the building contains two equally spaced windows and an enclosed porch which sits at the back of the house. The east side of the building is treated the same as the west except there is no porch. The rear elevation of the Harrison House contains four windows, of varying size, which are boarded over. A back entrance door is also boarded over.

Structurally the building has experienced some deterioration. Vandals have broken the windows and removed boards from the ceiling on the interior exposing the high roof. As a result the windows and doors have been boarded over to prevent further damage.

The major change in the building has been the addition of a room on the west side and the southwest corner. The room was created by enclosing a portion of the porch and the addition of a window and door. The hipped roof is original, as is the porch and interior. The house is dominated by a central hall which runs nearly the entire length of the building and is entered by the front door with rooms leading off the central hall. Another hall lies perpendicular to the central hall forming a T. A high degree of original fabric is intact.

The Harrison House has been acquired by the City of San Juan Capistrano. The City has undertaken the restoration of the building for use as an Indian Cultural Center. Details of the original appearance are being reconstructed by a professional restoration architect. The goal is an historically accurate restoration. In keeping with this goal the addition will be removed and the porch replaced. The only contemplated alteration will be the construction of a skylight on the south side of the roof for energy conservation. As the building has been tentatively awarded a restoration grant under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, restoration work will be executed according to the Secretary of Interior's guidelines.

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES probably circa 1906 BUILDER/ARCHITECT unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Harrison House is significant to San Juan Capistrano for the following reasons:

- it represents an architectural style which was once common, but is now rare
- it is a reminder of the community's agricultural heritage which lasted from 1776 to 1970 before Southern California urbanization displaced it
- it contributes to the environment of the Parra Adobe, a building listed on the National Register of Historic Places, which is situated on the same lot approximately 10 feet away.

Architecture

The Harrison House is a single-story vernacular building of single-wall construction, featuring a hipped roof, a veranda running the length of the north and west elevations, and a dormer window over the north veranda roof. Old photos of San Juan Capistrano show several buildings of similar construction.¹ Today this is the only one remaining. The single-wall construction was a method common to this coastal area of Southern California. Many beach cottages, generally vernacular in style, were built in this manner. The Harrison House is unusual, however, in that it shows the adoption of an "indigenous" construction method to a California bungalow.

History

San Juan Capistrano, located half way between Los Angeles and San Diego on the California coast, was an agrarian community for nearly 200 years. Founded in 1776 by Father Junipero Serra as a Spanish Mission settlement, San Juan Capistrano was a self sustaining community in terms of food production. Mission Records show that crops such as beans, wheat and corn were planted soon after the founding.²

San Juan continued to be an agricultural community even after the Mexican government confiscated the property of the Mission in 1836.³ Cultivation of individual lots was a stipulation of land grants in the San Juan township in 1841⁴ and in the homestead allocations of the American period.

Diversified farming as an industry began with the break up of the large Mexican land grants/ranchos after the 1860s in San Juan Capistrano area. Homesteaders planted wheat and barley, later walnuts, apricots and finally oranges along with other crops such as beans and tomatoes.⁵ Today peppers, oranges, and strawberries continue to be produced in small agricultural preserves in the city, but most of the agricultural land has disappeared. Developing much later than most southern California coastal cities, San Juan Capistrano managed to resist urban sprawl until 1970 when the population was only 3,000. Today nine years later, the population is nearing 13,000 and only the farmhouses of Hot Springs Road (the Ortega Highway) will be left as reminder of the agrarian past. The Harrison House is one of these

Please see continuation sheet

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .18 acre

San Juan Capistrano, Ca. Quadrangle
Scale 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A	11	440100	3707760
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C			

B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION The subject property is located at 27332 Ortega Highway, occupying .13 acres of land in the northwesternmost corner of Parcel 37 as shown on page 29, Book 124, County of Orange Assessor's Mapbook. The justification for these boundaries relate to the remaining portion of the historic tract of land once associated with the Harrison House...not included in the boundaries but immediately adjacent to the east is .18 acres of land on which the Parra Adobe sits (now on the National Register of Historic Places).

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

FORM PREPARED BY

Office of Historic Preservation Staff
Additions in conjunction with Pam Hallan

NAME / TITLE

Pamela Hallan, Administrative Aide

DATE

February 23, 1979

City of San Juan Capistrano

TELEPHONE

32400 Paseo Adelanto

714-493-1171

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

San Juan Capistrano

California

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Kerry M. Ellen

TITLE

DATE 7/18/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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CONTINUATION SHEET four ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE one

Bibliography

- Bancroft, Hubert Howe. History of California (7 vols.) 1884-1890, San Francisco.
- Englehardt, Zephyrin. Mission San Juan Capistrano, Los Angeles, Standard Publishing Company, 1922.
- Friis, Leo. Orange County through Four Centuries, Santa Ana, Pioneer Press, 1965.
- Hallan, Pamela. Dos Cientos Anos en San Juan Capistrano, Irvine, Lehmann Publishing Company, 1975.
- Mission Records located in Santa Barbara Mission Archives
- Plot of land irrigated by Mission Viejo Ditch, 1882, Los Angeles County Book 1, page 67.
- San Juan Capistrano Historical Society collection of photos, City Hall, San Juan Capistrano.

(1/78)

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CONTINUATION SHEET

one

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE

one

Footnote:

1. The Hot Springs Road/Ortega Highway is the subject of a National Register District Nomination recently resubmitted to the Department of Interior H.C.R.S. This submission contains detailed information concerning the physical character and historical development of the road. In relation to this nomination for the Harrison House, it should be briefly discussed as to the physical description of the road in front of the Harrison House and the historical association of the road to the house. Directly in front of the Harrison House between the road is a landscaped parkway and sidewalk. The road is two lanes with wide, paved shoulders. The widening of the road was done within the past one year, previously there were dirt and sand shoulders. The Hot Springs Road/Ortega Highway has been in existence since approximately 1776-8 when the Mission San Juan Capistrano was founded. The road acted as the main thoroughfare between the Mission and the San Juan Hotsprings (located approx. 10 miles from the Harrison House). As one of the main traffic routes of the area, much of the agricultural development of San Juan Capistrano grew up along the road; the Harrison House is a part of this history. The road was originally known as the Hot Springs Road and later was also given the name of the Ortega Highway in 1932-33 when it became a County Highway for the State of California. Ortega is the individual thought to have first used the road for settlement in the area after the Indians.

When the Ortega Highway was widened, trees in front of the Harrison House were removed and new trees planted. A brick fence which acts partially as a retaining wall for the section of the road which was built up during the widening process was also added. Please refer to photos for a before and after shot.

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few remaining houses.

The Harrison House is located next to the Parra Adobe, a farmhouse of the Hot Springs Road (the Ortega Highway) period of agricultural period (1860s.) The adobe is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and was once used as a storage area for the residents of the Harrison House. Loss of the Harrison House would seriously damage the environment of the adobe which is otherwise surrounded by residential development.

The land along San Juan Creek was part of the vast area claimed by the Spaniards to be held in trust for the Indians of Mission San Juan Capistrano.⁶ When lands of the Missions were confiscated, the Eastern Valley, carved through geologic time by the San Juan Creek, was reserved for Indian farmers.⁷ Yet it is a Frenchman by the name of Francois Riverin who is shown as the property owner in 1882 on an irrigation map filed in Los Angeles County.⁸ By 1888 the property was owned by John Truslow. Interests in the land were sold to two others before Andrew McNally of Rand-McNally Corporation in Chicago, bought the entire ranch over the period from 1889 to 1906.

An architectural historian from the State Office of Historic Preservation dated the home to 1906. This would indicate that the house was probably built during McNally's ownership. In 1909 Father Alfred Quetu bought the ranch from the McNally estate. When his mansion was destroyed by fire in 1912, he moved to the Harrison House, living there until the ranch was sold in 1915. John J. Harrison, a subsequent owner, lived in the house for 36 years and grew oranges on the property. The house is more closely associated with his family and carries his name.

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Footnotes:

1. San Juan Capistrano Historical Society collection of photos, City Hall, San Juan Capistrano
2. Mission Records (located in Santa Barbara Mission Archives).
3. Hubert Howe Bancroft, History of California (7 vols.) 1884-1890, San Francisco.
4. Zephyrin Englehardt, Mission San Juan Capistrano, Los Angeles, Standard Publishing Company, 1922.
5. Pamela Hallan, Dos Cientos Anos en San Juan Capistrano, Irvine, Lehmann Publishing Company, 1975.
6. Leo Friis, Orange County through Four Centuries, Santa Ana, Pioneer Press, 1965.
7. Englehardt, Ibid.
8. Plot of land irrigated by Mission Viejo Ditch 1882, Los Angeles County, Book 1, p. 67.