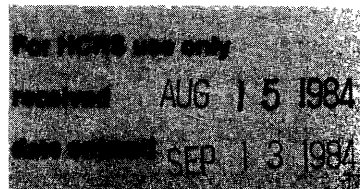


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections



1. Name

historic Sugg House

and/or common Sugg House Antiques

2. Location

street & number 37 Theall Street N/A not for publication

city, town Sonora N/A vicinity of congressional district 18th

state California code 06 county Tuolumne code 109

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> n/a	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Robert Brennan

street & number % Sugg House Antiques, 37 Theall Street

city, town Sonora N/A vicinity of state California 95370

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Tuolumne County Recorder's Office

street & number 2 S. Green St.

city, town Sonora state California 95370

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Sonora Landmarks Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1981 federal state county local

depository for survey records City of Sonora City Hall, 94 N. Washington St.

city, town Sonora state California 95370

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>N/A</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Sugg House is a composite of wood frame, adobe, and brick construction. The two-story structure in simplified classical styling incorporates an 1857 single story adobe with red brick exterior. This portion, still visible on the ground floor, was enlarged with several early wood frame additions as the family grew. It attained its present appearance in the 1880s with the addition of the wood frame second story and impressive two story gallery across the front. Subsequent alterations are minimal. The house is surrounded by gardens and a picket fence on its original lot adjacent to the downtown area of Sonora.

The Sugg House was built in 1857 as a three-room adobe structure with a wooden lean-to along the south elevation. The adobe bricks measure 25-1/2 inches in length by 5 inches high and form the interior walls of the home. The exterior is covered with red bricks measuring 8-1/2 inches long and 2-1/2 inches high. The bricks were painted red early in the history of the building, thus providing a protective shield from the elements. The north elevation is the front elevation and centered on this side is the original adobe building's front door. Double hung windows (six over six) are found on each side of the door. A single soldier course of bricks forms a decorative detail over each window and the door. A single double hung window and another door are found on the west elevation of the original adobe portion of this building. They, too, have the soldier course detail above them. The east elevation of the original adobe portion has a similar door but no window. The thickness of the front and west elevation exterior walls is 19 inches (adobe and brick together) and the thickness of the east elevation original wall (adobe and brick together) is 15 inches. The original adobe portion had a porch and overhanging roof on the west, north, and east elevations. Adobe for the walls was mixed on the site by building owner William Sugg and his friends. It is not known where the red bricks came from but they could have been manufactured in Tuolumne County as commercial brick making had been established in 1857. The original adobe structure is one story in height.

The floor plan of the original adobe building allowed access to each room via a door centered on the walls separating the rooms from each other. The front door gave access to the front room; the middle room was a bedroom and all eleven of the children of William and Mary Sugg were born in that room. The rear room was the living-dining room and it had access directly to a 14' x 16' frame kitchen located in the wooden lean-to referred to above.

The roof of the original adobe portion was flat but as it approached the rear (south elevation) it sloped downward and this is visible in the living-dining room. The roof was covered with sheets of tin, probably cut from five-gallon cans.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		Ethnic History: Black
Specific dates	1857-1880's	Builder/Architect	William Sugg, builder	American

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Sugg House is significant for its 1880s architectural character which has survived intact to the present. The building utilizes a classical vocabulary with its boxed cornice, broad simple frieze, cornice returns, and simple architrave moldings; with its notable two-story gallery, it is a good representative of its type and period in the local community. It is also important for its method of construction, which incorporates one of the region's few surviving Gold Rush era adobes. The adobe section, sheathed in red brick, still constitutes a major portion of the ground floor. Subsequent wood frame additions reflected the growth of the family and created the present appearance of the building as it had evolved by the mid 1880s. The property is also significant for its role in Black history having been built by William Sugg, a manumitted slave¹ and his wife, Mary Elizabeth Sugg, during the Gold Rush; it was subsequently expanded and occupied by members of the same family for over 120 years.

Sugg House is one of Tuolumne County's most historic homes and it is certainly unique in California's Gold Rush country. The original portion of this home still stands, 126 years after it was built of adobe mud formed into bricks on the property in 1857. As such, the original portion of this structure is one of the very few remaining adobe buildings left in Tuolumne County. Adobe was a common building material in the Mother Lode area but exposure to the elements, demolitions, and the availability of native stone and fired brick have all contributed to its scarceness. The fact that a layer of red bricks was applied to the exterior and that they were painted red help account for its survival. The 1880s expansion around and on top of the adobe structure also helped preserve it. The Sugg House's architecture is very typical of heritage homes in the Mother Lode country: rambling porches, a balcony, gable roof, and a paint job of red with white for window trim, balcony, and porch posts. That the home was a part of Sonora's and Tuolumne County's economic life is another test of its significance. When times were good and local hotels were full, guests were referred to Sugg House for accommodations that were clean and comfortable. One of the house rules stipulated "No Lewd Women".

^{1/} His manumission papers were filed with the Tuolumne County Recorder's Office June 21, 1854. (Source: Afro-American Ethnic Minority Cultural Resources Survey, Vol. III, "Sugg/McDonald House," State Office of Historic Preservation.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

"The Pioneer Sugg Family", by Vernon Sugg McDonald, The Quarterly of the Tuolumne County Historical Society, Vol. 4 No. 1, July-Sept., 1964, pp. 97-99.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .1185 acre

Quadrangle name Sonora, California

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	0	7	3	0	0	7	0	4	2	0	7	0	5	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification

Assessor's parcel #2-162-03.
 Parcel bordered by S. Stewart St., Theall St., S. Shepherd St. and south property line. Sugg House and grounds occupy the entire property. Dimensions are shown on attached site plan.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
state		code	county		code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sharon Marovich, Director

organization Tuolumne County Historical Society

(OHP Staff Revision, 4/84)

date December 15, 1983

street & number P.O. Box 695

telephone (209) 532-1733

city or town Sonora

state California 95370

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Melvin D. Wilson

title Deputy State Historic Pres. Officer

date 7/10/84

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

for Shelore Byers
 Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the
 National Register

date 9-13-84

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
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Representation in Existing Surveys (continued)

Afro American Ethnic Minority Cultural Resources Survey (Vol. III)

October 1979 x state

Records at State Office of Historic Preservation
P. O. Box 2390
Sacramento, CA 95811

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National Park Service**

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The original adobe building was modified within a year after the Sugg family moved in. A bedroom (frame) was added to the east elevation. As the family continued to increase in size, it became necessary to make further modifications. Sometime in the decade of the 1880s, two frame bedrooms were added to the east side of the home. A second floor consisting of four bedrooms with attic overhead were added at the same time and the home took on the exterior appearance it has today. The 1880s project also included adding a frame kitchen to the rear of the west elevation. The original adobe structure remains intact and forms half the lower floor of today's Sugg House. The former east elevation exterior door now opens into a hallway and faces a staircase with pine balustrade leading to the second story. The adobe's west porch is the same as the original; however, a balcony, added in the 1880s expansion, dominates the front elevation. It has access from a second floor hallway door.

The exterior of the 1880s expansion is made of drop siding. It features classical returns at the roofline and a gable roof. The windows are all double hung and consist of six panes of glass in each unit of the double hung window. There is a decorative panel under each window sill. The roof is metal with a repeating scallop pattern.

The attic was modified into living quarters for the family shortly after the expansion and the four bedrooms on the second floor were furnished for renting. The room number (1 through 4) remain attached to the doors. All interior walls, including the adobe portion, are covered with wallpaper, underneath which is cloth similar to canvas. The ceilings are all papered and a border pattern of paper was applied. Ceilings in the adobe portion are 9-1/2 feet from the pine floor and 12 feet from the pine floor in the 1880s expansion.

When the nearby City and Victoria Hotels were full, guests were regularly referred to the Sugg House. This source of additional income for the family continued until 1921 when hot and cold running water was required of facilities rented to the public. The cost of providing this convenience plus a requirement for inside bathrooms was too costly for the Sugg family to implement. In fact, it wasn't until the 1940s that the Sugg House had an indoor toilet. An outhouse near the east elevation sufficed.

The home is surrounded by garden areas on the east and west elevations, and they are enclosed by a picket fence. There are no outbuildings left, although at one time there was the aforementioned privy and a woodshed on the east side of the property.

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

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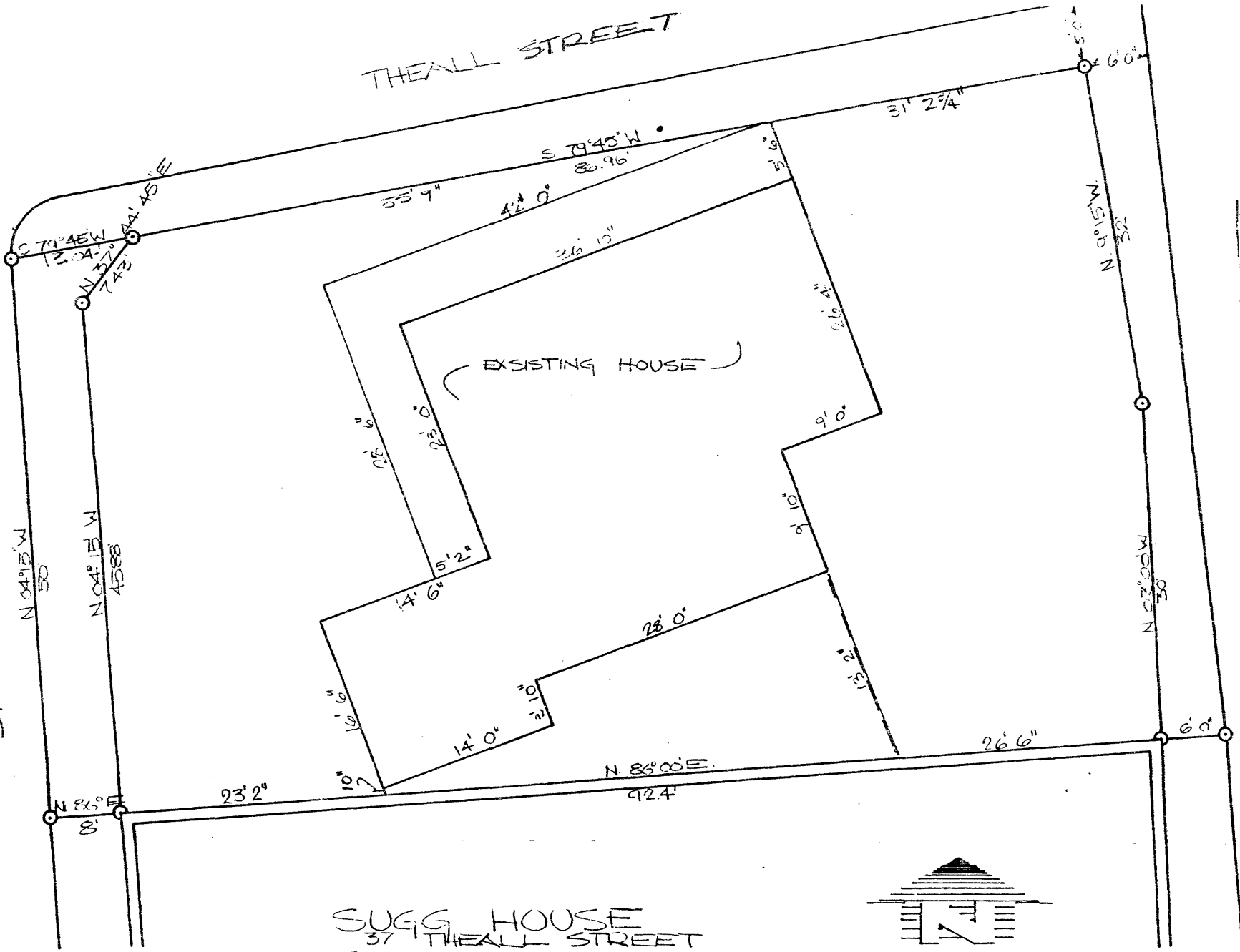
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Perhaps the Sugg House's most significant element is its association with a Black family. Blacks represent an ethnic group not unknown in the Gold Rush but one that numbered only in the hundreds in Tuolumne County during that time. William Sugg, builder of the home, was born into slavery in Raleigh, North Carolina, on February 15, 1828. Prior to 1852, he arrived in California by wagon train, working as a muleteer and bullwhacker on the arduous journey. Upon reaching California, the wagon train's members settled around Merced and William Sugg, who obtained his freedom after his arrival in California, engaged in the harness business. He met his wife, Mary, at a social function in Merced and they moved to Sonora where they were married on January 20, 1855. The new Mrs. Sugg was born a slave on February 4, 1839, in Johnson County, Missouri. She came across the plains to California in 1851, surviving hostile Indians and a cholera outbreak. Members of her wagon party settled at what would become Snelling (Merced County). Although Sugg returned to Merced in 1877, a year after the birth of their last child, Mary Sugg and the children stayed in Sonora. Mrs. Sugg worked hard to keep the family together and to see that all eleven children received at least an elementary school education. High school classes did not start in Tuolumne County until the late 1890s. Only one of the Sugg children, Rosa, married. Although Rosa left Sonora to continue serving as a domestic to a local family which moved to the San Francisco Bay Area, she sent her two sons from her marriage to a Mr. McDonald, Earl and Vernon Sugg McDonald, to Sonora to live with their grandmother, Mary Sugg, at the Sugg House. Mary Sugg died in 1915. Vernon Sugg McDonald died at Sugg House in May 1982. Thus, for 125 years, the home was occupied by the same Black family responsible for its construction. The family owned it until 1979 when Vernon Sugg McDonald sold to the current owner.

STEWART STREET

THEALL STREET

SHEPHERD STREET



SUGG HOUSE
 37 THEALL STREET
 SONOMA CALIFORNIA
 ± .1185 ACRES

