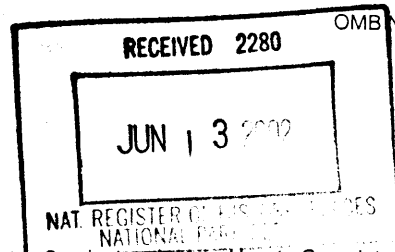


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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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 **Congdon, Joel R., Residence**

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number **32701 Alipaz Street** NA not for publication

city or town **San Juan Capistrano** NA vicinity

state **California** code **CA** county **Orange** code **059** zip code **92675**

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.)

K. M. ELLON 6/12/02
Signature of certifying official/Title 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): _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
[Signature] 7/22/02

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>	buildings
		sites
<u>1</u>		structures
		objects
<u>2</u>	<u>5</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

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Single Dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Work in Progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete
roof wood shingles
walls wood

other _____

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or 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.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture

Period of Significance

1876-1887

Significant Dates

NA

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Congdon, Joel Rathbone

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Architect/Builder

Congdon, Joel Rathbone

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Congdon, Joel R., Residence
Name of Property

Orange County, CA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 28.8 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	11	437340	3705640	3	11_	437620	3705320
2	11_	437600	3705620	4	11	437340	3705340

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title **Ilse M. Byrnes, Historian**

organization _____ date **4/30/01**

street & number **P.O. Box 1029** telephone **949-493-4222**

city or town **San Juan Capistrano** state **CA** zip code **92693**

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

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 **George Scarborough, City of San Juan Capistrano, Community Redevelopment Agency**

street & number **32400 Paseo Adelanto** telephone **949-493-1171**

city or town **San Juan Capistrano** state **CA** zip code **92675**

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Congdon, Joel R., Residence
Orange County, CA

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SUMMARY

Located on the 28.8 acres are the main house and water tower, which are counted as one contributing building and one contributing structure. There are also five noncontributing buildings: a modern fruit stand building and storage barn, and three older buildings moved onto the site in 1955, after the period of significance. These three buildings were used to house farm workers and equipment. The remaining land is used for farming.

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CONGDON, JOEL R., RESIDENCE
ORANGE COUNTY, CA

7.0 Description

Introduction

Constructed in 1876, the Joel R. Congdon residence is the first wooden structure built in San Juan Capistrano. The house, located on 28.8 acres of farmland, the remainder of the original 160 acres that Joel Congdon acquired in 1868, is a 2-story structure constructed in the late Victorian architecture typical of the period. (Photo #1) The total building square footage is 2134 sq. ft. The home sits on its original site in the heart of Capistrano Valley with open fields surrounding it. This tranquil setting remains to this day as the City of San Juan Capistrano has designated the Congdon Home and the 28.8 Acres that surround it an Agricultural Preserve. Within this property is the Congdon House, itself, with associated water tower and outbuildings, a working organic farm dominates the remainder of the property. Fresh fruits and vegetables of all varieties are grown here, using natural methods. A non-historical, but aesthetically sensitive, vegetable and fruit stand sits on the corner of the property near the Congdon House.

The Congdon House is a historically significant structure that has transcended the ages and provides visitors a glimpse of Orange County's agricultural past. The house and its surrounding property retains the feeling of what the Capistrano Valley was 125 years ago, a period in Orange County's history which was dominated by agriculture. It represents an era just before the railroads and freeways began to change the area into the urban center it is today.

Structure Description and Historic Integrity

The City of San Juan Capistrano has taken great care in the restoration of the Congdon House structure. Historic architects, 30th Street Architects of Newport Beach, were consulted prior to preparation of renovation plans. 30th Street performed site evaluations and aided the City in the specification of materials and colors to insure that the historic integrity of the structure was maintained. Detailed photos were taken to document the location and condition of the various fine points of the home's construction. The City used the Historic Building Code as the basis for the plans for the renovation. This set of laws allowed much more lenience in regards to building code issues than the Uniform Building Code. In this way the City was able to retain and restore the structure to its original late 1800's condition. Of course some allowance was made for modern day convenience and safety. For instance electric lighting was not available at the time that the Congdon House was first built. The City spent much time researching and locating original lighting fixtures from the late 1800's and early 1900's. Architectural salvage firms were able to supply the necessary elements so that, while these are not original to the house, they are original fixtures from the time period.

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CONGDON, JOEL R., RESIDENCE
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In the planning of the restoration it became apparent that, while the structure looked quite dilapidated from the outside, most of the house had actually survived intact. The City of San Juan Capistrano and its architects were pleasantly surprised to see that all of the original door hardware, cabinetry hardware, and fixtures were still in place, even after 25 years of neglect and being uninhabited. Original doors, built-in cabinets and moldings remained and the structural framing had remained solid and secure (due no doubt to the fact that it was dimensional redwood). The limited areas that did require rehabilitation due to structural defect were restored to original condition. Fully more than 80% remains of the original structure, those portions which required renovation were completed in exacting detail; with timbers specially milled to the specification of the original.

Restoration of the Congdon House was a time consuming and tedious process, but one that had to be undertaken to insure that the authenticity of the structure was maintained. It is the City's intention that as much of the original structure would be saved as could safely be done. The following reference prepared by the City Engineer gives a somewhat detailed description of the structure and the City's efforts to bring it back to form:

The Congdon House faces east onto Alipaz Street and is set back approx. 200 ft. from the street. The south side faces the old Water Tower and the Fruit stand. On the west side is a barn (moved to the ranch in 1955) that is approx 20 ft. from the back entrance, while the north side overlooks the farmland.

The ground floor of the house is modified rectangular in shape. The second floor is square. (See Exhibit "E"). The building has a raised floor with a two-foot crawl space. The structure sits on posts on eight-foot centers. Existing foundations under these posts include portions of concrete rubble that is said to have come from the old mission church. Frequent floods over the years had deteriorated the foundations and had caused the structure to come out of plumb. The north and south exterior walls had become 7" out of plumb over the 26-foot height of the structure. Floor joists were curved and the interior oak flooring had become warped. This became the most important and critical part of the project, to reestablish the structural integrity of the building. (Photo #3)

The racking of the building required that the north side of the structure be slowly raised using eight 10 ton hydraulic jacks. This was accomplished by raising the structure approximately 1/2" every day over a week and a half period. The structural members and the flooring slowly achieved their original shapes. New concrete pad foundations were then poured to provide a stable new base for the building. After proper curing the home was lowered and the posts attached to the new footings.

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The outside walls are redwood V-Grooved Ship Lap Siding (Tongue and Groove). Water blasting was performed to remove the many layers of paint that had been applied over the years. Paint chips were retained to document the colors that the structure had been painted. These samples aided the historic architect in the choice for the final exterior paint and trim colors. Paint removal revealed the location of an original doorframe above the front porch. Rita Nieblas, who had been born in the Congdon House in 1929, later verified this door location. She recalled watching San Juan Creek overflow its banks from there, flooding the fields and the front yard during extreme rain years.

After paint removal the siding was inspected for signs of termite damage and dry rot. All of the original siding on the north and east sides of the structure has been retained. A small portion of the siding on the south/west side required replacement. Samples of the removed siding were taken to the sawmill so that the milling knives could be set up to replicate the original siding exactly. The siding, where replaced, was redwood using identical material and milled to replicate the original. These special milling orders were costly, but it does exhibit the lengths that the City went to to insure that a proper restoration be performed.

The roof shape is cross gabled. The historic architect determined that the original roof material to have been cedar shake shingles. The original shingles had been removed but evidence of them was available on the dimensional 1" x 6" wood sheathing that was retained. The removal of the 5 heavy asphalt composition roofs that had been applied in the later years did much to relieve undo stress on the roof framing. The roof was weatherproofed and then resingled using cedar shake shingles. The brick chimneystack on the roof was structurally unsound as the mortar was crumbling and failing away. During the renovation the stack was removed, the brick retained, and the chimney rebuilt with steel reinforcing using the original brick. (Photo #2 & #38)

On the east side is the main entrance to the house. A covered porch/open veranda extends across the entire front. This porch area was in extreme disrepair. Photo documentation of this veranda was crucial to renovation of this part of the structure. Much of the original building materials were salvaged. Those improvements, which could not be retained, were removed and conducted to the lumber mill to use as templates to set up milling knives. Porch columns, balusters, dentil molding and railings were remanufactured in this manner. (Photo #4)

As stated earlier, there originally was a balcony on top of the porch. The balcony was accessed through a door on the second floor hallway. (Photo #33) The balcony fell into disrepair and between 1950-1955 the owners closed off the balcony by changing the door into a window. (Photo #4) During the present restoration the balcony was rebuilt and the former door re-

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established. This new door is a copy of the original doors on the ground floor. The new balcony railing is traditional and matches that which was restored on the porch below. (Photo #5)

Four wide steps lead up to the porch and to the front entrance of the house. The steps are new and closely match the original ones in design and measurement. The porch railing is new and copied from original pieces that were found in the house. (Photo #4) The front door is a double door with mahogany wood panels and leaded glass windows above. This is the original door and has been refinished and the original door hardware locks and hinges intact and restored. (Photo #6 & #45) The doors throughout the house are original and refinished. The original hardware, hinges and doorknobs have been put into working order and re-installed. (Photo #15)

Two large rectangular windows are on the left and right side of the front door. One belongs to the living room, the other to the parlor. These windows were in excellent condition, requiring only stripping and repainting. The south side of the house is dominated by a large bay window. To the left of the bay window is the original entryway to the kitchen area. The bay window and some of the framing surrounding it had significant dry rot that required removal and reconstruction. The original side stairway was in poor condition and was copied and replaced. Above the bay window, on the upstairs floor are two square casement windows that flank a large rectangular window that has wood mullioned geometric shaped panes in a beehive type pattern. These windows were removed, completely restored, refinished and reinstalled. (Photo #7)

On the west side, where the utility room extends outwards, was a small-attached structure. It was removed during the present restoration, since it was none-contributing, in very poor condition and a much later addition. A new stairway was installed, a copy of the original stairway on the south side entry to the kitchen.

The north side of the house shows three rectangular shaped windows on the ground floor. The two larger ones belong to the parlor, the third one is smaller and serves the bathroom. The three windows on the second floor are exactly in line with the windows on the south side, two small square casement windows flanking the larger, rectangular window with the wood mullioned geometric shaped panes. These windows are the originals, removed, restored and reinstalled. (Photos #8 & #9 & #39) The two upstairs windows, (in the center) on the north and south side of the house have small, ornamental hoods. They are original, unaltered and restored. (Photo #40)

On the east side, the front door opens directly into a large room with a freestanding fireplace in the center. The front part of this room was the original living room. The large bay window is

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positioned on the south wall. (Photo #1, #41 & #42) The freestanding fireplace is original and unaltered. A wooden mantel winds around the entire fireplace, it too is original. (Photo #43) During restoration, asphalt tile that covered the original oak floor of the former living room was removed. During the process a rectangular cement slab fireplace hearth was uncovered. This slab is freely inscribed with a circle in the center that has a cross in the middle. Bird heads and lines form the border. (Photo #11) To find out more about the significance of this slab, a picture was sent to the Art History Dept. at UCI. It is their opinion, that it is a Celtic motif, (Exhibit H) which is very likely, since Joel Congdon's roots go back to Irish/Scottish Immigrants. Family Members believe that the artist is Ella Congdon Wilkinson (1870-1964), daughter of Joel Congdon. She became an artist and two of her paintings hang in the mission of San Juan Capistrano. (Photo #26)

The area behind the fireplace was the dining room. The door on the south sidewall provides access to the kitchen and the dining room. A large built-in china cabinet is on the wall next to the kitchen door. This cabinet has two lead lined glass doors and four drawers underneath. It is original and unaltered. (Photos #12 & #13)

The kitchen is located off the family room or former dining room. A small pantry is to the right of the kitchen area. In the kitchen is the original sink; the cupboards under the sink are new, copies of the old ones. On the west wall of the kitchen is a large pantry. In this room is a narrow entrance to the root cellar. At the present time, this access to the root cellar is blocked off. Due to the high cost of renovation, the City of San Juan Capistrano decided to leave it un-restored. If at a later date funding becomes available, the City plans to restore the root cellar. Adjacent to the kitchen is the hallway that connects with the only bathroom in the house. The bathroom has the original claw-footed bathtub; the sink and toilet had been replaced at some point in the past. The City had an original water closet and sink from the early 1900's installed in their place.

The parlor, a long rectangular room is on the right side, off the former living room on the north/east side. (Photo #14) The walls of the parlor were cleaned and wallpaper in the style of the early 1900's was installed. The downstairs area originally had oak floors. They were in poor condition due to water damage and could not be saved or restored. New oak flooring, matching the original was installed throughout the entire downstairs.

A narrow stairway is located between the family room and the parlor that leads to the three upstairs bedrooms. The stairway is original, unaltered, restored and refinished. (Photo #16 & #44) The three bedrooms open up to the hallway. At the end of the hallway (facing east) is the new door that opens out to the restored balcony, located on top of the downstairs open veranda. This door is an exact replica of the door downstairs, lower wood panel with rectangular, beveled glass above.

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In the bedroom located on the south/east corner of the house is the fireplace chimney that comes from downstairs and goes to the roof. It is free standing and is adjacent to the south wall. It is slightly curved. The bricks of the chimney are unfinished and whitewashed. This room has two windows, one is a square casement window with 12 small panes, and the other is a larger one with wood lined, geometric shaped panes. (Photos #17 & #18)

The second bedroom is next door on the south side. It has one square casement window with 12 small panes. It is in line with the two windows described above. The third bedroom, on the north side is large and has the two square casement windows with 12 small panes each. The larger rectangular window with the wood mullioned geometric design is in the center. (Photo #19)

The ceiling in all three bedrooms is coffered. The oak floors on the second floor are original, sanded and refinished. The doors are all original, cleaned and refinished; the original hardware was used. The one exception being the reestablished door that opens up to the balcony. The walls are original wood single wall construction.

Site and Surrounding Improvements

Outside, on the east side of the Congdon House is a large Canary Palm and a single Washingtonian Palm. These trees are very old and are Landmark Trees. On the south side of the Congdon House is the Water Tower. It is a large structure, two stories high with a water tank on top. In the tower is a large room on the Ground floor. A narrow staircase on the north side of the structure goes to a room on the second floor. These two rooms were used to lodge the farm workers.

The water tower is original and unaltered. It is historically significant, since it was constructed by Joel R. Congdon, when he built the house in 1876. It is in need of restoration. The City intends to restore the tower when funding becomes available. (Photos #21, 22, 23, 24)

On the west side, behind the Congdon House is a long rectangular barn. According to Mr. Kinoshita, his father Sanji Kinoshita built the small kitchen/mess hall and the barn/bungalow in 1945, while the family lived in Baldwin Hills. The two buildings look like one structure. An additional smaller moveable structure (no permanent foundation) exists to the south of the water tower. These structures were built in such a way that they could be separated and were small enough to be moved to Anaheim in 1951, where the Kinoshitas took up farming. The three buildings were moved a third time in 1955 to San Juan Capistrano, when the Kinoshita's bought the 60 acres. Again it was to house the farm workers and equipment on the Kinoshita

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Farm. The use of these buildings stopped 25 years ago due to the poor condition of the buildings. The City of San Juan Capistrano may consider restoration of the barn and outbuildings at a later date. (Photo #28,29)

Also on the property are a fruit stand and storage barn for the crops. They were installed by the present farm operator, who has a long-term lease with the City of San Juan Capistrano. They are non-contributing and only serve the present farm operation who sells their produce to the public. Exhibit H (map of the agricultural irrigation system) with existing buildings on property.

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CONGDON, JOEL R., RESIDENCE
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8.0 Significance

Summary

For 125 years, the Congdon House has played an important role in the History and Development of Farming in San Juan Capistrano. Since its construction in 1876, The Joel Congdon House was continuously the home for families living on the farm until 1975. For 25 years, 1975 to 2000, the house was unoccupied and fell into disrepair. Since Joel R. Congdon was the founder of the English Walnut Industry in Orange County and the first American-born citizen to settle in San Juan Capistrano, it seemed appropriate that his house be saved, restored and the farm land leased for agricultural purposes.

- The Joel R. Congdon Residence is on the City of San Juan Capistrano's Inventory of historical and Cultural Landmarks
- It is the first and oldest Farm House in San Juan Capistrano and is located on the original farmland that Joel Congdon bought in 1868.
- Joel R. Congdon played a significant role in the introduction of English walnuts as a commercial crop to California.
- The farm operation, due to its agricultural zoning will continue and is likely the longest continuously working farm in Orange County.
- Restoration of the Congdon House has not altered the buildings' historic significance or integrity, either on the exterior or the interior.
- The City's goal is to preserve the agricultural heritage of San Juan Capistrano.
- The 28.8 Acres on which the Congdon House is located will remain actively cultivated farmland. The City of San Juan Capistrano, owner of the Congdon House and the farmland, has made a commitment to its citizens to permanently preserve it.

Early History

Joel Rathbone Congdon was born in Norwich, Connecticut, March 10, 1838; His family was of Scotch/Irish decent and among the first settlers in Connecticut. Joel received his education in

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the public school of Norwich. When he was sixteen, he headed west, going from New York to St. Louis by railroad and from there by boat to Independence, MO.

On March 10, 1854 Joel and his brother George went by mule traveling the Salt Lake Route, through South Pass and arrived at Truckee Lake, September 6, 1854. For six years after arriving in California, he worked near Truckee Lake on a cattle ranch that belonged to his older brother. In 1859 he went to work on a ranch near Sacramento and two years later came to Los Angeles. He worked as a letter carrier in San Bernardino and later got a job in the mining industry.

In 1864, he married Mary A. Rouse and for four years farmed in the San Bernardino area. In 1868, Joel Congdon, his wife Mary and his brother-in-law J.P. Fuller came to San Juan Capistrano. Both purchased land in the valley between San Juan Capistrano and the Ocean. Joel owned 160 acres in the area of what is now Alipaz Road between Del Obispo and El Camino Real. There is a story that Congdon bought the land from the Juaneno Indians and paid for it twice. The land had originally been given to the Juaneno Indians as gifts from the Mission. The United States Government did not recognize gifts from the Mission, so Congdon paid again for the land, receiving his patent in 1876.

Old newspaper accounts state that Joel Congdon and his family at first lived in an old adobe structure on the farm. In 1876 Joel Congdon decided to build larger home to accommodate his growing family and to serve as ranch headquarters. Joel Congdon and his wife Mary had eight children. (Photograph #27) In a newspaper article published in 1958, (Coastline Dispatch, March 20, 1958) Joel Congdon's oldest son, Walter gave the following account on the construction of the Joel Congdon House: (Exhibit L)

"With the help of Joel Congdon's brother-in-law J.P. Fuller, Joel took a wagon with a four-horse hitch to transport the redwood lumber and square iron nails he needed for construction of his new house. It was either in San Bernardino or more likely in Seal Beach at the Anaheim Landing, where he picked up his supplies. Redwood Lumber for Southern California usually came by ship from San Francisco."

The foundation for the house came from the old Mission in San Juan Capistrano. After the earthquake of 1812, which leveled the Mission Church and Bell Tower, nobody thought of reconstruction of the mission. The rubble of sandstone was for anybody to take away and use. Joel Congdon utilized the sandstone slabs for the foundation of his house.

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CONGDON, JOEL R., RESIDENCE
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Historic Significance – Walnut Farming

While the house was under construction Joel decided to plant 35 acres of English walnuts. There is evidence that this was the first commercial grove of this nut fruit in Orange County, if not in the State of California. The trees thrived in the mild climate and produced well. After the harvest, the walnuts were taken to the Anaheim Landing in Seal Beach and shipped by freighter to San Francisco. (See Exhibits: I, J, K, L) The walnuts proved to be a very successful venture for the Congdon's. (Photos #35, 36, 37)

An 1890 history of Southern California states that Congdon planted the first walnut orchard in the southern part of the county. A 1911 History of Orange County states: "J.R. Congdon of Santa Ana claims to have planted the first English walnuts, in what is now Orange County (the area was part of Los Angeles County until 1889), at Capistrano in 1870. Seven or eight years later he hauled his first crop of 6,000 pounds of nuts nearly 60 miles to Los Angeles and sold them to a German for seven cents a pound delivered."

The Orange County History Series, 1932, Published by the Orange County Historical Society states in it's History of the Walnut Industry in Orange County: "Mr. J.R. Congdon is supposed to have been the first to set out an orchard in what is now Orange County. In 1870 he planted eighteen acres of irrigated land at Capistrano with walnut trees he bought from Mr. Thomas Gooch at Rivera."

Jim Sleeper's Orange County Almanac further states: "Said to be the pioneer walnut grower was Joel R. Congdon, who set out 18 acres of English Walnuts in 1870."

The History of Diamond Walnut Growers references the inclusion of the Capistrano Walnut Growers Association as one of the eight original charter members of the Southern California Walnut Growers Association that was formed in 1896. Joel Congdon's son-in-law R.B. Cook, who worked as a foreman on the Congdon farm was to, in 1920, become the eighth Director of the California Walnut Growers Association.

In its heyday the Capistrano growers were noted for their high-grade walnuts. In 1902 the San Juan Capistrano orchards produced 230 tons of the highest quality walnuts. Walnuts continued to be one of the valleys primary crops until the late 1930's when many were torn out and replaced by orange groves. Evidence of Capistrano's legacy in the California's Walnut industry are mostly gone today, with the exception of the Congdon House, and the old Walnut Grove Restaurant in downtown San Juan Capistrano.

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CONGDON, JOEL R., RESIDENCE
ORANGE COUNTY, CA

Recent History

In 1887, California was at the height of a big "boom" brought on by the development of the railroad. Whole families were moved by rail from the East to California at \$6.00 per person. The Santa Fe Railroad owned all the land in Capistrano Beach and Dana Point and started to market the land. They created small building lots and promoted the land to develop customers for the new railroad system. At the height of this real estate boom in 1887, Joel Congdon decided to sell his farm and house for \$55,000.00 cash. The buyer was a banker from Los Angeles, named Major Bonebreak."

After the sale of the farm, the Congdon's moved to Santa Ana. There Joel Congdon became active in local politics and was no longer involved with farming. His oldest son Walter, who gave the account regarding the construction of the house, first owned a garage in Santa Ana. Walter later moved back to San Juan Capistrano where he established the well-known "Congdon Garage" on Camino Capistrano.

During the ensuing years the Congdon Ranch had several owners. It is unknown when and to whom Major Bonebreak sold the Congdon House and the farm. Records show, that from 1928 until 1946 the owner was Mr. Maag, a wealthy rancher who owned several ranches in Orange County. His foreman, who was in charge of the Congdon Farm was Eugene Arce. The Arce family lived in the Congdon House. In 1928 Arce's daughter Rita Arce Nieblas was born in the Congdon House. She recalls the walnut grove on the property.

George Cobren bought the farm in 1946 and sold it to Sanji Kinoshita in 1955. The Kinoshita Family lived in the Congdon House until 1975. They farmed the property until 1990, when they sold the farm to the City of San Juan Capistrano. In 1990, the City of San Juan Capistrano acquired the property and farming still continues on the 28.8 acres as it did in 1868. The property is zoned "permanent agricultural".

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CONGDON, JOEL R., RESIDENCE
ORANGE COUNTY, CA

9.0 Bibliography

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Sleeper, Jim; "Orange County Almanac" 1971

Sleeper, Jim; "Turn the Rascals Out", California Classics, Trabuco Canyon, CA., 1973

Hallan, Pam; "Dos Cientos Anos" Lehman Publishing Co., 1975

Tyron, Mary Ellen; "A Guide to Historic San Juan Capistrano", Paragon Agency, 1999

The Orange County Historical Society; "Orange County History Series" Vol. No. 2, Press of
Santa Ana High School and Junior College, 1932

"Eighty Years of Excellence", A History of Diamond Walnut Growers

9.1 Oral Interviews

Interviews by Ilse M. Byrnes at the Joel R. Congdon Residence

Nieblas Acres, Rita; Spring 2001 (Was born in the Congdon Residence)

Kinoshita, Shig; Spring 2001 (His family owned the farmland and Congdon Residence 1955 -
1990)

Cook, Mary Elliot; Spring 2001 (Great grand daughter of Joel and Mary Congdon)

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Congdon, Joel R. Residence
Orange, Ca.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the Joel R. Congdon Residence, outbuildings, water tower, fruitstand and fields.

The legal boundary line for the Joel R. Congdon Residence is described in the Grant Deed, Exhibit A
(Exhibit F)

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of Joel R. Congdon Residence including outbuildings, water tower and fruitstand, located on 28.8 acres of farm land is marked by the following UTM reference points:

A	11	437600	3705200
B	11	437330	3705200
C	11	437330	3705540
D	11	437600	3705540

Exhibits C,D and H show the location of the buildings located on the 28.8 acres of farmland.

The 28.8 acres are bound

On the Northside by Via Positiva.

On the Westside by the Community Center/Sports Park

On the Eastside by Alipaz Street

On the Southside by Camino Del Avion

Exhibit B

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PHOTOGRAPHS

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Congdon, Joel R. Residence
Orange, Ca.

Photographs:

1. The Joel R. Congdon Residence
32701 Alipaz Street
San Juan Capistrano, CA
2. County of Orange, California
3. Photographer: Ilse M. Byrnes
P.O.Box 1029
San Juan Capistrano, CA 92693
4. Photographs taken between January and June, 2001
5. Negatives located: c/o Ilse M. Byrnes
P.O. 1029, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92693
6. Description of Photographs # 1-45
 1. Frontview of Congdon House, facing East
 2. Southside of Congdon House, chimney stack before restoration
 3. Congdon House being shored up, Eastside
 4. Front Entrance and Porch before restoration, Eastside
 5. Restoration in progress of Porch and Balcony, Eastside
 6. View of Front Door before restoration, Eastside
 7. Southside, Baywindow being restored
 8. North/East corner of Congdon House
 9. Eastside, square casement windows and woodlined geometric shaped panes.
 10. Freestanding fireplace with view of Bay Window facing South
 11. Closeup of Cement Slab in front of Fireplace in Livingroom

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PHOTOGRAPHS

Congdon, Joel R., Residence
Orange, CA

12. View of entrance to kitchen with built-in China Cabinet. Looking West
13. Close-up of China Cabinet with lead lined glass doors
14. Parlor with window looking East
15. Original hinges after restoration
16. Stairway to second floor, located on Eastside
17. Upstairs bedroom, facing South. Room with fireplace chimney
18. Close-up of freestanding fireplace chimney, south side wall of bedroom.
19. Close-up of windows in upstairs bedroom on Northside.
20. -
21. Watertower, Northside, stairs leading to upstairs quarters
22. Watertower, Eastside
23. Watertower, Westside
24. Watertower, Southside. Windows in upstairs quarters
25. Family Picture of the Joel R. Congdon's
26. Oilpainting: Lucana Forster's Confirmation, done by Ella Congdon Wilkinson
27. South/East View after restoration June, 2001
28. Eastside, Front View of House after restoration. Outbuildings and Water Tower in back
29. Water Tower, outbuildings
30. Southside, Baywindow and stairs to kitchen after restoration

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PHOTOGRAPHS

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Congdon, Joel R., Residence
Orange, CA

31. Detail of original Lamp in Livingroom after restoration
32. Detail of original door knob in Livingroom after restoration
33. China Cabinet with lead lined glass doors after restoration see. photo # 13
34. Aerial view of San Juan Capistrano with Walnut Groves
35. Aerial view of old SJC Airport and Congdon's Walnut Grove upper right
36. Congdon Property view from Del Obispo St.
37. Harvesting Walnuts

Photographs taken September 2, 2001

38. View of roof with new wood shingles
39. Northside of house
40. Ornamental hoods over upstairs window
41. Restored Bay Window, view from inside the livingroom
42. Outside view of restored Bay Window on , south side of house
43. Freestanding fireplace in Livingrom, after restoration
44. Stairway to upstairs bedrooms after restoration
45. Front door after restoration

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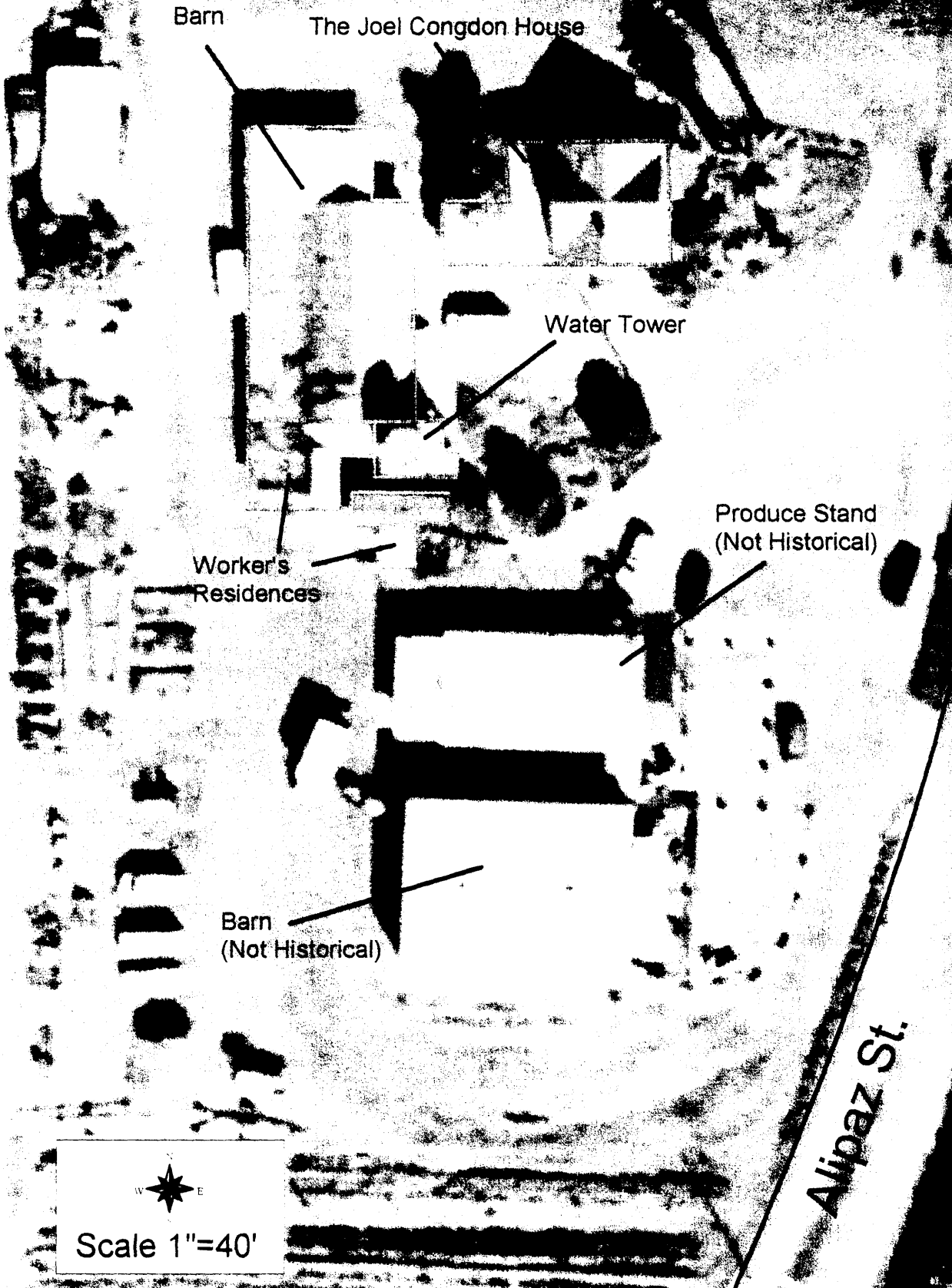
CONGDON, JOEL R., RESIDENCE
ORANGE COUNTY, CA

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Appendix

Digital Photography of Restored Congdon House

Congdon House and Ancillary Historical Structures in The City of San Juan Capistrano



Barn

The Joel Congdon House

Water Tower

Produce Stand
(Not Historical)

Worker's
Residences

Barn
(Not Historical)

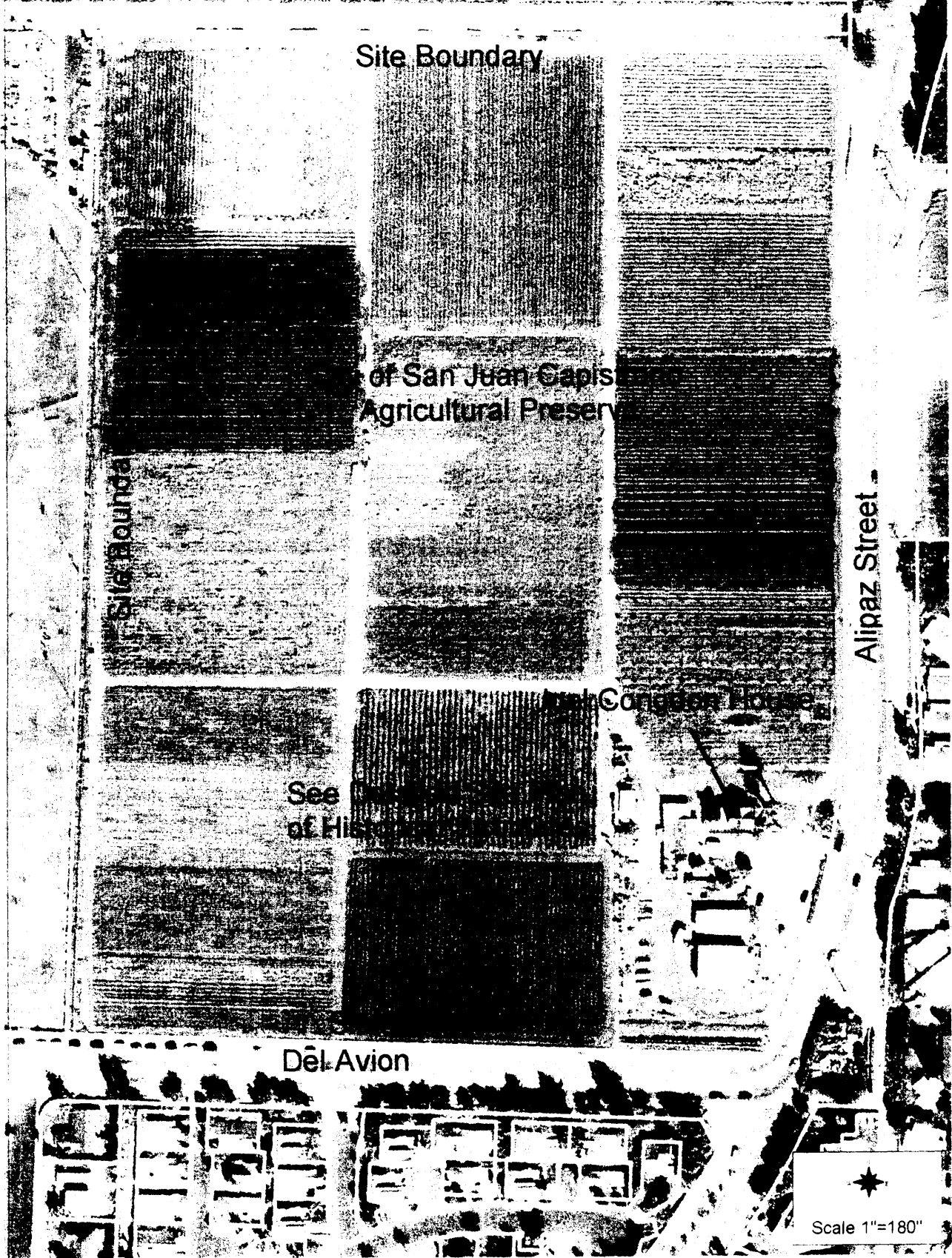
Alipaz St.



Scale 1"=40'

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City of San Juan Capistrano Congdon House and Kinoshita Farm



Site Boundary

City of San Juan Capistrano
Agricultural Preserve

Site Boundary

Alipaz Street

Congdon House

See [illegible]
of Historic [illegible]

Del Avion

★
Scale 1"=180"