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**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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Beringer Brothers / Los Hermanos Winery
other names/site number: Beringer Winery Historic District

2. Location

street & number 2000 Main Street not for publication N/A
city or town Saint Helena vicinity N/A
state California code CA county Napa code 055 zip code 94574

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 nationally statewide locally.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Stephen D. Milazzo 7/16/01
Signature of certifying official Date

California Office of Historic Preservation

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register (See continuation sheet.)
- determined eligible for the National Register (See continuation sheet.)
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): _____

Edson R. Beall 8.17.01
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

• Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

• Category of Property (Check only one)

• Number of Resources within

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Non contributing
<u>6</u>	<u>2</u> buildings
<u>1</u>	<u> </u> sites
<u>3</u>	<u> </u> structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
<u>10</u>	<u>2</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 1 (Rhine House)

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Agriculture Sub: processing

Agriculture agricultural field

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Agriculture Sub: processing

Agriculture/Subsistence agricultural field

Commerce/Trade specialty store

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian, Queen Anne, Mission Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone
roof slate, metal
walls wood, stone, stucco, brick, concrete
other _____

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See Continuation Sheets for descriptive information.

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 a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture

Period of Significance: 1878 - 1935

Significant Dates 1878

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

NA

Cultural Affiliation NA

Architect/Builder Albert A. Schroepfer

Narrative Statement of Significance - See Continuation Sheets

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

see continuation sheet.

10. Geographical DataAcreage of Property (District) 8 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

UTM points for the NE, NW, SE and SW corners of the district.

	Dir	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	NE	10	545320	4262700
2	NW	10	545240	4262440
3	SE	10	545200	4262400
4	SW	10	545600	4262360

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

The boundaries of the district are indicated on the accompanying base map and have been described below:

The Beringer Winery Historic District is bounded by York Creek to the south, the Beringer property boundary to the north, the remnants of the stone wall and the elm trees on the east side of highway 29, and an historic fence line that runs along the western hillside.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

The boundaries are based upon the shared relationship among the district contributors. The boundaries reflect the portion of the property which include the historic resources relating to the agricultural significance of the district. The boundary includes the winery building, the residential components of the property, the outbuildings and distillery building which supported the wine production. The Beringer property originally included several lots on the eastern side of Highway 29. This area has been partially excluded because no historic resources are present on these parcels.

The boundaries do not include the entire current legal property boundaries, but instead are defined by the concentrated area of activity, buildings and structures from the western fence line to the highway and from the northern property boundary to the southern creek bed.

11. Form Prepared Byname/title M. Bridget Maley, Architectural Historianorganization Architectural Resources Groupdate February 2001street & number Pier 9, The Embarcaderotelephone (415) 421-1680city or town San Franciscostate CAzip code 94111

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets attached

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

A sketch map of the historic district with contributors and boundaries labeled is attached.

Photographs - Representative black and white photographs of the property are attached.
Representative historic photographs are attached.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Beringer Wine Estates Company

street & number 2000 Main Street telephone (707) 963 7115

city or town St. Helena state CA zip code 94574

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Section 7 Page 1

Beringer Winery Historic District

Name of property

Napa, California

County and State

SUMMARY DISTRICT DESCRIPTION

The Beringer Winery Historic District is located at the north end of St. Helena, in Napa County, California along the west side of State Highway 29. Rural in character and easily identified by an alley of elm trees lining Highway 29, the Beringer Winery consists of approximately eight acres with one contributing site and six contributing buildings. There are also two non-contributing buildings present within the limits of the district boundaries. When originally purchased by the Beringer Brothers, the tract of land consisted of 215 acres that ran from the Napa River, along the south boundary of Charles Krug's property, west across the county road, and into the wooded hillside to the upper waters of York Creek. The initial acreage included a vineyard, with cultivated lands extending east to the Napa River. The Beringers developed the property along both sides of the county road; however, with the exception of a low stone wall and the elm trees, today there are no historic resources present on the east side of the road. At the property's west side, Jacob Beringer occupied an existing house, then began construction of a stone winery set into the hillside to accommodate stone aging caves. As wine production increased, support structures such as distilleries, storage facilities, offices, and fermenting houses were erected. Additionally, a residential component of the property was developed to allow the family to live adjacent to the operating winery. Overall, the district retains a high degree of integrity of location, setting, feeling, association, design, materials and workmanship with the property looking much like it did historically, during the period of significance (1878 - 1935). The property was developed by the Beringer family from 1878, when the construction was completed on the winery, through 1935 when the last major building campaign was completed under Beringer direction as a result of increased wine production after the demise of Prohibition. While some of the storage buildings and the small stone castle-like distillery building have been lost, the residential buildings, the winery, the office, a distillery building, as well as major site circulation routes imperative to wine production remain intact. This is one of the few winery sites in the Napa Valley where the historical setting and the relationship of the winery facility, vineyard lands, residential precincts, and site circulation is extant, as evidenced in the 1878 Smith & Elliott *Illustrations of Napa County California with Historical Sketch* and Sanborn Maps of the property.

DESCRIPTION OF OVERALL DISTRICT SETTING / PAST AND PRESENT

The Beringer Winery Historic District is a complex of buildings and structures consisting of a winery, residential buildings, winery support structures, a series of circulation routes, and a number of significant landscape elements that retains a high degree of integrity from its period of significance. At the height of Beringer activity at the site, the property looked remarkably like its present configuration. In fact, it appears to be one of the few Napa wineries that retains all four of the central site components present at most wineries: the winery building, support structures, and the crucial site circulation, as well as the residential structures and precincts. A comparison of an 1878 Lithograph of the property with Sanborn Maps from the years 1886, 1889, 1910, and 1944 give a strong indication of the appearance of the Beringer property as it developed during its period of significance. As the Beringers expanded the facility over a long period of time, both before and after prohibition, it is important to understand the site chronology.

Upon purchase of the 215 acre property from William Daegener in September 1875, Jacob Beringer moved into a pre-existing house and began construction of a winery building a year later. By 1878, a two-story stone winery had been constructed, a series of site roads was developed, and a number of vineyards were planted. The 1878 lithograph illustrates a cluster of buildings set behind the main road, which is busy with horse and carriage traffic. The stone winery building is in the center, two stories high, and without the wings which would be added later. To the left, or south, of the winery, and

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closer to the road, sits the main residence (Hudson House before it was moved). The main house is two stories high with intersecting gabled roofs, and porches spanning the first and second floors on the front facade. South of the main house is a low shed-like structure, partially obscured by trees. Behind the shed is a large barn with arched doorways and several smaller outbuildings, likely stables for the horses shown in an adjacent corral. The house and barn are set in a cluster of trees. Part of the vineyard is located directly north of the house along the road.

The accompanying text to this lithograph specifically states that the "wine cellar of the Beringer Brothers is the most handsomely finished in the valley. . . the building is of two stories, and besides this the roof is adapted to crushing so that there are really three stories of working room. There are no partitions and each story forms but a single room. . . A roadway has been graded around through the place, leaving the county road at one side and entering it at another, and describing in its course along the hillside a semi-circle that passes along the front of the cellar, while a side-track goes around past the rear of the same, and thus affords the facilities for the unloading referred to." These features described in 1878 remain today.

By 1879, the winery's stone caves or aging tunnels into the hillside were almost complete. Jacob calculated that it was cheaper to construct these caves than to erect freestanding support structures. This decision would forever establish the unique character of the Beringer Winery, as it is one of the few in the valley to possess such extensive historic aging tunnels. A distillery, located directly to the south of the winery building, was also completed in 1879. Many thought this small structure resembled a castle, as it had a crenallated roof line.

In 1880, Jacob further improved the winery with the completion of a third story, constructed of wood, not stone. During this period Jacob obtained a large steam boiler to power the system of belts and pulleys in the winery and distillery buildings and to run the feed-grinding mill for the horses. These belts ran a lift-conveyor that moved grapes from wagons to the crushing unit at the third story of the winery. Also in 1880 Jacob purchased another 70 acres of vineyard.

When Frederick Beringer joined Jacob in St. Helena in 1883, it was decided that Jacob's house (the pre-existing house on the site) would be moved and remodeled, while Frederick would build a larger, grander house in proximity of Jacob's original residence. Frederick Beringer looked to a German-born architect, Albert Schroeffer, to construct his California family seat. The house has traditional German architectural elements including half-timbering, use of stone, and high pitched gables. The Rhine House, as it has become known, was completed in 1884, and quickly became the center of the family activity on the property. The elaborate interiors offered wonderful entertaining facilities for the frequent visitors to the property.

It appears that Jacob Beringer undertook a remodeling of his house (the Hudson House), during this period as the house appears on the 1889 and 1910 Sanborn Maps as having a one story front porch. This is partially in conflict with photographic evidence which indicates that the two-story porch of the Hudson House was in place by the early 1890s. At any case, it appears that Jacob altered his residence prior to his death in 1915 as a photograph from 1914 shows him with his family on the one story porch.

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To further beautify the property, the Beringers planted an alley of elm trees along the main roadway in 1885. Upon completion of these residential projects the Beringers could then concentrate on expansion of winery production. The 1886 Sanborn Map shows the wine production area at Beringer, but does not show the dwellings. The winery is noted as housing fermenting facilities on the second floor and grape crushing on the third. A one-story addition containing a still room was added to the south side. Consistent with the 1878 Lithograph, the building is at grade in the front, but is recessed into the steep hillside at the rear. The system of underground tunnels serving as cellars are clearly shown connected to the winery. A two-story wine storage building was constructed to the northwest of the winery, connected to the underground tunnels. The one-story, castle-like distillery building is located south of the winery, and has two rounded bays on the front facade as shown in early photographs. South of the distillery are a one-story square office building and a small rectangular shed. The map notes that the buildings are "substantial and tidy" and were lit by candles.

The April 1889 Sanborn Map shows more of the Beringer property than the 1886 map, including the Rhine House (1883), the Hudson House, and several buildings across Main Street (current State Highway 29). This map reflects a number of changes to the property from the earlier 1878 Lithograph. A large two-story fermenting house was added to the north side of the winery building, which still housed storage on the first and second floors, fermenting on the second, and crushing on the third. A series of small one-story additions had also been made to the south side of the winery, adjacent to the still room. The underground cellar tunnels were also expanded into the hillside, and a low building built on top of the southern end of the tunnels, protruding from the hillside. The original residence (Hudson House) was moved northwest, in front of the winery. The Rhine House was built on the former site of the Hudson House, near a large wood shed and greenhouse. Buildings belonging to the Beringer Brothers across Main Street included a two-story sleeping house, a large unidentified two-story building, and a wagon shop.

While Frederick Beringer died in 1901, his brother Jacob continued to manage, oversee, and expand wine production until his death in 1915. The 1910 Sanborn Map indicates this continued extension of the facilities. The two-story fermenting house adjacent to the winery building was expanded to the north, and an additional one-story wine storage building was constructed in front of the fermenting house, closer to the road. A small one-story, wood frame structure was added to the front, or east elevation of the winery at the north end. The map still notes that within the winery building the grapes were crushed at the third floor, fermented at the second, and stored at the first floor.

In 1915, the North House was constructed for use by Beringer family members. Aside from this small residence, no building occurred at the site between 1915, the year of Jacob's death, and the repeal of Prohibition in 1933. While the winery remained active during Prohibition, producing sacramental wines, the repeal meant increased production, and modernization of facilities. This resulted in the expansion of the winery building and construction of several new buildings including a larger distillery as well as an expanded office building.

The repeal of Prohibition was official by December 1933 and with its end came an almost immediate increase in production by the Beringer winery. After Prohibition Jacob's children took over the winery: C.T. Beringer was the president and operated the San Francisco sales office, Otto Beringer, Sr., was in charge of the cellar, and Jacob's daughters were also active. In 1932, the family hired a new general manager and wine maker for the Beringer winery. In April 1934, the Beringer Brothers Winery became the first Napa Valley winery to open its doors to public tours and sales.

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Following Prohibition, a number of improvements were made to the property. By the start of the 1935 crush, the old fermenting room was replaced with a new wing on the winery and the office was expanded and remodeled (the Exports Building), two small buildings were constructed near the office building (the Sherry Shack Complex), new redwood storage tanks were installed, two new hydraulic presses were operating, and a new barrel room with cooperage for 200,000 gallons of wine was added. Most importantly, however, the winery wings were constructed at the north and south ends to accommodate increased equipment and provide more space for processing and storing the wine produced with the repeal of Prohibition. The north and south wings appear to be completed in a May 1934 photograph showing the opening of the Beringer winery to public tours. This building campaign was the last major construction effort completed at the site under Beringer family direction.

This building campaign was described in detail in the *St. Helena Star* on July 14, 1933 under the headline "Unusual Activity at Beringer Brothers' Winery Recalls Pre-Prohibition Days". The article noted that Bertha Beringer was the present manager of the business and that the company had "laid out a program of enlargement and improvement to cover a period of several years, the features of which being carried out at present are the installation of the second crusher, the re-coopering of 60 casks and the construction of a bottling building. Re-cementing of the winery floors and the construction of a sherry room (the new distillery) are also included in the program for early completion probably shortly after the first of the year. . . Both buildings will harmonize in architecture with the picturesque stone cellar building."

The 1944 Sanborn Map recorded this significant expansion in the Beringer wine-making facilities. The map clearly shows the additions to the original winery building with the central section and two wings, and with a storage area abutting the former Distillery (Castle-like structure). An additional fermenting building was constructed just north of the c. 1910 storage warehouse. The underground cellars were expanded to include several new tunnels. Near the Rhine House, the earlier outbuildings were removed and a garage built in their place. Also, a new distillery building appears to the north of the other structures; a rectangular building with a three-story tower in the center, labeled as space for "sherry cooking (the second distillery building on the site)."

A 1958 historic photograph shows that the storage buildings were extant behind and in front of the winery building and the wings were present on the winery building. Today, a number of the secondary structures constructed on the site have been removed. Only one of the significant structures, the Castle-like distillery building which stood at the south end of the winery has been removed. All three of the residential buildings, the winery, second distillery, office and site circulation are extant. Most importantly, the winery tunnels so unique in the Napa Valley remain within the hillside behind the winery building. Following is a description of the extant contributing resources within the historic district and an evaluation of their integrity within the district setting.

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INDIVIDUAL RESOURCE DESCRIPTIONS

Beringer Site – Contributing Site

The Beringer Historic District includes a site of approximately eight acres. There are six contributing buildings and two non-contributing buildings at the site. Generally, the site retains a great deal of integrity, including buildings, site circulation, and landscape features. Based on the 1878 lithograph from the Smith & Elliott publication on Napa County, little change has occurred in the overall site circulation at the Beringer Winery. This publication noted: "A roadway has been graded around through the place, leaving the county road at one side and entering it at the other, and describing in its course along the hillside a semi-circle that passes along the front of the cellar, while a side track goes around past the rear of the same, and thus affords the facilities for the unloading." The circulation routes established on the site were critical to efficient transfer of grapes to the upper level of the winery during the crush. Study of the Sanborn Maps for the winery property also indicate that these routes through the site have changed little since the period of significance.

The Beringer brothers planted 75 elm trees on either side of the roadway in the late 1880s. The elms ran the length of the Beringer property at the time, which was located on both sides of the road. The 1878 Smith & Elliott publication noted that the Beringers had "graded the county road in front." This line of trees is strongly associated with the Beringer property and is a unique landscape feature within the Napa Valley. This site feature contributes to the setting of the historic district and is a contributing element to the Beringer property. While several elms have been lost to disease, these trees are over 100 years old and are protected by various interests.

Further, the Beringer Brothers constructed a stone wall with several entry gates along both sides of Highway 29. Only remnants of the walls are present along the east side of the highway, while on the west side this feature remains almost completely intact. In conjunction with the Elm Alley along the highway, this feature contributes to the character of the historic district as an original landscape element and boundary marker constructed by the Beringers.

Other significant site features include a number of large palms are present around the front lawn area of the Rhine House. Several large oaks on the property appear to be well over 100 years old with one oak documented to be over 200 years old. A grove of Redwood trees is located to the east of the Hudson House and west of the stone wall. Lastly, the North House has a series of landscaped walls and planted features.

Hudson House (1852, 1883, 1989) Contributing Building

The Hudson House is the oldest structure on the Beringer property, as it pre-dates the Beringer ownership of the site. The house was originally built by David Hudson between 1848 and 1852 on the site that is now occupied by the larger Rhine House. An 1878 lithograph from the Smith & Elliott *Illustrations of Napa County California* shows the Beringer Brothers Winery property with the original house built by Hudson. This house was two-stories with a two-story front porch articulated with heavy square columns. The main portion of the house had a gable roof running north-south, while the rear addition had an intersecting gable roof running east-west. Jacob Beringer moved the house to its present location in 1883 so that the construction of the Rhine House could begin. House moving was a common practice in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The *St. Helena Star* noted at that time:

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Jacob Beringer's dwelling has been considerably enlarged . . . receiving an addition of four rooms and a bathroom . . . the whole house has been built over outside and in, and is particularly made new.

Workmen are now finishing off the interior in handsome style, and the many friends of Mr. & Mrs. Beringer will rejoice to see its hospitable walls made all the more worthy of its esteemed occupants.

An 1891 photograph shows that the front porch remained similar to the porch on the 1878 Smith & Elliott lithograph. However, a 1914 photograph of Jacob Beringer and his family seated on the front porch of his home shows the results of a second remodel. This remodel completed sometime between 1891 and 1914 resulted in the current front facade appearance. During this early remodel the two-story porch was removed and a one-story porch with a Palladian window above was installed.

Hudson House Condition and Integrity

The Hudson House retains integrity of design, setting, feeling, and association as its early remodel was completed during the period of significance and under the direction of Jacob Beringer before his death in 1915. Additionally, it retains integrity of location as it was moved on the property early within the period of significance. In 1988-89, the Hudson House was partially restored and renovated, however, wherever possible, the original and early features of the structure were maintained on the exterior. Interior modifications to accommodate modern cooking and banquet facilities have resulted in few remaining historically significant interior features. However, as noted, the exterior retains substantial historic features, and its presence contributes to understanding the district's development and history. This building is an important component of the district and continues to visually contribute to the district setting.

Old Winery (1877, additions 1880 and c. 1935) Contributing Building

The old winery building is composed of a rectangularly shaped, three-story central section, with two flanking one-story side wings. The central section has a long, low-hipped roof with a small cupola projecting above the roofline. Construction of the central section began in 1876 and was completed in 1877. The building was originally a two-story stone building with a flat roof and was built against the hillside to accommodate aging tunnels. An 1879 drawing from the Smith & Elliott *Illustrations of Napa County California*, shows the Beringer Brothers Winery property and the appearance of the original two-story winery building. In 1880, the third story, which included the cupola observatory, was constructed of wood frame, not stone like the first two stories. However, the details of the lower stories were replicated in the third story.

The central three-story component of the winery consists of two stories of coursed stone with a wood-framed third floor clad in horizontal wood siding. Stone quoins accent the building corners at the first two levels, while wood quoins are present at the third story and on the centrally-placed cupola. The fenestration is symmetrical, and is primarily comprised of two-over-two, rounded, wood-frame arched windows. All window surrounds have either decorative stone work or wide wood casing. Along the first floor of the central section two large recessed, arched door openings flank four regularly spaced arched windows. A single arched window opening on each of the outer sides of the two doorways completes the first floor fenestration. The second and third floors each have centrally-placed large arched openings flanked by three smaller arched windows. Arched vents and drains are located along the stone foundation at the building base.

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Because the structure was constructed into the hillside, only a portion of the second story stone work is visible at the rear. The third-story wood-frame component is completely exposed and has two, asymmetrically placed cargo-type openings to receive the grape harvest. A pedestrian door is accessed via a set of wood stairs. The roof of the central three-story element is hipped with a wide overhang. All roofing components, including the side wings, are sheathed in standing seam metal roofing material installed in 1993.

The two side wings were constructed by May 1934, as they appear complete in an historic photograph of that date. The wings are not present on the 1910 Sanborn Map, but are on the 1944 map. The wings have gable roofs and are constructed of board-form concrete and finished with exterior stucco. Each wing has large arched doorways (one in the north wing, two in the south wing) that are flanked by smaller arched windows. The south wing shows evidence of expansion in at least two phases in the raised quoins dividing the east elevation. These wings were constructed to accommodate increased production after the repeal of Prohibition.

The interior of the winery central section consists of three floors each with a large open volume with exposed wood framing. These spaces are utilized for storage and fermenting. The original floors of the first floor central component were reported to have been dirt. The interior of the wings are predominantly exposed board-form concrete and wood framing and are used for storage. Large oak barrels occupy most of the north wing, while a small retail and tasting shop as well as a storage mezzanine occupy the south wing.

Contributing to the winery's significance are the stone aging tunnels entered through two arched portals in the west wall of the first floor. The *St. Helena Star* reported on December 22, 1876, that the "Beringer Brothers have commenced work on a new wine cellar, 64 by 100 feet, on their beautiful place purchased of Mr. Daegner. The present work consists of excavating into the rock hillside back of the dwelling, where the cellar is to be located. It is not yet decided of what it is to be built." The fact that this rock hillside was composed of stone enabled the Beringers to excavate extensive tunnels into it, behind the winery building, to serve as aging caves.

Winery Condition and Integrity

Overall the winery retains a high degree of integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. The building sits in its original location and its setting is similar to that of the period of significance with the exception of the removal of the adjacent castle-like distillery and several storage structures. While the winery building has been expanded through time, most of these modifications relate to the Beringer's wine production expansion and the evolution of the building. The alterations were completed within the period of significance. Furthermore, the additions successfully carry through the design features of the earlier central section of the winery, forming a cohesive unit with similar openings and surrounds. The interior has been slightly modified by the seismic strengthening; however, the major spatial volumes remain and the work was sensitive to the original design and character of the building.

Exterior repairs to the structure have been made promptly as needed and appear to have been executed with respect to the historic fabric of the structure. Stonework and grouting are in good condition. The stucco plaster is sound and well maintained and the wood siding at the third floor is in good condition. The original windows have been well-maintained. The original wood doors are extant. The roofing material was replaced with standing seam metal in 1993. A 1958

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photograph of the Beringer property shows that both the winery and distillery roofs were sheathed in sheets of corrugated metal. The north and south wings were constructed in the early 1930s, during the period of significance and contributing elements of the winery structure.

The winery interior has been altered through the years. Most of the original tunnels remain, although portions have been infilled for structural reasons. The interior stone walls of the first and second floors of the original central section of the winery are now concealed by gunite applied during a 1973 seismic strengthening project. Like the stone walls of the winery, the tunnel stone walls have been strengthened with gunite. Horizontal steel trusses and steel framing were inserted to strengthen the floor framing at the second and third floors, and the existing stairs were removed and replaced by a steel stair in a new location. The wood-framed third floor walls were strengthened by applying plywood to the wood framing to form shear walls in various locations. Plywood diaphragms were added to the roof at the same time, and a standing seam metal roof was installed. Flooring now consists of tile at the first floor of the central winery section and concrete flooring at the wings.

Rhine House (1883-84) Contributing Building

Constructed in 1883-84, the Rhine House is one of the most imposing houses in the Napa Valley. It has been speculated that the house was designed as a replica of the Beringer home on the Rhine River near Mainz, Germany. Some of the materials were imported from Germany, while the stone for the house was quarried locally. Frederick Beringer's large residence on the Beringer Winery Historic District represents a mix of the Queen Anne and Chateausque Styles with architect Albert Schroeffer's own German architectural heritage.

This redwood framed, two-story house with partial basement and full attic has a steeply pitched, multiple-hipped roof with two projecting towers. Sheathed in gray slate reportedly from Pennsylvania, the varying rooflines are typical of the Chateau Style. Multiple dormers, dressed with pinnacles, project through the roof. Within the central three-story tower is a recessed, first-floor entrance surmounted by a second-story balcony. The door to this balcony is flanked with large one-over-one light windows and a circular arched transom. Within the segmented gable of the tower is an elegant decorative motif indicating the date of construction. Set within another gable end is the symbol of the Arion Society, a longtime affiliation Frederick Beringer held in New York City. The second tower has a steep candle-snuffer type roof. Rising above the roofline are several chimneys. The foundation and first floor of the building are locally-quarried Napa stone. The second story is half-timbered construction with stucco plaster-covered brick. Various styles of windows articulate the facade, most of which are narrow one-over-one, double-hung wood sash with small fixed decorative stained-glass transoms. A covered porch flanks two sides of the house. The porch roof is supported by decoratively turned posts and brackets. Early photographs show an octagonal conservatory attached to the south side of the Rhine House by a glass-roofed passage leading to the dining room.

The interior of this seventeen-room house features a wealth of carved wood finishes and art glass. Hand-carved wainscoting of German white oak, walnut-finished mahogany, and California redwood are set against intricately inlaid floors of these, and other, decorative woods. When first completed, the floors were covered with large Turkish rugs. Interior partitions are masonry or wood framed, finished in wood paneling, plaster, and gypsum board (at later partitions).

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In plan, the house consists of a large reception hall on the first floor with an open grand stair and a parlor to the north of the hall. A library, smoking room, and dining room are located to the south of the reception hall. These spaces are currently used for winery retail and hospitality. The southwest wing of the first floor held the kitchen and a service stair running north/south along the fireplace wall of the Dining Room. The kitchen wing has been heavily altered and the service stair replaced by a new stair located in the southwest corner of the wing.

The second floor of the Rhine House contained the living and private spaces for the Beringer family. Frederick Beringer's bedroom is reported to have occupied the large, central room above the reception hall. This room has a ceiling higher than the other second floor rooms and a prominent arched stained-glass transom above double doors, which open onto a balcony above the main entry. Frederick's bedroom was extensively remodeled in 1985 to become the "Founder's Tasting Room." The single door to the stair hall was enlarged to a double door, and a bar, paneled wood wainscot (possibly replacing original wainscot), and small sink were installed. These rooms are currently used for various staff functions as well as private tasting rooms for winery guests. The second floor has a number of alterations including new and modified toilet rooms, as well as new partitions that break up the historic floor plan. Additionally, modifications have been made to the wing above the first floor kitchen which was originally the maid's quarters.

The basement level consists of a crawl space at the north side of the house and an unfinished storage area to the south. Mechanical equipment is located in the basement, outside the rear (west) side of the Rhine House, in the attic, and on the roof. The attic above the main block of the Rhine House is unfinished with exposed rafters and sheathing for the slate roof. The attic space is expansive and is reached by a narrow stair that occupies a space off of the second floor landing of the main stair. Seismic improvements for the first phase of a two phase program were completed in 1994 and are visible in the attic.

The collection of stained glass present in the Rhine House is one of the most outstanding in California, and it ranges in style from Gothic-revival to more modern glass from the 1930s. Many of the rooms are thematically identified with their stained-glass windows, the majority of which are transoms featuring painted medallions of window glass surrounded by abstract, stylized patterns of leaded stained glass. The majority of the glass is unsigned, while a few windows are signed with the name "Lambert," presumably George Lambert, a Belgian glass artist about whom there is little information. Made by Lambert's New York glass company, many of the elements featured in the windows, most notably the glass jewels, were apparently imported from Europe. Records indicate that Frederick Beringer paid more than \$6,000 for the entire collection.

The Rhine House wood paneled front doors contain two large stained-glass panels and a transom above. The two door lites feature uniformed Vatican Swiss Guards, created of painted and fired flash glass (a two-color glass in which one of the colors is etched away to reveal the color beneath it). The guards are representative of the two Beringer brothers, Jacob and Frederick. The floral transom above these doors was completed by a local Napa studio in 1937 in an attempt to match the other glass throughout the house.

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The grand staircase, to the rear of the reception hall, features a pair of double-hung sash with painted medallions that depict hunting scenes, surrounded by a stylized pattern of leaded glass. To the south of the reception hall, the library features a tripartite arched transom, depicting a bust of William Shakespeare. The bust is flanked by side lights of musical instruments, globes, and scrolls with a background of rays of light. The ladies parlor, to the north of the reception hall, features glass depicting the feminine images of wildflowers and butterflies, while the dining room transoms depict trout, game, and a still life of wine, cheese, and fruit aimed to stimulate the palate.

Upstairs, the windows of the bedrooms are less thematically arranged, though they continue to include painted scenes of medallions of clear window glass, often depicting wildlife or landscape scenes. Differing most notably from the others is the arched transom in what was originally Frederick Beringer's bedroom. Distinctly Art Nouveau in style, with its large center orange rondelle of crackled flash glass, this window is representative of the sun, which is surrounded by purple irises.

Rhine House Condition and Integrity

The Rhine House retains a high degree of integrity of design, setting, location, feeling, association, materials and workmanship. It retains almost all of its historic character-defining features dating to the period of significance with the exception of the small conservatory that originally occupied a portion of the south elevation. The building has been well maintained with repairs made quickly as needed. Almost all of the alterations to the structure have occurred at the interior with the exception of the modifications to the porch and stairs on the north end of the house and installation of tile floors to the first floor porches, conversion of north end first-floor parlor windows into doors, relocation of openings in the Reception Hall (one each north and south of the stairs), and removal of a rear porch.

Interior modifications include alterations to the kitchen wing and removal of the original service stair, alterations in the Founder's Room (second floor), remodeling of the south rooms on the second floor, remodeling of the second floor wing above the kitchen. Seismic strengthening of the building in 1990 involved some alterations to interior finishes at exterior wall locations.

North House (1915) Contributing Building

The North House, located near the north gate of the Beringer property, is a two-story residential building with a raised basement and an attic. According to Beringer Brothers Winery records, it was constructed in 1915 at the north end of the Beringer Winery Historic District. The 1878 Smith and Elliott drawing includes a small square structure in the approximate location of the North House. Quite possibly, the structure in the drawing was expanded to become the present North House, or this smaller building became a support structure seen in historic photographs of the north end of the Beringer property. The current appearance of the North House dates to circa 1915.

A reference in the February 1983 obituary for Adela Clarice Beringer Mihelich (daughter of Jacob Beringer, Jr.) to her family home "Buena Vista" just north of the winery is most likely the North House, as the house sits on a small knoll affording it a view of the surrounding landscape. The house is currently used as administrative offices. Stylistically, the North House is a simple, gabled structure typical of rural sites. It is finished with exterior wood shingles and trimmed with undecorated wood. Windows are double-hung wood sash set in simple wood frames. An over-sized dormer above a first

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floor porch marks the center entry to the structure. The porch roof is supported by paired columns of rough hewn wood timbers. At the corners there are three columns with the center column supporting both the front and side elevations.

North House Condition and Integrity

The North House retains a great deal of integrity. The building sits in its original location and retains integrity of setting, feeling and association. There are a number of original or early site features remaining such as the olive grove and stone retaining walls. Additionally, as the exterior front facade is intact, aside from new composition shingle roofing, it retains integrity of workmanship, design and materials. The building has been well maintained and while it has been altered over the years to accommodate a change from residential to office use, it retains its integrity. It conveys its place within the residential use of the property and remained the residence of Beringer family members until the mid-1980s.

The interior of the North House has been altered through time to accommodate changing uses and needs. These changes include a new kitchen, modifications to the living room to accommodate offices, and new toilet rooms. The second floor of the structure is intact in plan and has original wood floors. Much of the original interior wood trim remains.

Distillery Building (1935, addition post 1958) Contributing Building

The original south end of the Distillery Building was constructed in 1935 and is set into the hillside. Stylistically similar to the wings of the old winery, this building is a rectangularly-shaped, one-and-a-half story building with a metal-clad gable roof. Located to the north of the winery building, the Distillery fenestration is irregular with large arched openings for doors and smaller round arched windows. The window assemblies are primarily four-over-four double-hung wood windows. Raised quoins run along the building corners and around the large arched openings. The doors within the openings are large wood sliding and swinging doors of tongue and groove wood in a chevron pattern. The exterior of the building is finished in painted stucco. The roof of the Distillery appears to have been replaced at the same time as the winery in 1993 and is the same standing seam metal material. An addition at the north end was constructed some time after 1958 when the building was photographed without the addition present.

The interior of the Distillery Building is primarily exposed wood framing while the exterior is board-form concrete. Interior partitions are variously finished in wood boards and gypsum board. The interior space is divided into two major sections the south and north ends.

Distillery Building Condition and Integrity

The Distillery originally had a tower near its north end as well as a shed-roofed addition across most of its main facade. Additionally, a boiler and its associated chimney were located at the north end of the distillery in an open area surrounded by a stucco wall. The tower, boiler, and chimney have been removed; the Distillery was expanded to the north of the open boiler area sometime after 1958 when an historic photograph was taken that illustrates these building components. An addition was subsequently constructed at the north end.

While the Distillery has been altered, it retains its integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association. Additionally, it retains enough integrity of design, materials and workmanship to convey its historical use and significance within the

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district setting. The removal of the shed roofed front porch has revealed the door and window openings original to the building.

Export Building - Winery Office (pre-1889, modified and expanded 1935) Contributing Building

The Export Building or the Beringer Winery Office was modified in 1935 from an original wood frame and shingled, small, square in plan structure that is present on the 1889 Sanborn map. Presently, it is a small rectangularly-shaped one-story building, with a shallow hipped roof, that abuts a rising slope to the rear. The roof is currently covered with flat asphalt shingles at the hipped roof and composition roll roofing at the flat roof of the addition. The fenestration is asymmetrical and flanks a large, arched, slightly recessed entrance. Two concrete steps enter this recess, which contains an arched wood door with a single small lite. Engraved on the face of the stair risers are the words "Office - Beringer Bros. Inc." A pair of rounded arch, four-over-four double-hung windows appears on one side of the entrance, while two pairs occur on the other side. A set of stone steps run up the hill along the south elevation. A pair of rounded arch windows identical to those on the front elevation adorn the south elevation. A vault of concrete masonry units (CMU) is present at the west side (rear) of the Export Building and is set into the hillside which was likely constructed with the 1935 alterations.

A later addition of CMU construction was erected at the south end of the structure after the completion of the 1944 Sanborn Map. This addition does not appear in a mid 1930s photograph of the building after the remodel. The interior of the Export Building is finished simply in painted plaster. Interior rooms include the offices, two vaults, as well as a small bath and kitchen. One of the vaults appears to date to the original construction of the building. The other vault is located in the south addition.

Export Building Condition and Integrity

The Export Building retains integrity of location, setting, feeling, design, workmanship and association. Remodeled during the post prohibition building campaign at the winery, this structure served as the location of business transactions, thus the rear vault. It has retained its use as an office, serving now as the Beringer marketing center. The original building was small and with the post prohibition boom in wine production a larger building was needed. While some modifications and preliminary exploratory investigations indicate a great deal of dry rot present, the Export Building retains enough integrity to convey its historical use and significance within the district.

NON-CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

Sherry Shack Complex (1935) Non-Contributing Building

This area contains two small buildings: a shed-roofed Kitchen and gable-roofed Sherry Shack. The Kitchen features a rear wall of stone, under the lowest portion of the roof, while the front and sides of the building have horizontal wood siding. The one-room Sherry Shack has a composite tile roof and horizontal wood siding, with a single door with a light as well as a six-light fixed-sash window at its front. These two structures occupy a prominent area of the site that has been historically used for outdoor activities such as picnics and gatherings. However, they have been modified and altered "as needed," reflecting their utilitarian functions. Mechanical equipment mounted on the exterior of the Kitchen gives it the appearance of busting at the seams. Both buildings have composition roofing. Extensive modifications were made in the 1970s.

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Sherry Shack Condition and Integrity

The Sherry Shack complex consists of two small buildings at south end of the site. These structures lack significance within a district context as they have been used for a variety of needs at the site through time and do not directly relate to the significant wine-making processes that have occurred at the site. Additionally, their integrity has been impaired by frequent repairs and upgrades. While the structures date to the period of significance they are non-contributing to the district as they do not convey a significant use nor are they linked to the district's historical associations.

Tour Center (1971) Non-Contributing Building

After the purchase of the Beringer Brothers Winery in 1971 by subsidiaries of the Nestle Corporation, the Tour Center was constructed between the Rhine House and the winery. In this vicinity, Nestle made additional site changes including creating a passenger drop-off area near the Rhine House. Two years later, a Visitors' Plaza was constructed between the Rhine House and the Tour Center. The Tour Center was not constructed during the period of significance and is thus non-contributing to the historic district.

Old (Castle-like) Distillery (1879, non-extant, demolished 1970s)

This building was constructed in 1879 and demolished in the 1970s. As the building is no longer extant it can not be considered a contributor to the Historic District. There are no foundation remains of the building.

Winery Storage Buildings (1880s, non-extant, demolished post-1958)

Behind the winery building there are a several stone foundation remains that represent the two winery storage buildings constructed during the 1880s. These buildings were likely demolished in the 1970s at the same time as the old Distillery building. These buildings appear on the 1944 Sanborn Map of the property and in a 1958 historic photograph of the site. However, as these buildings are no longer extant they cannot be considered contributors to the Historic District.

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SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

The historical resources within the Beringer Winery Historic District are significant at the state level under National Register Criterion A in the area of California agriculture, specifically the statewide development of the viticultural industry during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Unlike early Southern California wineries which diminished in production and distribution as other agricultural uses became more lucrative in that area of the state, the Northern California wineries expanded from the mid nineteenth century until Prohibition. Significant as a continuously family-operated agricultural enterprise, the Beringer Winery differs from other early California wineries in that it remained family-run through Prohibition, Repeal, World War II, and the beginnings of the second wine boom of the 1960s. The Beringer family operated one of the "Big Four" family wineries in the Napa Valley and utilized innovative agricultural and business practices to achieve this status. Leaving Charles Krug's winery and establishing his own winery, Jacob Beringer erected a large, modern winery incorporating the latest technology. In the late 1870s, the *St. Helena Star* called the Beringer wine cellar "the most handsomely finished of any in the valley, and for solidity of build and completeness of appointments can have no superior anywhere."¹ Similar to other wineries developing in Napa during the third quarter of the nineteenth century, the Beringer Winery site consisted of a residential precinct; a winery, distillery, and storage buildings located in an industrial precinct for wine production; as well as vineyards, orchards, and gardens. Elevating its significance within an agricultural context, the Beringer Winery Historic District is one of the few California wineries remaining that fully illustrates the relationship of the industrial wine making precinct to the more residential components of the winery site linked by extant circulation routes. In conjunction with establishing modern wine making practices, the Beringer winery produced large quantities of wine and distributed products across the country, including an outlet in New York.

One district contributor, the Rhine House, is currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C. The Rhine House, built on the property in the 1880s as Frederick Beringer's residence, is representative of the work of a significant local architect, Albert Schroepfer; it is a good example of the use of local stone; and possesses distinctive characteristics including a remarkable collection of stained glass. Additionally, the Beringer Brothers Winery building is a California State Historical Landmark.

Context: Agriculture

Contribution to Early Viticultural Development in the Napa and Sonoma Valleys

The year 1823 brought the establishment of the twenty-first and last of the California Franciscan Missions in Sonoma. Similar to other Mission sites, the Sonoma Mission cultivated grape vines for small-scale manufacture of sacramental wine. The Sonoma Mission illustrates the initial agricultural development of vineyards in the region. With increased European settlement in the area came larger-scale attempts to produce grape vines and wine in both the Sonoma and Napa valleys. European immigrants to the Napa Valley perceived the regional climatic and geological conditions to be similar to the major European wine producing regions.

By the third quarter of the nineteenth century several enterprising Europeans were exploiting the lands in the Napa Valley for agricultural purposes, specifically viticulture. Prior to the 1870s, California's vineyards were found mostly in Southern California. However, by 1878 over 2,000,000 gallons of wine were produced in the Napa Valley, elevating the region's importance within California's wine industry. Two individuals are credited with establishing wine making in the vicinity:

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George Belden Crane and Charles Krug.² Crane, who relocated to the Napa region from the Santa Clara Valley, identified the Mission wines as inferior and planted imported vinefera vines in 1861. By 1869, Crane had planted over one hundred acres of vines and by 1874 achieved production of 50,000 gallons. Remaining in Napa until his death in 1898, Crane was a strong believer in the region's capacity for excellent grape and wine production.³

German native, Charles Krug, with a University education, immigrated to California during the Gold Rush of the 1850s and ultimately became a significant player in the wine industry. Upon moving to the Napa region in the early 1860s, Krug began to cultivate Mission vines. Inspired by Crane's success with foreign varieties, Krug embarked on the expansion of his business, building his first large stone winery in 1872. Historian Charles Sullivan has noted that "by the late 1870s his (Krug's) name had become synonymous with the great quality successes that were perceived for Napa Valley wine."⁴ Krug and Crane were soon joined by two enterprising brothers who, like Krug, were immigrants of Germany.

Immigrating to America from Germany in 1868, Jacob Beringer spent two years in New York and then found his way to California by 1870. Finding work with Charles Krug, Jacob settled into the positions of cellar superintendent and foreman, with the goal of establishing his own winery in the future. Jacob's brother Frederick made the voyage from Germany several years earlier in 1862, but chose to stay in New York, establishing a malted barley business. The Beringer Brothers were from Mainz along the Rhine River, a well-known wine region. Frederick was born in 1840 and his brother Jacob five years later. The brothers were from a family linked with the German wine-making industry, and they seemed destined to flourish in viticultural practices.

In 1875, five years after arriving in Napa, Jacob Beringer, along with his brother Frederick, still living in New York at the time, accumulated enough wealth to invest in Napa's rich agricultural lands. Adjacent to Krug's vineyards, the parcel that Jacob purchased had a history of agricultural use. The Beringer Brothers were the fourth titled owners of the site. In 1848, David Hudson, a pioneer of Napa County, purchased a parcel of land consisting of approximately 300 acres from Dr. Edward Bale. Upon acquiring the property, Hudson commissioned contractor William Spurr to design and build a home with "Southern farmhouse flair." Hudson held the property until 1872 when he sold it to William Daegner for \$25,000. Daegner in turn sold 215 acres to Jacob and Frederick Beringer in 1875 for \$14,500, a significant loss for Daegner who had suffered a debilitating accident rendering him unable to manage his property.

After tending to his new vineyard throughout the spring and summer of 1876, Jacob Beringer made his first crush and then began excavating a new stone winery building that fall, which was completed in February of 1877. Departing from Krug's outdated techniques of hand crushing, Jacob's winery included modern equipment, allowing for larger production. Jacob's winery facility was expanded a year later, including construction of a distillery.⁵ An 1878 publication noted the following of the Beringer wines:

At first some poor California wines were put upon the market and created a prejudice which will require time to overcome. The fine cellar and conveniences put into use by the Beringers for handling and keeping clean and sweet the products of the vineyards, will soon work a revolution in sentiment and increase the popularity of California wines.⁶

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In a two-year time frame, Jacob's winery rivaled that of his former employer Charles Krug, a considerable accomplishment. Although the United States experienced a depression during the 1870s as a result of over expansion after the Civil War, these hard times did not effect Napa wine producers as severely as those in other California wine growing regions. Some wineries were even able to expand operations despite generally low prices for grapes and wine, including the young Beringer Brothers enterprise. Riding on the coat tails of a record California wine crop in 1872, exports of California wine in 1875 were 1,030,000 gallons, 1,460,000 gallons in 1877 and 2,500,000 in 1879. The newly formed Beringer Brothers winery was one of several Napa facilities to prosper in the late 1870s. This was in part due to Jacob's understanding of the complex process of wine making and his ability to take advantage of new technology and the natural landscape of his property.

Technological Innovations

In 1880, the Beringer Brothers added another 70 acres of hillside, located behind the winery, signaling the beginning of a successful decade of winery expansion. A component of Beringer success is attributed to Jacob's involvement in the wineries design. Built into a hill to accommodate the gravity flow process of making wine and a series of aging tunnels carved into the hill, the cellar was declared one of the county's best upon its completion. A 1933 article about Napa wine history in the *San Francisco Chronicle* noted that Jacob Beringer "selected the site because of the stone hillside, and that the stone formation is particularly well adapted to underground sorting and aging because of its tendency to keep wines sweet and free from decay, thus preventing winesour."⁷

In a small valley bounded by steep hills, it was logical for Napa wineries to take advantage of geography and dig naturally-cooled cellars into the hillsides, above and below vineyard lands. An 1889 review of California wineries noted that in Napa, "the best and largest cellars are of stone or brick, and have underground tunnels extending into the side-hills."⁸ The geography of the Napa Valley provided ideal soil conditions for growing, hillsides to simplify the mechanical processes during the annual crush, and soft stone for carving out caves. The Beringers made use of all these natural features when constructing their winery.

About the time that the Beringer Brothers began to develop their winery complex, the technology to produce wine in the Napa Valley was expanding. The hillside location of Beringer and many of its neighbors afforded a simple method of moving their product from grape presses to fermentation to bottling and in the case of the Beringer Winery to cave storage. This method was called gravity flow, and it was dependent on a three-story winery building constructed into the hillside, with a road running above and behind. Wagons brought loads of grapes along the roadway, behind the building, to the top story for crushing, and the juices flowed down to the lower floors for further processing without requiring the aid of pumps or other machinery. Jacob incorporated all the latest technologies in his winery design and interior mechanics to ensure a profitable production level.

While a number of Napa County wineries consisted of the three-story buildings to accommodate the gravity flow system, these buildings all post-date the Beringer complex and none made use of an extensive cave system for aging. These sites include Far Niente (1885), Eschol (1886), Inglenook (1887), Bourne & Wise Graystone (1889), Nichelini (1890), and

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Chateau Chevalier (1891). Although the *1878 Illustrations of Napa County California with Historical Sketch* indicates three other contemporary wine cellars constructed into significant hillsides, Edge Hill, Weinberger, and White Rock, of these only Edge Hill is extant. While Edge Hill was of comparable size to the Beringer establishment, it changed hands frequently, never included substantial caves, and does not retain the residential precinct that distinguishes the Beringer Winery Historic District from other Napa County winery sites.

Establishing Good Business Practices

During this period, Beringer wines were praised through receipt of awards and in agricultural journals. Important to the success of any business enterprise is not only producing large quantities of a product, but also successfully marketing and selling that product in diverse markets. Using Frederick's contacts in New York City, the Beringer family successfully distributed wines to the east coast. In June of 1879 Beringer Brothers shipped 14,000 gallons of wine from St. Helena, almost twice that of their largest Napa County competitor Charles Krug. The following spring Frederick, who was selling all the wine his brother could ship east, opened a store and wine cellar in New York City to handle Beringer as well as other fine wines. In 1880, 35,000 gallons of wine were shipped east and the Beringer's were helping to establish the Napa Valley as a major source of table wine for east coast households.

Through Frederick's contacts in New York, the Beringers were able to employ a string of salespersons there who sold Beringer wines directly to dealers, bypassing the growing power of the San Francisco middle merchant. This enabled the winery efficient and direct sales to east coast buyers, translating into greater profits for the Beringer business. These profits were almost always directly reinvested in improvements to the wine making facilities as evidenced in the 1886, 1889 and 1910 Sanborn Maps (discussed in Section 7).

Family-Operated Winery

Naming their estate Los Hermanos, or "The Brothers", Jacob and Frederick Beringer became two of the most well-known and respected businessmen in Napa's wine industry. Their family owned and operated business existed for almost one hundred years becoming one of the longest family run wineries in the Napa Valley. Aside from raising the initial investment for their vineyard, the first real challenge for the Beringer Brothers' wine business was the Phylloxera plague of the 1880s. Phylloxera is a nearly microscopic pest native to the Mississippi Valley that was carried to France in the late 1850s. It likely returned to California during the 1860s, but was slow to develop because of the extensive summer dry periods. By 1873, the pest was fully advanced in California vineyards. However, few individuals in the wine industry were concerned about the appearance of the pest. During the same period, the destruction of French vineyards by Phylloxera had been extensive, the pest's presence in France was viewed by American wine makers increasing the need for American production, as French production was down. Unfortunately, the French experience was not heeded by the locals in Napa, and the Phylloxera issue was not seriously addressed in a timely manner.⁹ In October 1889, the *St. Helena Star* reported that "the Phylloxera is marching at such a rate that if not checked will destroy some vineyards in two years. If nothing is done there will be practically no vineyards left in Napa Valley."¹⁰

By the early 1880s, the combined effects of Phylloxera, poor quality grapes, a depressed economy, and overproduction created disastrous economic conditions for the California wine industry. Throughout the Phylloxera plague, however, the

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winery sustained a strong client base and production level under the leadership of Jacob and Frederick Beringer and with east coast connections. In 1887, Beringer wines won their first awards at the Mechanic's Institute Exposition in San Francisco. Two years later, in 1889, the winery was awarded a coveted silver metal at the Paris Exposition which spurred foreign orders from Japan, Germany, and Great Britain.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the Beringer legacy had been firmly established in the Napa Valley, and, with the death of Frederick Beringer in 1901, Jacob became the winery's sole manager. During the first decade of the twentieth century, Jacob expanded the Beringer facilities constructing another storage facility and expanding the fermenting house. At the end of this decade, Jacob Beringer was nearing retirement, and he transferred responsibilities to a younger generation of Beringers. Jacob officially retired in 1911, allowing his children to assume operation of the winery. Jacob Beringer died in 1915, the same year his important Napa winery was awarded a Gold Medal at the 1915 San Francisco Panama-Pacific International Exposition for their excellent Zinfandel.

Shortly after the conclusion of World War I, Prohibition brought a significant challenge to the second generation of Beringer wine makers and to the California wine industry in general. Prohibition, the Eighteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, ratified by individual states in 1919, made the manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages illegal. Support for Prohibition grew out of the Progressive Movement, a reform-based political coalition, and the urge to transform society and elevate morality through legislative reform.¹¹

With the implementation of the Eighteenth Amendment, the wine-producers in the Napa Valley were forced to find innovative ways to process their grape harvest. Many wineries turned to the production of dried fruit as a means of sustaining their grape crops; however, the Beringer winery continued to produce wine under a Federal license to manufacture altar or sacramental wines. This allowed the facility to remain up and running during the darkest days of Napa wine industry, a luxury not afforded to many Napa enterprises. The repeal of Prohibition was proposed by Congress in February 1933 under the provisions of the Twenty-First Amendment, which was ratified by the states in December of that year. With the end of Prohibition, fifteen years after its implementation, came an almost immediate increase in production by the Beringer winery.

The end of Prohibition found Jacob Bangor's children at the helm of the winery. C.T. Beringer was the president and operated the San Francisco sales office, Otto Beringer, Sr. was in charge of the cellar, Martha Beringer worked in the bottling line, and Bertha Beringer served as the corporate secretary. Known during this period as one of the "Big Four" wineries along with Beaulieu founded 1900, Inglenook founded 1879, and Larkmead founded 1894, the Beringer winery was the oldest of the four. With increased production after Prohibition, the last major building campaign at the winery under Beringer family direction was completed. By the start of the 1935 crush, the old fermenting room was replaced with a new distillery building, a new office was constructed (the Exports Building), two small buildings were constructed near the office building (Sherry Shack Complex), new redwood storage tanks were installed, two new hydraulic presses were operating, and a new barrel room with cooperage for 200,000 gallons of wine was added.¹² Most importantly the north and south wings to the winery were completed by May 1934 as evidenced in historic photographs.

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In April 1934, the Beringer Brothers Winery became the first Napa Valley winery to open its doors to public tours and sales. By 1936, the winery was producing more than half a million gallons of wine, possessed the best distillery in the Valley, and was one of the first wineries to convert to the sweet wine demand that had pervaded the industry. All of these procedural changes and well as the physical alterations noted above allowed the Beringers to prosper until World War II.

After the War, while the winery became a popular tourist and film industry destination, as several films were shot on location during the 1950s, it lacked the prestige of hoped for when the 1935 building campaign was planned. In 1955 Otto Beringer, Jr. became the winery manager and his brother in law Roy Raymond, became his assistant. Both had worked in the winery during their youth and were good friends. The new Beringer team adjusted easily to the growing wine industry including a burgeoning tourist economy in Napa. Additionally, the third generation of Beringer family bought new lands to cultivate grapes but this over extended their business. Additionally, a series of family deaths including several of Jacob Beringer's elderly children burdened the estate with inheritance taxes. In 1970, Otto Beringer, Jr., the grandson of Jacob Beringer, was forced to sell Beringer Brothers, Inc. to subsidiaries of the Nestle Corporation ending a close to one hundred year history of Beringer family wine-making in the Napa Valley. While the winery has continued to operate under the Beringer name, the family has not been officially involved in wine-making since 1970.

The Beringer Winery Historic District represent advancements in wine growing and viticultural practices with its three-story stone winery building and accompanying aging tunnels. Additionally, the Beringer family success in early distribution techniques and levels of wine production set them apart from other practitioners such as Charles Krug. The Historic District clearly conveys the significance of the relationship of the residential and agricultural uses of the site and the importance of this family owned and operated early California Winery.

Period of Significance

The period of significance for the district begins in 1878, with the construction of the winery and associated caves and ends after the repeal of Prohibition with the ambitious 1935 building campaign to accommodate increased production after the end of alcohol restrictions.

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Endnotes

¹ *St. Helena Star* as quoted in Denzil and Jennie Verardo, *Napa Valley: From Golden Fields to Purple Harvest* (Northridge, CA: Windsor Publications, Inc., 1986): 48.

² Charles L. Sullivan, *Napa Wine: a History from Mission Days to Present* (San Francisco: The Wine Appreciation Guild, 1994).

³ Sullivan.

⁴ Sullivan: 35.

⁵ Sullivan: 60.

⁶ *Illustrations of Napa County*, 1878.

⁷ 'Beringer Brothers Established in State in 1876' *San Francisco Chronicle*, 6 December 1933: 10W.

⁸ Edwards Roberts 'California Wine-Making' *Harpers Weekly* 9 March, 1889: 199.

⁹ Sullivan: 60 - 67; Denzil and Jennie Verardo, *Napa Valley: From Golden Fields to Purple Harvest* (Northridge, CA: Windsor Publications, Inc., 1986): 50-55.

¹⁰ *St. Helena Star*, October 11, 1889. Sorensen: 58.

¹¹ Sullivan: 188-195; Verardo: 58-59; Sorensen: 92-104.

¹² Sorensen: 118.

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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: Beringer Wine Estates

