



534

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a).

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name Chapel of the Transfiguration

Other names/site number Saint Nicholas Episcopal Church Outdoor Chapel

### 2. Location

street & number 855 West Lake Blvd.  not for publication

city of town Tahoe City  vicinity

State California code CA county Placer code 061 zip code 96145-0855

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national  statewide  local

W. Wayne Cross  
Signature of certifying official

4 JUL 2011  
Date

California State Historic Preservation Officer  
Title

California Office of Historic Preservation  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain:)

Edson H. Beall  
Signature of the Keeper  
Date of Action 8-18-11

**5. Classification**

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

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing
1	buildings
	sites
	structures
	Objects
	buildings
1	<b>Total</b>

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/religious facility

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**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/religious facility

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**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: spilt-log and peeled-log chapel

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Rustic

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Arts and Crafts

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**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: Stone

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walls: Stone, wood, glass

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roof: Wood

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other:

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### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

### Summary Paragraph

The Chapel of the Transfiguration, better known as The Outdoor Chapel, is situated in a forest of pines and cedars just off of Highway 89 approximately one mile south of Tahoe City. The Outdoor Chapel has not changed in appearance since it was built in 1909. It consists exclusively of a sanctuary and chancel, built in a rustic style with massive rubble rock walls and a peeled-log structural framework supporting a roof that is covered in shake shingles. The congregation is seated outside of the Outdoor Chapel on benches/pews in a grove of pine trees facing the broad opening of the chancel. The Outdoor Chapel has been in continuous use since its construction in 1909.

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### Narrative Description

The Chapel of the Transfiguration, better known as the Outdoor Chapel, was built in 1909 and was the first church constructed in Tahoe City, Lake Tahoe. The Outdoor Chapel sits next to Highway 89 on the northwestern shore of Lake Tahoe, at an elevation of 6250 feet above sea level. Giant pine and cedar trees and a rock wall constructed in 1944 separate the Chapel from Highway 89. The setting of the Outdoor Chapel is wooded and peaceful.

The Outdoor Chapel is a small, simple building of rustic style and approximately 676 square feet. The building is symmetrical and rectangular in plan and measures approximately 35 feet wide by 22 feet deep. The interior of the building consists of two rooms—the sanctuary and the chancel. The sanctuary is a small room at the rear of the building. The sanctuary measures approximately 26 feet wide by 6 feet deep and is split in half by a wooden wall that is 7 feet high. A door passes through the center of the wall. The floor is made of wood planks and the walls are rubble stone set in mortar. The sanctuary contains a loft that is used for storage.

The chancel is the front, open portion of the building that houses the altar and defines the building. The chancel measures approximately 26 feet wide by 20 feet deep. Exposed peeled log construction and stonework at the opening of the chancel are the primary contributors to the building's character. A wooden door in the rubble stone wall at the back of the chancel leads into the sanctuary.

The lower portion of the front, west facing façade of the Outdoor Chapel holds huge doors constructed of wood planks that span the width of the structure and swing inward, revealing the interior of the chancel. During the summer the doors are always open. The doors are used as shutters in the winter to close up the Outdoor Chapel and keep the snow out. All hardware appears to be original. The centerpiece of the interior (chancel) is a large stone and mortar altar. The floor is also stone and mortar. Three very large stone steps lead up to the altar which is 8 feet wide and 3 feet deep and is situated at the back wall of the chancel.

The exterior of the building is masterfully executed in stone walls that are made of rough, native stones of irregular shape and size and laid in reinforced concrete mortar. The stones were gathered on site. The walls are reinforced on all four corners with massive stone buttresses that are 3½ feet wider at the bottom than they are at the top. These buttresses frame the large opening to the chancel and greatly contribute to the building's simple, naturalistic, rustic character.

The steep gabled roof comprises one half the Outdoor Chapel's height which is approximately 35 feet. This steep triangular shape is also framed with peeled logs. Knee braces further divide the gable into smaller triangles. Forty-four panes of amber glass, each measuring approximately 10 inches square, fill the spaces between the frames. The apex of the gable contains a multicolored stained-glass window depicting a chalice and baptismal shells. The exaggerated eave extends several feet beyond the front of the building and outlookers extend beyond the roof line. A wooden Celtic cross 4 feet in height stands at the peak of the roof. The roof is covered in shakes. This steeply pitched gable with its peeled-log structure contributes greatly to the rustic character of the Outdoor Chapel. Notably, many of the logs are the same diameter as the surrounding trees.

The rear elevation faces east. The lower wall is constructed of rubble stone and is punctuated with two pointed-arch windows measuring 2 ½ feet by 5 feet. The upper section of the rear elevation is constructed of planks and contains two smaller pointed-arch windows, each with four panes of amber glass.

The rustic style of the Outdoor Chapel is very similar in design to that of the Watson Cabin in Tahoe City, California, which was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1979 (Building #79000518, 560 North Lake Blvd.). In fact the Outdoor Chapel was constructed by the same builders as the Watson Cabin, Robert Montgomery Watson and his son Robert H. Watson, and completed in the same year as the cabin, 1909.

The Outdoor Chapel is in very good original condition. There have been no significant alterations to the original building. Electric power was installed in the chapel in 1937 when the old bellows-type organ was replaced by a new Hammond electric organ. A long carved wooden plaque above the chapel entrance with the words "Chapel of the Transfiguration 1909" was added in 1984. Copper caps on the outlookers were added in 2005 to protect the wood from the snow. The benches/pews that the congregation sit on outside of the chapel have been replaced a few times. The latest replacement was completed in June 2009 when Gus Gotschall took on the demolition of the old benches and construction of new benches, for his Boy Scout Eagle Project, in conjunction with the centennial anniversary of the Chapel of the Transfiguration. Because the benches are newly constructed, and also because they are considered furniture, this nomination is for the Outdoor Chapel only and does not include the benches, although they are a component of the setting of the Outdoor Chapel and help define and interpret the function of the building.

The Outdoor Chapel is owned by the Episcopal Diocese of Northern California and is part of Saint Nicholas Episcopal Church. The church is approximately 175 yards from the chapel. The Outdoor Chapel is used for Saint Nicholas' summer services. The congregation and visitors park their cars in the church lot and take a short walk in the woods to the chapel. In the winter services are moved back into the church as the pews and the grounds surrounding the Outdoor Chapel are covered in snow.

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

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

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

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1909  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1909  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Watson, Robert Montgomery  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Watson, Robert Howard  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The period of significance is 1909, the year that the Chapel of the Transfiguration was constructed.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

Because the Chapel of the Transfiguration was constructed for religious puposes, it must meet the special requirements of National Register Criteria Consideration A. The Chapel meets Criteria Consideration A and is eligible for the National Register because it derives its primary significance from architectural distinction and historical importance.

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

The Chapel of the Transfiguration (Outdoor Chapel) is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C as a locally significant example of Arts and Crafts-influenced Rustic Architecture. The Outdoor Chapel exemplifies some of the Arts and Crafts movement's most important ideals: the use of simple forms, medieval decoration, traditional craftsmanship, and an emphasis on hand-made over the mass-produced. The Outdoor Chapel was constructed in 1909, at a time when several design philosophies and historical events combined to strongly influence architecture in the United States. The Outdoor Chapel was the first church at Lake Tahoe. With further development, it may be demonstrated that the Chapel also played a significant role in the early history and development of Lake Tahoe as a destination-resort community.

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

The Chapel of the Transfiguration is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C as a locally significant example of Arts and Crafts-influenced Rustic Architecture. Originating in England during the second half of the nineteenth century, the Arts and Crafts movement was born out of reaction to the deleterious effects of industrialization on the quality of manufactured goods and the separation of the worker from his product. Craftsman Architecture's simplicity of form, informal character, direct response to site, and extensive use of natural materials, particularly wood and rubble masonry, were interpretations of the socio-economic and aesthetic reforms espoused by the movement's founder, William Morris.<sup>1</sup> The Outdoor Chapel exhibits many, if not most of these characteristics. Massive stone walls, massive, battered, stone buttresses, an upper structure constructed of peeled timber, most materials gathered on site, all represent the purest, most simple expression of a simple, naturalistic, rustic building.

Many San Francisco Bay Area architects embraced the Arts and Crafts movement and designed both humble and monumental examples, many of which survive. The San Francisco Bay Area's contribution to the Craftsman idiom was a more naturalistic manner, identified in northern California as the "San Francisco Bay Region Tradition." Joseph Worcester, A. Page Brown, Bernard Maybeck, Julia Morgan, John Galen Howard, Willis Polk, Ernest Coxhead, and A.C. Schweinfurth successfully designed in the Arts and Crafts style, often in the San Francisco region's more naturalistic manner. Maybeck and Morgan are well known for their designs of several significant churches, however Brown, Worcester, Coxhead, and Schweinfurth also completed well-known ecclesiastical commissions. Worcester's friendship with pioneering naturalist John Muir is well documented, and Muir is widely understood to have related to, and spoken about, the outdoors in religious terms. John Muir founded the Sierra Club in San Francisco in 1892. In turn of the Century San Francisco many of these individuals knew of each other, each others' ideas, and designs. Walter Danforth Bliss and William Faville, the architects of the Outdoor Chapel, practiced architecture in San Francisco and would also have, at minimum, known of these individuals and their architecture.<sup>2</sup>

The idea of designing with nature also flourished in the National Park Service during the early decades of the twentieth century. Architects, landscape architects and engineers combined native wood and stone with convincingly 'native' styles to create visually appealing structures that seemed to fit naturally within the majestic landscapes. In 1903, the Sierra Club erected LeConte Memorial Lodge in Yosemite Valley. Designed to serve as the Club's summer headquarters, it contained a library and a club information center. Weathered native granite dominated the symmetrical Tudor Revival building. The building bore the strong imprint of its architect, John White, in an exaggerated roofline which comprised more than half of the height of the structure, a huge granite fireplace, and its rough-finish exposed roof beams.<sup>3</sup> Lake Tahoe's Outdoor Chapel exhibits these same characteristics with its massive stone work, and its tall, peaked, gable with lights divided by large timbering that comprises over half of the height of the building.

Sometimes called "the national park that got away," the Lake Tahoe region shares many characteristics of a national park, and is particularly suitable for the construction of a chapel in the rustic style. It is not surprising, then, as Lake Tahoe became a resort community and a summer home for middle-class and well to do San Franciscans (and Sacramentans) in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the idea of building a chapel that expressed Craftsman and San Franciscan Bay Region Tradition ideals would take hold.

<sup>1</sup> Lauren Weiss Bricker, et al. "The Residential Architecture of Pasadena, CA 1895-1918: The Influence of the Arts and Crafts Movement." Multiple Property Submission, (1999).

<sup>2</sup> Leslie Mandelson Freudenheim and Elisabeth Sacks Sussman, Building with Nature: Roots of the San Francisco Bay Region Tradition, Santa Barbara, CA: Peregrine Smith, Inc. (1974).

<sup>3</sup> Freudenheim.

The Outdoor Chapel is also associated with persons who were important to the history of the Lake Tahoe community. Duane Leroy Bliss (D.L. Bliss) donated the original two acres of land for the building of the chapel. D.L. Bliss was a 19<sup>th</sup> Century timber and mining magnate who first realized the potential of tourism in the Lake Tahoe basin. He formed the Lake Tahoe Railway and Transportation Company and built the elegant and famous Tahoe Tavern in Tahoe City. As noted earlier, the architects for the Outdoor Chapel were Walter Danforth Bliss and William Faville of San Francisco. Walter Bliss was D.L. Bliss' son and designer of the Tahoe Tavern. A California State Park on the west shore of Lake Tahoe (D.L. Bliss State Park) is named in his honor for the contributions he made to the Lake Tahoe area.

Robert Montgomery Watson and his son Robert H. Watson built the Outdoor Chapel. The elder Watson was one of the early settlers of Lake Tahoe, coming to Tahoe City in 1875. He was appointed Tahoe area's first Constable in 1904, an office he held for the next 28 years. He supplemented this livelihood with work as a builder, guide, mill operator and trail finder. Watson was among Tahoe City's most revered citizens. There is a mountain peak and a lake in the Tahoe area named after him. Robert M. Watson and Robert H. Watson built the Outdoor Chapel in the same style as the Watson Cabin, which is already on the National Register of Historic Places.

Famed for its beauty and outstanding clarity, people from all over the world came to see for themselves this unique Lake Tahoe. Many stayed at the Tahoe Tavern and visited the Outdoor Chapel. Weddings would be held in the Chapel and an elegant reception would be held at the Tavern. In addition to the few year round residents, the summer congregation of the chapel also included many families from the San Francisco Bay Area as well as from foreign countries who visited the lake during the summer season.

The Outdoor Chapel's simple, elegant form harmonizes with the natural environment through the use indigenous materials. Stones for the building were dug out of the nearby mountainsides and logs were cut from the surrounding forest. The Outdoor Chapel exemplifies some of the Arts and Crafts movement's most important ideals: the use of simple forms, medieval decoration, traditional craftsmanship, and an emphasis on hand-made over the mass-produced. The Outdoor Chapel is a locally significant example of Arts and Crafts-influenced Rustic Architecture. The chapel has been well preserved and maintained.

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#### **Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)**

Lake Tahoe is a large freshwater lake in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. It is located along the border between California and Nevada, west of Carson City, Nevada. Lake Tahoe is the largest alpine lake in North America and the second deepest after Crater Lake in Oregon. John C. Fremont was the first non-indigenous person to see Lake Tahoe on February 14, 1844. Upon discovery of gold in the South Fork of the American River in 1848 thousands of gold seekers going west passed near the basin on their way to the gold fields. In 1858 the Comstock Lode, a silver deposit, just 15 miles to the east in Virginia City, Nevada was discovered. From 1858 until 1890 logging in the Lake Tahoe Basin supplied large timbers to shore up the underground workings of the Comstock mines. The logging was so extensive that loggers cut down almost all of the native forest.

D.L. Bliss founded the Carson and Tahoe Lumber and Fluming Company. He eventually controlled every facet of the business. By the 1890's the decline of the Lake Tahoe Basin's lumber industry caused lumber mills to close. The Bliss Family, whose extensive interests had dominated the Glenbrook (and the Basin's) economy, wisely spared the magnificent stand of trees around the Lake's sole outlet at Tahoe City. It was to this location that they began to move the structures and materials that would be the basis of their new operations.

The new endeavor would be in the realm of tourism. The Bliss Family's plan called for the construction of a hotel to rival any in the country. To do this D.L. Bliss had to build a railway to connect Tahoe with Central Pacific's line at Truckee, CA. With the completion of the railroad in 1900 work immediately started on the Tahoe Tavern. It had its grand opening in June of 1901. The Tavern was a grand hotel and the showplace of Tahoe. People from all over the world came to see Lake Tahoe and many stayed at the Tahoe Tavern.

In 1908 the Bliss family donated two acres of land one-half mile south of Tahoe Tavern to the Episcopal Church for the construction of an outdoor chapel. The construction of the Chapel of the Transfiguration took place during the summer of 1909. Robert M. Watson and his youngest son, Robert H. Watson, built the chapel out of native rock and trees. Many people who stayed at the Tahoe Tavern visited the outdoor chapel. Unfortunately the Tahoe Tavern was demolished in 1969 and condominiums were built on its footprint, but the Chapel of the Transfiguration continues to welcome visitors just as it did back in 1909.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography** (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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** Less than one acre  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	<u>10</u>	<u>746680</u>	<u>4337520</u>	3	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	4	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description** (describe the boundaries of the property)  
The boundaries extend twenty-two (22) feet from the back (east) of the building to the bike lane that parallels the nearby road, one hundred-fifty feet (150) from the sides (north and south) of the building, and one-hundred sixty feet (160) from the front (west) elevation of the building.

**Boundary Justification** (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The Outdoor Chapel is historically significant and eligible for the National Register because it is an excellent example of Rustic Architecture that "relates" to and blends with its natural surroundings. The boundaries were selected to include a portion of those surroundings so that the building's relationship with its setting is evident and clearly conveyed.



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**11. Form Prepared By**

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name/title Nancy Gotschall  
organization St. Nicholas Episcopal Church date \_\_\_\_\_  
street & number Box 42, 213 Vista Pines Circle telephone (530) 546-4100  
city or town Tahoe Vista state CA zip code 96148-0042  
e-mail Manysmiles28@yahoo.com

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**Additional Documentation**

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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**Photographs:**

Submit clear and descriptive black and white photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

**See Continuation Sheets**

**Name of Property:**

**City or Vicinity:**

**County:**  
sdfsdf

**State:**

**Photographer:**

**Date Photographed:**

**Description of Photograph(s) and number:**

1 of \_\_\_\_.

## Bibliography

- Freudenheim, Leslie Mandelson and Elisabeth Sacks Sussman. Building with Nature: Roots of the San Francisco Bay Region Tradition. Santa Barbara, CA: Peregrine Smith, Inc., 1974.
- Hathaway, Julia Quinan (1993). "The Ten-Acre Site." Unpublished Masters Thesis. University of Nevada, Reno, NV.
- Larson, Sara and the North Lake Tahoe Historical Society. Postcard History Series Lake Tahoe. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2008.
- Moreland, Rev. William H "The Missionary District of Sacramento" The Sacramento Missionary March 1903
- Scott, Edward B. The Saga of Lake Tahoe. Crystal Bay, NV: Sierra-Tahoe Publishing Company, 1957.
- Stollery, David J. Tales of Tahoe. Sparks, NV: Western Printing and Publishing Company, 1979
- Van Etten, Carol. Tahoe City Yesterdays. Tahoe City, CA: Sierra Maritime Publications, 1987.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Chapel of the Transfiguration  
Name of Property

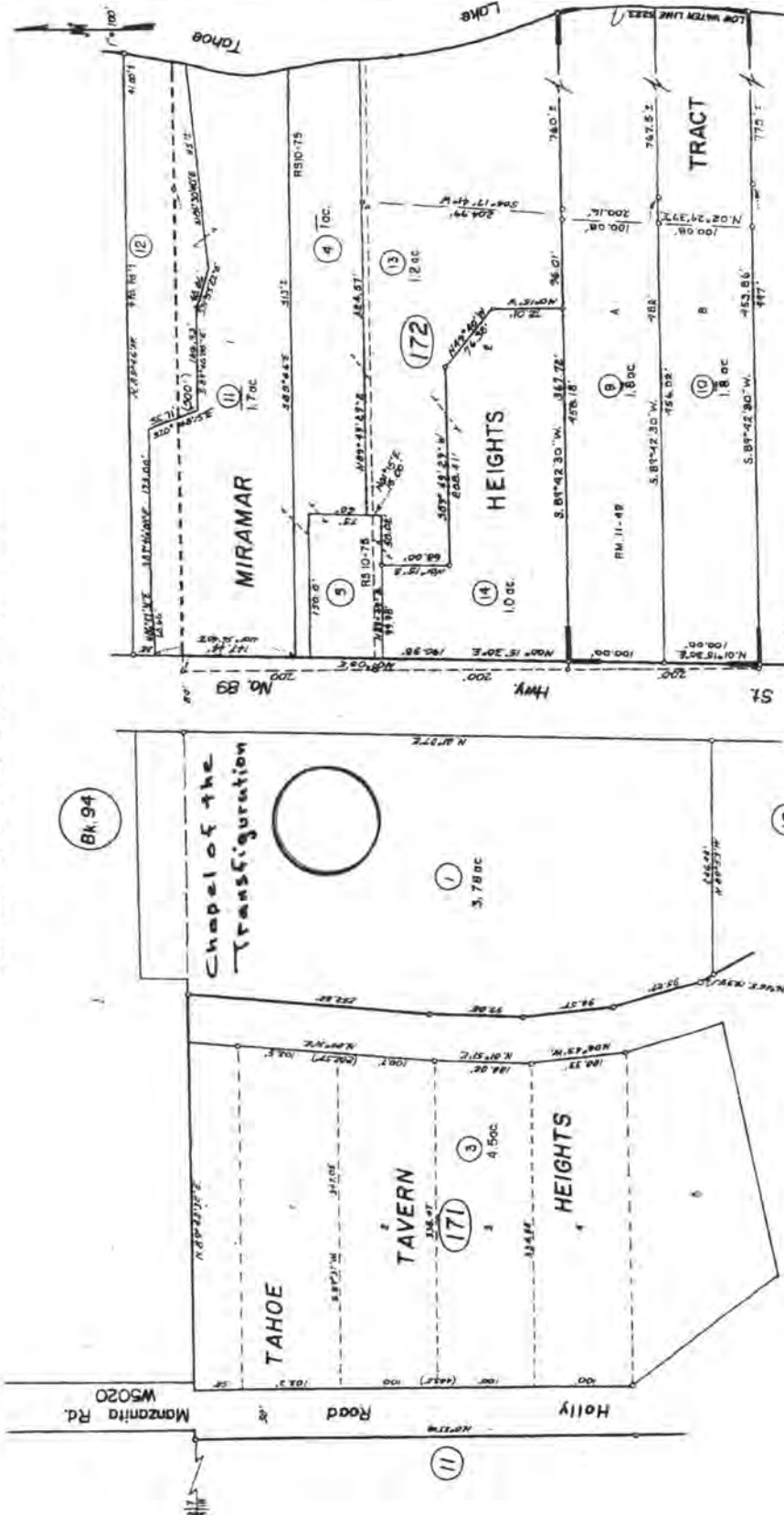
Placer County, CA  
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Page 1

83-17

FOR LOT 5, SEC. 18, T.15N, R.17E, M.D.B & M.



NOTE  
This map was prepared for assessment purposes only and is not intended to illustrate legal building lines or supersede local ordinances. Official information concerning site or use of any parcel should be obtained from recorded documents and local governing agencies.

NOTE - ASSESSOR'S BLOCK & LOT NUMBERS SHOWN IN CIRCLES

Survey M.O.R. Bk. 10, Pg. 75, No. 1191  
Parcel M.O.R. Bk. 11, Pg. 49-72685  
Survey M.O.R. Bk. 2, Pg. 71  
Tahoe Tavern Heights Amend. & Addn. M.O.R. Bk. D, Pg. 92  
Survey Bk. 1, Pg. 98  
Tahoe Tavern Heights M.O.R. Bk. C, Pg. 42  
Miramar Heights Tract M.O.R. Bk. A, Pg. 14

Assessor's Map Bk. 83-Pg. 17  
County of Placer, Calif.

APR 01 1994

APN 083-170-001-000

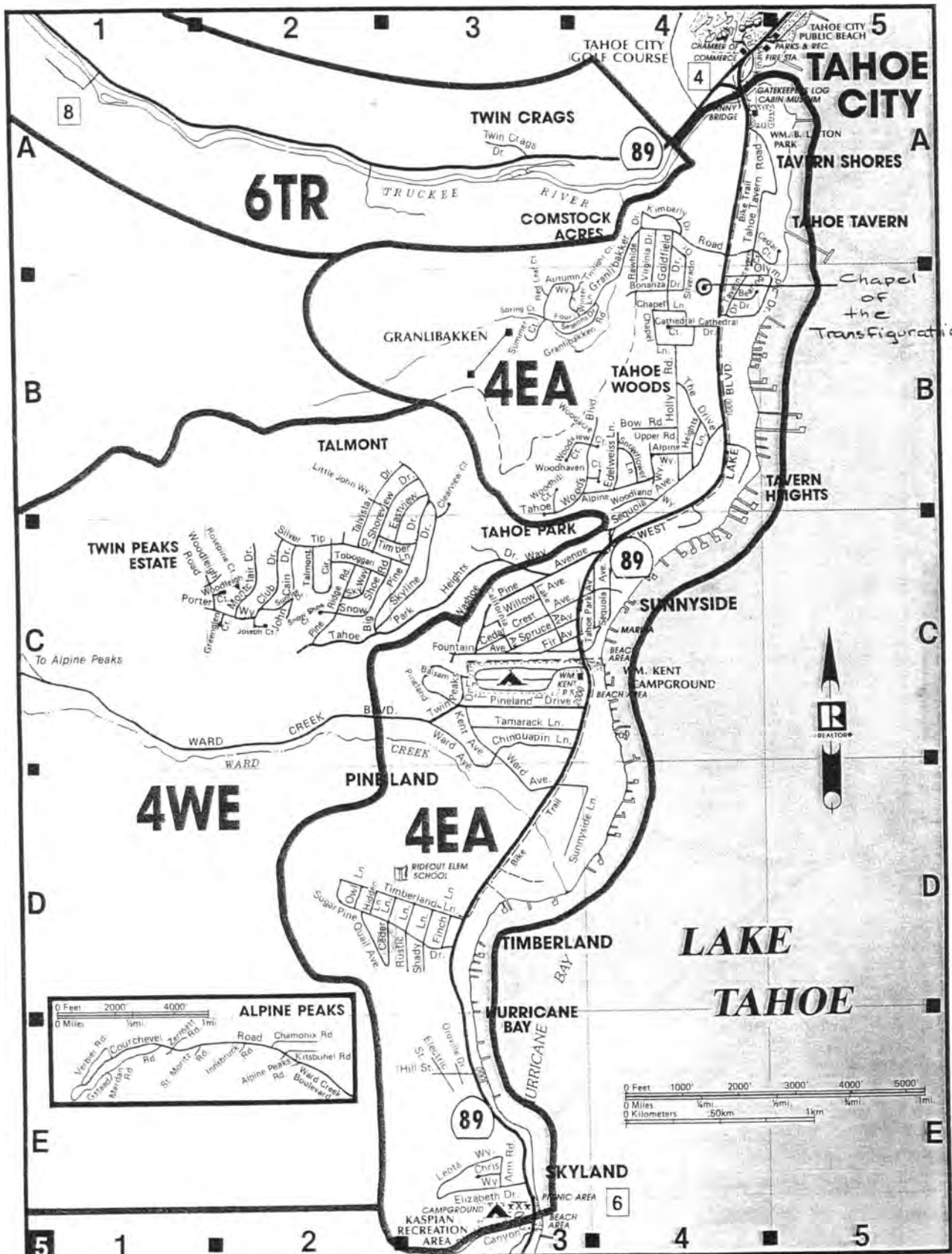
02-93  
10-97  
11-96  
74  
68

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Chapel of the Transfiguration
Name of Property
Placer County, CA
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Page 2



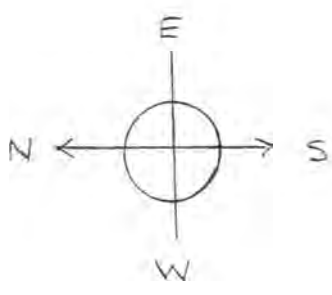
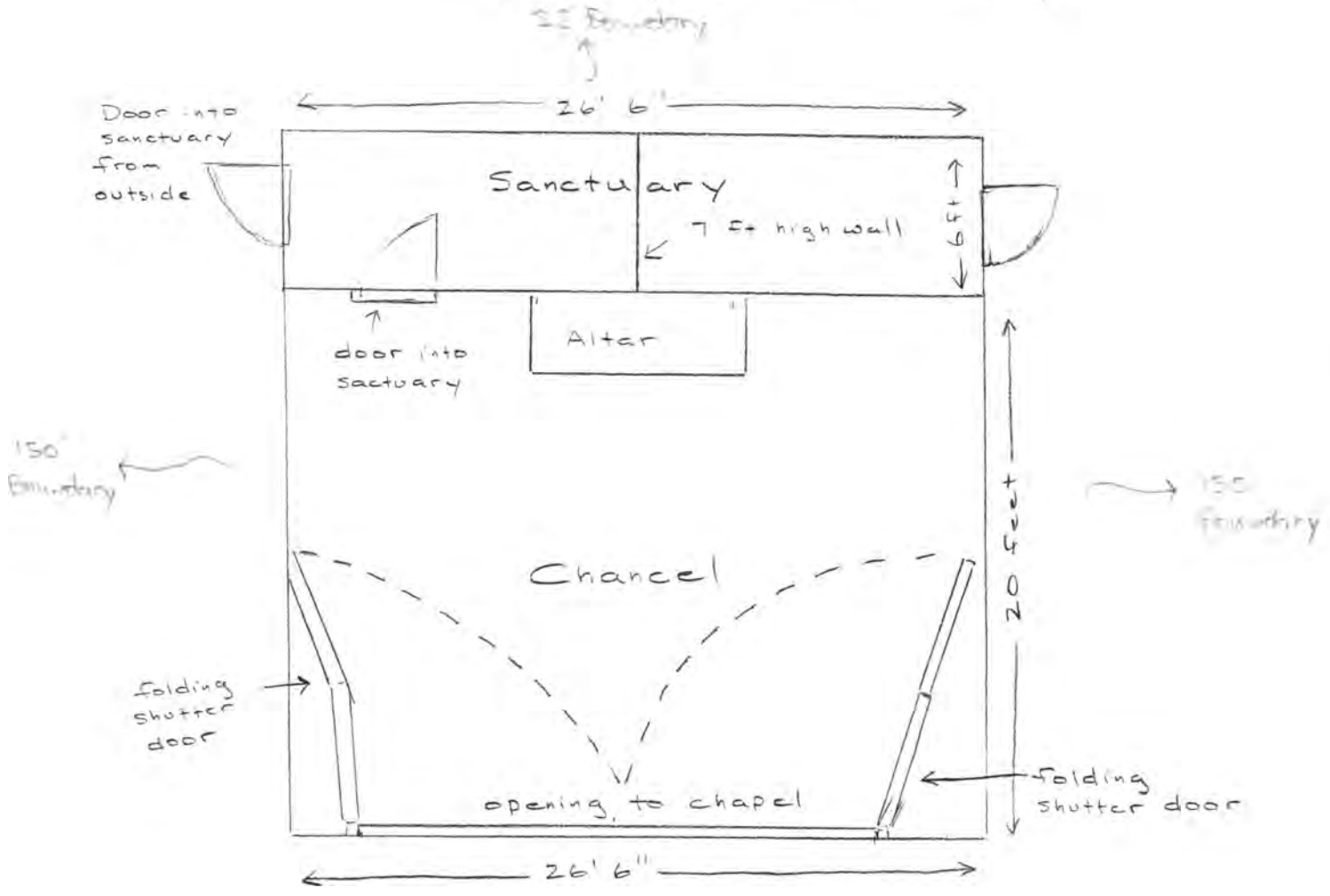
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Chapel of the Transfiguration
Name of Property
Placer County, CA
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Page 3

Chapel of the Transfiguration  
Floorplan & Sketch Map



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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Chapel of the Transfiguration
Name of Property
Placer County, CA
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation

Page

4

**Name of Property:** Chapel of the Transfiguration

**City or Vicinity:** Tahoe City

**County:** Placer

**State:** CA

sdfsdf

**Photographer:** Nancy Gotschall

**Date Photographed:** July 12, 2009

**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Front façade and west side elevation, looking east.

1 of 14

**Name of Property:** Chapel of the Transfiguration

**City or Vicinity:** Tahoe City

**County:** Placer

**State:** CA

**Photographer:** Nancy Gotschall

**Date Photographed:** July 12, 2009

**Description of Photograph and number:** Front façade and westside elevation, looking east.

2 of 14

**Name of Property:** Chapel of the Transfiguration

**City or Vicinity:** Tahoe City

**County:** Placer

**State:** CA

**Photographer:** Nancy Gotschall

**Date Photographed:** July 12, 2009

**Description of Photograph and number:** South side elevation, looking north.

3 of 14

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Chapel of the Transfiguration
Name of Property
Placer County, CA
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Page 5

**Name of Property:** Chapel of the Transfiguration

**City or Vicinity:** Tahoe City

**County:** Placer **State:** CA

**Photographer:** Nancy Gotschall

**Date Photographed:** July 12, 2009

**Description of Photograph and number:** Back of chapel, east side elevation, looking west.

4 of 14

**Name of Property:** Chapel of the Transfiguration

**City:** Tahoe City **State:** CA

**County:** Placer

**Photographer:** Nancy Gotschall

**Date Photographed:** July 12, 2009

**Description of Photograph and number:** Detail of wooden sign added in 1984 on front façade and west side elevation, looking east.

5 of 14

**Name of Property:** Chapel of the Transfiguration

**City:** Tahoe City **State:** CA

**County:** Placer

**Photographer:** Nancy Gotschall

**Date Photographed:** July 12, 2009

**Description of Photograph and number:** Detail of amber colored window panes on the front façade, looking west from inside the chapel.

6 of 14

**Name of Property:** Chapel of the Transfiguration

**City:** Tahoe City **State:** CA

**County:** Placer

**Photographer:** Nancy Gotschall

**Date Photographed:** July 12, 2009

**Description of Photograph and number:** Detail of the rubble stone wall above the altar inside the chapel, looking east.

7 of 14

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

**Chapel of the Transfiguration**

Name of Property

Placer County, CA

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation

Page 6

**Name of Property:** Chapel of the Transfiguration

**City:** Tahoe City

**State:** CA

**County:** Placer

**Photographer:** Nancy Gotschall

**Date Photographed:** July 12, 2009

**Description of Photograph and number:** Detail of door in sanctuary that leads outside to south side elevation, looking south.

8 of 14

**Name of Property:** Chapel of the Transfiguration

**City:** Tahoe City

**State:** CA

**County:** Placer

**Photographer:** Unknown

**Date Photographed:** 1909

**Description of Photograph and Number:** Copy of historical postcard. Front façade and west side elevation, looking east.

9 of 14

**Name of Property:** Chapel of the Transfiguration

**City:** Tahoe City

**State:** CA

**County:** Placer

**Photographer:** Nancy Gotschall

**Date Photographed:** July 12, 2009

**Description of Photograph and Number:** Front façade and westside elevation, looking east.

10 of 14

**Name of Property:** Chapel of the Transfiguration

**City:** Tahoe City

**State:** CA

**County:** Placer

**Photographer:** Nancy Gotschall

**Date Photographed:** July 12, 2009

**Description of Photograph and Number:** Front façade and west side elevation, looking east.

11 of 14



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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Chapel of the Transfiguration
Name of Property
Placer County, CA
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Page 7

Name of Property

**Name of Property:** Chapel of the Transfiguration

County and State

**City:** Tahoe City

**State:** CA

**County:** Placer

**Photographer:** Nancy Gotschall

**Date Photographed:** July 12, 2009

**Description of Photograph and Number:** Front façade and west side elevation, looking east.

12 of 14

**Name of Property:** Chapel of the Transfiguration

**City:** Tahoe City

**State:** CA

**County:** Placer

**Photographer:** Nancy Gotschall

**Date Photographed:** July 12, 2009

**Description of Photograph and Number:** Detail of roof inside chapel chancel, looking north.

13 of 14

**Name of Property:** Chapel of the Transfiguration

**City:** Tahoe City

**State:** CA

**County:** Placer

**Photographer:** Nancy Gotschall

**Date Photographed:** July 12, 2009

**Description of Photograph and Number:** North side wall of chancel, looking north from inside the chapel. Door leading into sanctuary.

14 of 14

**Property Owner:**

Protestant Episcopal Bishop

P.O. Box 50

Tahoe City, CA 96145-0050

(530) 583-4713

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Chapel of the Transfiguration

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: CALIFORNIA, Placer

DATE RECEIVED: 7/08/11      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 8/03/11  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 8/18/11      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 8/23/11  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 11000534

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N    DATA PROBLEM: N    LANDSCAPE: N    LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N    PDIL: N    PERIOD: N    PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N    SAMPLE: N    SLR DRAFT: N    NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT     RETURN     REJECT    8.18.11 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

**Entered in  
The National Register  
of  
Historic Places**

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



Chapel of the Transfiguration—1909



✠ Chapel of the Transfiguration—1909 ✠





A black and white photograph of a wooden building. The upper portion shows a window with a grid pattern. Below the window is a dark horizontal band containing a white sign with the text "Chapel of the Transfiguration=1909". The middle section shows a wooden beam and a window with a grid pattern. The lower section shows a stone wall with a small wooden cross on the surface.

Chapel of the Transfiguration=1909











7655. THE CHAPEL OF THE TRANSFIGURATION  
IN THE WOODS NEAR TAHOE TAVERN - CAL.



Chapel of the Transfiguration - 1909



Chapel of the Transfiguration—1909



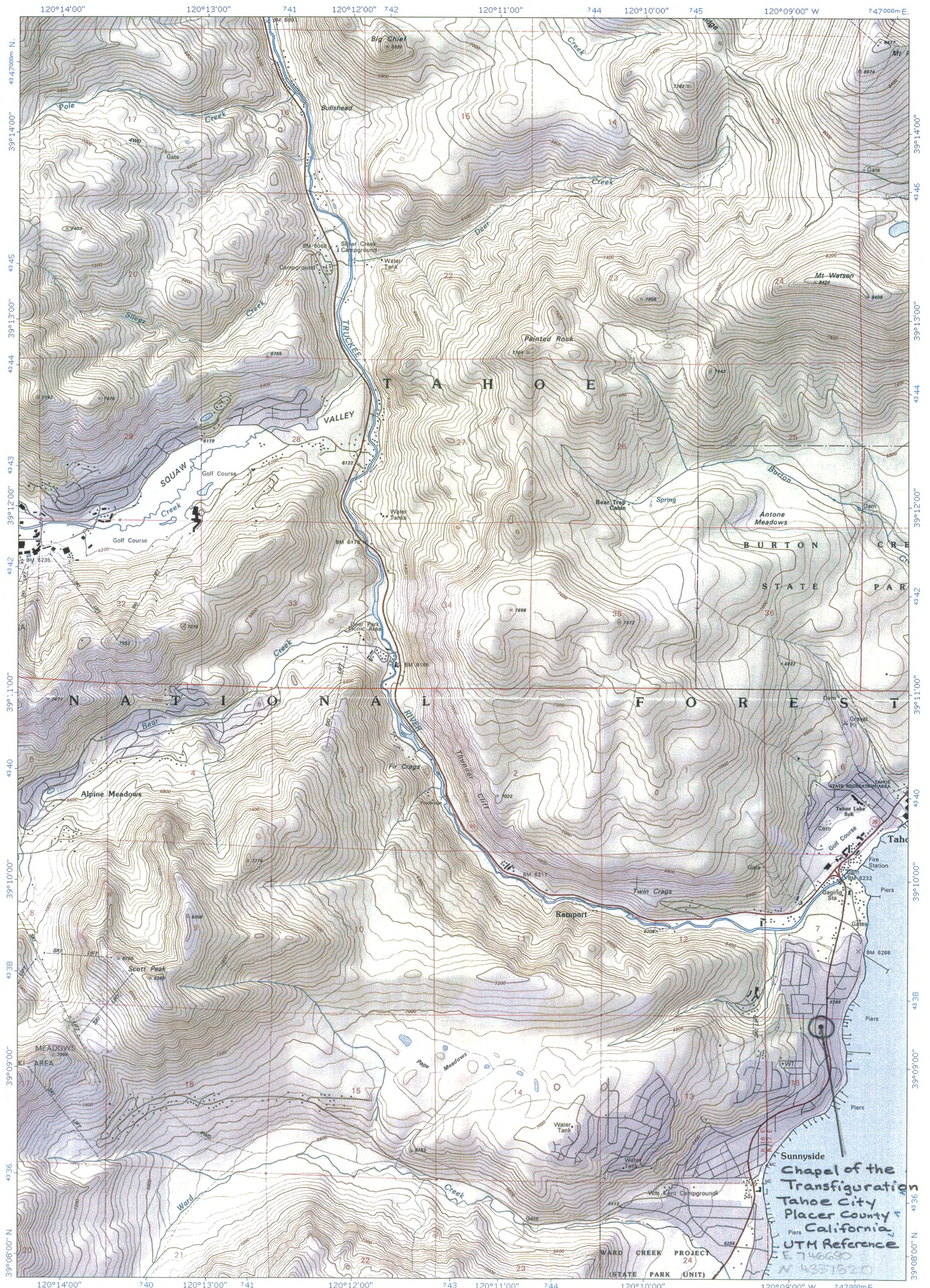
Chapel of the Transfiguration—1909





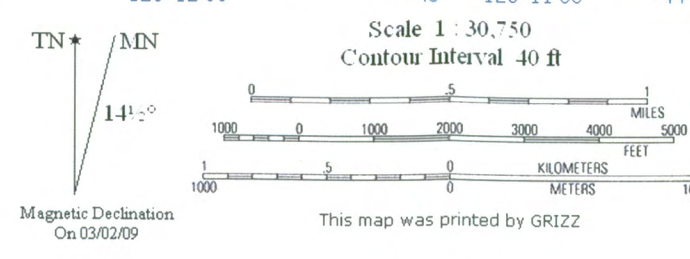






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1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9

1. Norden, CA 76  
 2. Truckee, CA 92  
 3. Martis Peak, CA 92  
 4. Granite Chief, CA 76  
 5. Tahoe City, CA 93  
 6. Kings Beach, CA 92  
 7. Wentworth, CA 73  
 8. Homewood, CA 92  
 9. Meeks Bay, CA 92

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**OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

1725 23rd Street Suite 100  
SACRAMENTO, CA 94296-0001  
(916) 445-7000 Fax: (916) 445-7053  
calshpo@ohp.parks.ca.gov



July 4, 2011

Ms. Carol Shull, Keeper  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service 2280  
1201 I (Eye) Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20005

Subject: **Chapel of the Transfiguration National Register of Historic Places  
Nomination**

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed please find the **Chapel of the Transfiguration** (Outdoor Chapel) nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Nancy Gotschall, working in conjunction with Saint Nicholas Episcopal Church, is the applicant. The Episcopal Diocese of Northern California supports the nomination.

On July 30, 2010, at its regular quarterly meeting, the California State Historical Resources Commission (Commission) found the Outdoor Chapel eligible for the National Register under Criterion C at the local level of significance because the building embodies the distinctive characteristics of Arts and Crafts-influenced Rustic Architecture. The Commission also found that the Outdoor Chapel meets National Register Criteria Consideration A: Religious Properties because the building derives its primary significance from architectural distinction and historical importance.

State Historic Preservation Office staff delayed sending the nomination to the Keeper's office after the July 30, 2010 Commission meeting in order to re-edit and re-organize the nomination for clarity. Portions of the Significance Section were also strengthened.

If you have questions regarding this nomination, please contact Jay Correia of my staff at 916-445-7008 or [jcorr@parks.ca.gov](mailto:jcorr@parks.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Milford Wayne Donaldson".

Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA  
State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosures

**Saint Nicholas Episcopal Church Outdoor Chapel**  
**Tahoe City, Placer County**  
**Staff Report**

The Chapel of the Transfiguration, more commonly known as the Outdoor Chapel, is a small Rustic Style chapel with a simple rectangular floor plan comprising two rooms and dimensions of approximately 35 by 26 feet. Constructed in 1909 on property donated by logging magnate Duane Leroy (D.L.) Bliss, the Outdoor Chapel is situated in a forest of Pine and Cedar trees very near the northwestern shore of Lake Tahoe.

Massive rubble rock walls with battered stone buttresses, a steeply pitched roof with exaggerated eaves supported by a structure composed of peeled logs, and doors made with large wood planks with original hardware, all combine to give the Outdoor Chapel a strong, rustic character. The peeled logs are of the same diameter as the surrounding trees and the stones used in the construction of the building match portions of the surrounding geology. These features intimately connect the building to its surroundings. The Outdoor Chapel is nominated to the National Register as a locally significant, masterfully executed example of rustic architecture in the Lake Tahoe region of California. The Outdoor Chapel is in excellent condition. With the exception of electrification and the addition of compatible signage, there have been no alterations to the Outdoor Chapel since its construction. The Outdoor Chapel retains all seven aspects of historical integrity.

The Outdoor Chapel's architects, Walter Danforth Bliss and William Baker Faville, met while attending the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Both architects worked in the New York firm of McKim, Mead, and White and eventually established their partnership in San Francisco where they built several well-known landmark buildings. Bliss and Faville also helped to establish the Shingle Style, practiced widely at McKim, Mead, and White, in the San Francisco Bay Area. The design of the Outdoor Chapel is a logical extension of the Rustic architecture Bliss and Faville learned at McKim, Mead, and White and further developed in San Francisco.

The Episcopal Diocese of Northern California Owns the Outdoor Chapel and supports the nomination. National Register Criteria Consideration A: Religious Properties applies because the Outdoor Chapel is a religious property. However, it is eligible because it derives its significance from its architecture. Staff recommends the State Historical Resources Commission find the Outdoor Chapel eligible for the National Register under Criterion C as a locally significant example of Rustic architecture and recommends the State Historic Preservation Officer approve the nomination for forwarding to the National Park Service for listing in the National Register.

Jay Correia  
State Historian III  
July 26, 2010