

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

For NPS use only

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

received MAR 6 1986
date entered MAR 20 1986

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

1. Name

historic IRVINE BLACKSMITH SHOP

RECEIVED

DEC 17 1985

and/or common IRVINE BLACKSMITH SHOP

OHP

2. Location

street & number 14952 Sand Canyon Avenue

N/A not for publication

city, town Irvine, 92650 N/A vicinity of

state CA code 06 county Orange code 059

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

4. Owner of Property

name The Irvine Company Contact: Michael LeBlanc (714)720-2321

street & number 550 Newport Center Drive

city, town Newport Beach N/A vicinity of state California 92660

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Orange County Hall of Records

street & number 630 N. Broadway

city, town Santa Ana state California 92701

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title See Continuation Sheet has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

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	NA	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved		date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed	(Minor)			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The East Irvine Blacksmith Shop, constructed in 1915-1916, is designed in a utilitarian manner characterized by its false front in a western "Boom Town" style common throughout the American West from the Mississippi to California. It is built of wood post and wood frame construction, measuring 60' x 62'. It is virtually unaltered and is in good to fair condition.

The false front facade of this wooden building faces northwest. It has a wide step-down parapet. It is clad in narrow lap rustic siding which is placed horizontally. Corner boards and a wood ledge at the top of each step-down section accent its unique architectural character. The 12-foot high center doors are clad with diagonally placed boards. A smaller freight door, clad in horizontal lap rustic siding, is located to the east of these main doors. On the right side the freight door was removed and replaced with a single walk-in door and wood-framed window. This appears to be the only alteration to the front facade. Behind the tall wooden facade is a front-facing gabled roof which is attached to the building behind the false front. The roof is clad in corrugated metal. The eaves sweep down to a height of 6 feet at the sides.

The southwest side of the building contains a small multi-paned window and a corrugated metal shed addition.

The northeast side of the building is sheltered by the Irvine Garage and has received little weathering. There are three window openings, covered from the interior with plywood.

The rear facade, like the front facade, has a center pair of 12-foot high sliding doors which run on their original tracks. These doors are clad in diagonal wood siding. A horizontal multi-paned window is in the center of the tallest parapet section. No other alterations have been made to this side of the building. Both the rear and the sides of the blacksmith shop are clad in board-and-batten siding.

See Continuation Sheet. . .

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 checked="" 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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1915-1916 **Builder/Architect** The Irvine Company

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

SUMMARY PARAGRAPH

The East Irvine Blacksmith Shop qualifies under Criteria A, B, and C as outlined under the guidelines for listing on the National Register. First, it is historically representative of two major traditions associated with the broad patterns of American history. Second, it is associated with persons of prominent local significance who contributed substantially to the events, growth and development of regional Southern California agriculture and that of the Irvine Ranch. Third, it is representative of a distinct and widely recognized building type and is a virtually unaltered example of this tradition and style. It retains its integrity in all seven ways: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Its association with the Irvine Ranch and the Irvine Bean and Grain Growers Association, and the East Irvine agricultural shipping center, are significant to Irvine and Orange County history. It was built in 1915-1916 by The Irvine Company. It is one of the few historic wooden, false front buildings remaining in the Southern California basin today. It retains its distinctive character which represents a particular time, place and period.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Irvine Ranch once covered 125,000 acres, one-fifth of the County. James Irvine took over the ranch in 1892. He was responsible for changing his father's sheep and cattle operation into the world-famous agricultural domain on which the small town of Irvine was the cultural, community and shipping center. James II encouraged tenant farming on his ranch, taking a personal interest in each and every farm family. Some leases passed from generation to generation. This system allowed the ranch to prosper through the 20's, 30's, 40's and 50's. The blacksmith shop was part of a farm community which contained a general store, post office, hotel, bean and grain processing plant, warehouses, grade school, railroad depot, and tenant bungalows. The grade school, depot and some of the bean warehouses are now gone, but the majority of the town looks much as it did when the blacksmith shop was built. Today, the blacksmith shop continues to be of service to the remaining farmers as a repair place for farm equipment.

See Continuation Sheets . . .

9. Major Bibliographical References

Please See Attached Continuation Sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 62' x 68' (.09 acre)

Quadrangle name Tustin

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	1	4	2	9	7	3	0	3	7	2	6	3	1	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

See Continuation Sheet and Exhibit "A".

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 James Wilson, AIA and Robert B. Smith, Ph.D.

organization Thirtieth Street Architects date June 16, 1985
Amended December, 1985

street & number 2821 Newport Blvd. telephone (714) 673-2643

city or town Newport Beach state California 92663

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

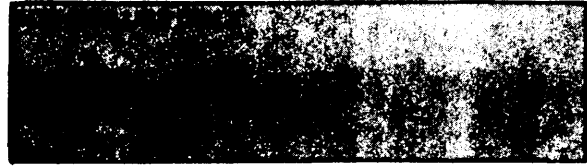
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Kathryn Guatieri

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 2/24/86

For NPS use only
I hereby certify that the property is
James M. McPherson
Director of the National Register
date 3/20/86
Chief of Registration

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



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

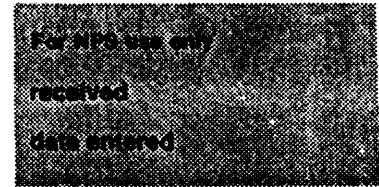
CONTINUATION SHEET Owner of Property ITEM NUMBER 4

PAGE 2

Ray Construction Company
2699 White Road
Irvine, CA 92650

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Continuation sheet Irvine Blacksmith Shop Item number 6

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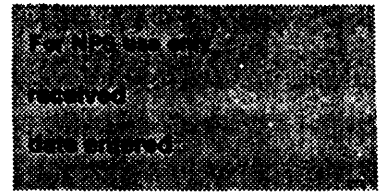
A survey by Melvin Green Associates of El Segundo, California, listed the building as one of those probably eligible for the National Register. Source: Planning Options: East Irvine Historic District, August, 1981.

The Environmental Impact Report, prepared by Roger Hatheway of Sanchez-Talarico Associates for the City of Irvine, listed the property as eligible for the National Register.

The building is to be included in the second volume of A Guide to the Architecture of Southern California by Gebhard and Winter.

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Continuation sheet Irvine Blacksmith Shop Item number 7

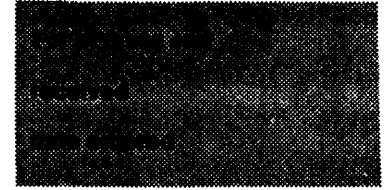
Page 1

The interior of the building is one large room with two sets of wood trusses equidistant from the center peak of the roof, running parallel to the peak. On the s/w wall is a single story tool room and office with car-siding paneling. The ceiling of this room is flat and there is storage space above. Branded into the n/e side wall behind the forge are brands from Orange County cattle ranches. These marking create a permanent record of the different brands used in the area. The walls and ceiling are all original and unpainted. The floor is a combination of concrete and dirt.

Although the Irvine Blacksmith Shop has been in continuous use as a blacksmith shop for the past 70 years, the interior has remained virtually unchanged. Much of the equipment and tools in the blacksmith shop have been in use since the building was constructed. The forge, the bellows, the anvil, the water trough and the blacksmith's tongs are still in use today. In addition to decades worth of accumulated tractor parts, rods, pulleys, etc., the shop retains the equipment used to repair and maintain the various farm equipment and machinery in use on the Irvine Ranch today.

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Continuation sheet Irvine Blacksmith Shop Item number 8

Page 1

CRITERION A

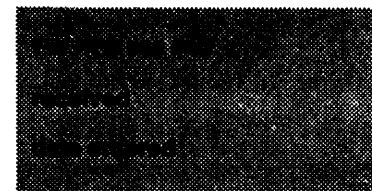
The blacksmith shop is a part of two major American traditions. First, it is considered a significant component of the "American Village" from Colonial times to the beginning of the twentieth century. Second, it is representative of the growth of American industry and the spirit of American innovation.

The East Irvine Blacksmith Shop can be placed squarely in the middle of these two traditions. The townsite is truly representative of a small agricultural crossroads village of the early twentieth century. In addition, the "village" is also a part of a second related tradition, the growth and expansion of the American West through the development of the railroads and the associated development of agriculture as the predominant economic force. Specifically, the town was founded because of its proximity to transportation routes. In exchange for permission to cross the Irvine Ranch, the railroad was required to locate a passenger and freight station in East Irvine. The location of these facilities, and subsequent associated ones including the blacksmith shop, was a key step in the development of the ranch and surrounding regions as a growing agricultural center. Finally, the history of the shop and the numerous agricultural inventions which occurred there places the building directly in the mainstream of American innovation.

The Irvine Blacksmith Shop is also a unique building which contributes much to the streetscape of East Irvine and is significant for its contribution to the broad patterns of the history of the farming industry, its relationship with the huge Irvine Ranch, and its association with persons who contributed significantly to the economy of Orange County and its most historically significant industry--agriculture.

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CRITERION B

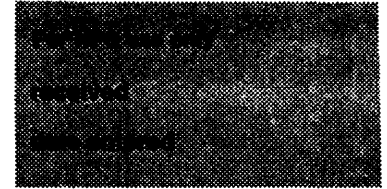
Since its founding in 1915, there have been four proprietors of the Irvine Blacksmith Shop. William Culver was the first to operate the shop. Culver Drive, the busiest street in the City of Irvine, is named for the Culver family. The second proprietor, Harry Spencer, purchased the blacksmith business from Culver. Spencer was the manager of the Irvine warehouse. He was one of the few ranch employees offered the opportunity to purchase an orange grove from the Irvine family--which he did.

Gene Thomas and Brad Hellis purchased the blacksmith shop from Spencer in 1928. Hellis was the Irvine Ranch manager and a close friend of James Irvine II. Hellis tended to ranch management and Thomas worked the blacksmith shop. Eugene Thomas typified the spirit of American industry and innovation. He worked at the blacksmith shop adapting new techniques to existing equipment to improve the quality and/or the ease of operation of farm equipment. He was an excellent welder and blacksmith. In his blacksmith shop he developed a hydraulic system used in conjunction with a three-point hitch (standard hitch on tractor to connect implements) to raise and lower attachments to the proper level of operation. This system of hydraulics would lift the plow out of the ground at the end of a furrow so that the tractor could turn in an efficient manner without damaging either crops or equipment.

Thomas was also responsible for changing the bean threshing process from mule-drawn to tractor-drawn. He put the cutter assembly on a wheel tractor and innovated the power lift to raise the sled for a fast turn at the end of a row. Four rows of beans were now cut instead of two. For his work in the farm equipment industry, Gene Thomas was featured on the cover of a nationally published Farm Magazine in September, 1935. The cover read, "Implement Record and Progress of Farm Equipment in the Far West." The article read, "Cletrac Tractor: New Shuffle in Bean Cutters Designed by Gene Thomas. Cuts beans like butter, so they say. This is used on the Irvine Ranch. Harvests four rows and outfit covers 60-80 acres a day. The May Bemis Company of Santa Ana are the dealers under whom Gene Thomas operates. They have sold nine outfits this season and we understand that the same equipment is now being used in Salinas and in other territories, also."

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Continuation sheet Irvine Blacksmith Shop Item number 8

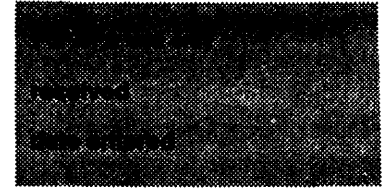
Page 3

During World War II, the Irvine Ranch was very important to the U. S. Government for bean production. Beans grown on the Irvine ranch were a staple in the diet of the troops. Because of the critical role the Irvine ranch played in feeding the troops, the Irvine Blacksmith Shop was second only to the Long Beach Naval Shipyard in its priority on steel. The work done in the blacksmith shop was considered critical to the continued harvesting of the lima bean, and thus, the war effort. The war was a peak time for the blacksmith shop. Thomas had six blacksmiths operating three forges twelve hours a day, six days a week. They made the implements for planting and harvesting the lima beans. The war effort took many of the able-bodied men in the area out of the bean fields. During this time Thomas developed and implemented new ways to do the same work with fewer men. He used motors and hydraulics to do what levers and men had accomplished in the past.

Thomas was responsible for building a better orchard spraying machine. Both sides of the truck had sprayers attached and workers walked alongside the truck and sprayed the trees with long hoses attached to the insecticide tank. The sprayer revolutionized the spraying industry for orchard crops. Thomas also designed and built a narrow gauge fruit trailer for Mybury Company. The orange trees grew close together and it was very difficult to get the trucks down the rows to load the picked fruit. The trailer Thomas built eliminated this problem.

In addition to his innovations in farm implements and his role in increasing production of lima beans during World War II, Gene Thomas was a prominent Tustin/Irvine area resident. He served for 10 years on the Tustin High School Board, on the County Fish and Game Commission, and was a Captain of the Sheriff's Possee. He was recognized by the Tustin Chamber of Commerce as Man of the Year in 1966. Thomas retired from blacksmithing in 1978, turning the business over to his apprentice, Clare Olson, who continues to serve the blacksmithing needs of the Orange County farm community. Gene Thomas is an individual testimonial to the American Spirit of innovation and industry.

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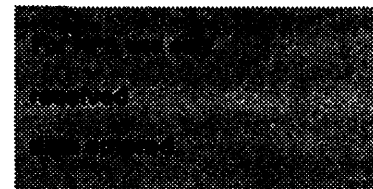
CRITERION C

The blacksmith shop can also be placed in a more regionalized historical and architectural tradition. The western blacksmith shop from east Texas to California developed in two predominant forms. They were generally built of either stone or adobe, or of single wall wood frame construction with occasional metal sheathing, and were either built in a square or rectangular building plan. They generally had a low-pitched gable roof and often had a false front as part of a facade with large open doorways. As such, the East Irvine Blacksmith Shop is architecturally tied to a regional tradition as a virtual archetype of the western blacksmith shop.

The blacksmith shop is, therefore, architecturally representative of a classic western building type with its false front facade, and its relationship to the western regional tradition of blacksmith shop design and construction. The shop is built in a virtually square building plan, and is constructed of wood posts with primarily single wall construction with some metal sheathing. Two large doorways provide access and ventilation. The building has a low pitched roof with a typical stepped false front. Floors are a combination of dirt and concrete. The building is, in fact, a virtually unaltered example of a once common and distinctive American building type more specifically related to a western regional blacksmith shop building tradition common throughout the period extending from the close of the Civil War to the first two decades of the twentieth century. The false front is, in addition, a conventional architectural feature which is as much a part of the mythical experience of the American West as any other.

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CONCLUSION

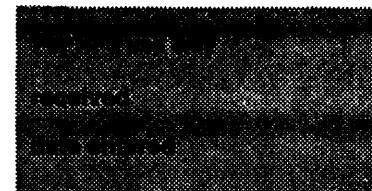
The East Irvine Blacksmith Shop is, therefore, justified for listing on the National Register under Criteria A, B and C. The Irvine Blacksmith Shop, constructed in 1915-1916, utilizing single wall siding with a false front, is representative of a distinctive style, period, and method of construction prevalent during Orange County's early agricultural era. In addition, the blacksmith shop is one of the few historic western false front buildings remaining in the Southern California basin. The building is remarkable in that it retains 90% of its original integrity, both inside and out.

The Irvine Blacksmith Shop contributed much to the authentic atmosphere of the East Irvine farm community. The blacksmith shop is strongly associated with the broad patterns of American history which have shaped Orange County into the metropolitan area it is today.

Finally, the Irvine Blacksmith Shop has been designated as a local historic resource by the City of Irvine and has been recognized in previous environmental documents published by Mel Green in 1981 and Sanchez-Talarico in 1984 as being eligible to the National Register and worthy of preservation for future generations.

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Continuation sheet Irvine Blacksmith Shop Item number 9

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BOOKS

Armour, Samuel, A History of Orange County, California,
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Cleland, Robert Gless, The Irvine Ranch, The Huntington
Library, San Marino, 1978.

Dunshee, Kenneth, The Village Blacksmith, Early Americans
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New York, 1957.

Giedion, Sigfried, Mechanization Takes Command,
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Grief, Constance, Lost America, Weathervane Books, New
York, 1972.

Hibben, Thomas, The Sons of Vulcan: The Story of Metals,
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Kauffman, Henry J., Early American Ironware: Cast and
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Knauth, Percy, The Metalsmiths, The Emergence of Man
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Lund, William, Orange County: Its Economic Growth 1940-
1980, Southern California Laboratories of Stanford
Research Institute, Menlo Park, 1959.

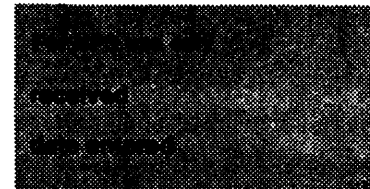
Osterman, Joe, Fifty Years in Old El Toro, Sultana Press,
Fullerton, 1982.

Pleasants, Mrs. J. E., History of Orange County,
California, J. R. Finnell and Sons, Los Angeles, 1931.

Sleeper, James D., Third Orange County Almanac of
Historic Oddities, Oscusa Press, New York, 1982.

Watson, Aldren, The Village Blacksmith, Thomas Crowell
Co., New York, 1968.

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NEWSPAPERS/PERIODICALS

Santa Ana Register, October 25, 1947; February 3, 1949;
November 18, 1980.

Los Angeles Times, August 25, 1947; October 29, 1949;
February 2, 1969; January 14, 1970, June 30, 1985.

Farmer Magazine, Jamaica Agricultural Society, Kingston,
Jamaica, September, 1935.

Orange County Business Digest, California Digest, Santa
Ana, March, 1969.

PAMPHLETS/UNPUBLISHED MANUSCRIPTS

Green, Melvin, Planning Options: East Irvine Historic
District, Irvine, August, 1981.

Meadows, Donald, Irvine--A City on the Rancho San
Joaquin, First National Bank of Orange County, Santa
Ana, 1975.

Parker, Charles, A Manual of Orange County History, First
American Title and Insurance Co., Santa Ana, 1964.

Sanchez-Talarico, Environmental Impact Report--East
Irvine Historical Site, Irvine, September 1984.

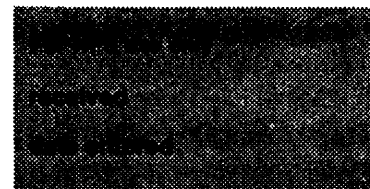
ORAL INTERVIEWS

Oral interviews conducted in 1985 by Judy Liebeck, Past
President of Irvine Historical Society:

Ahern, Dwight
Anderson, Victor
Cawthon, Kenneth
Deardorff, Mrs.
Hayden, Dennis
Marks, Cecil
Martin, Edward
Olson, Clare
Thomas, Irene
Veeh, George
Woodward, Lester

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Continuation sheet Irvine Blacksmith Shop Item number 10

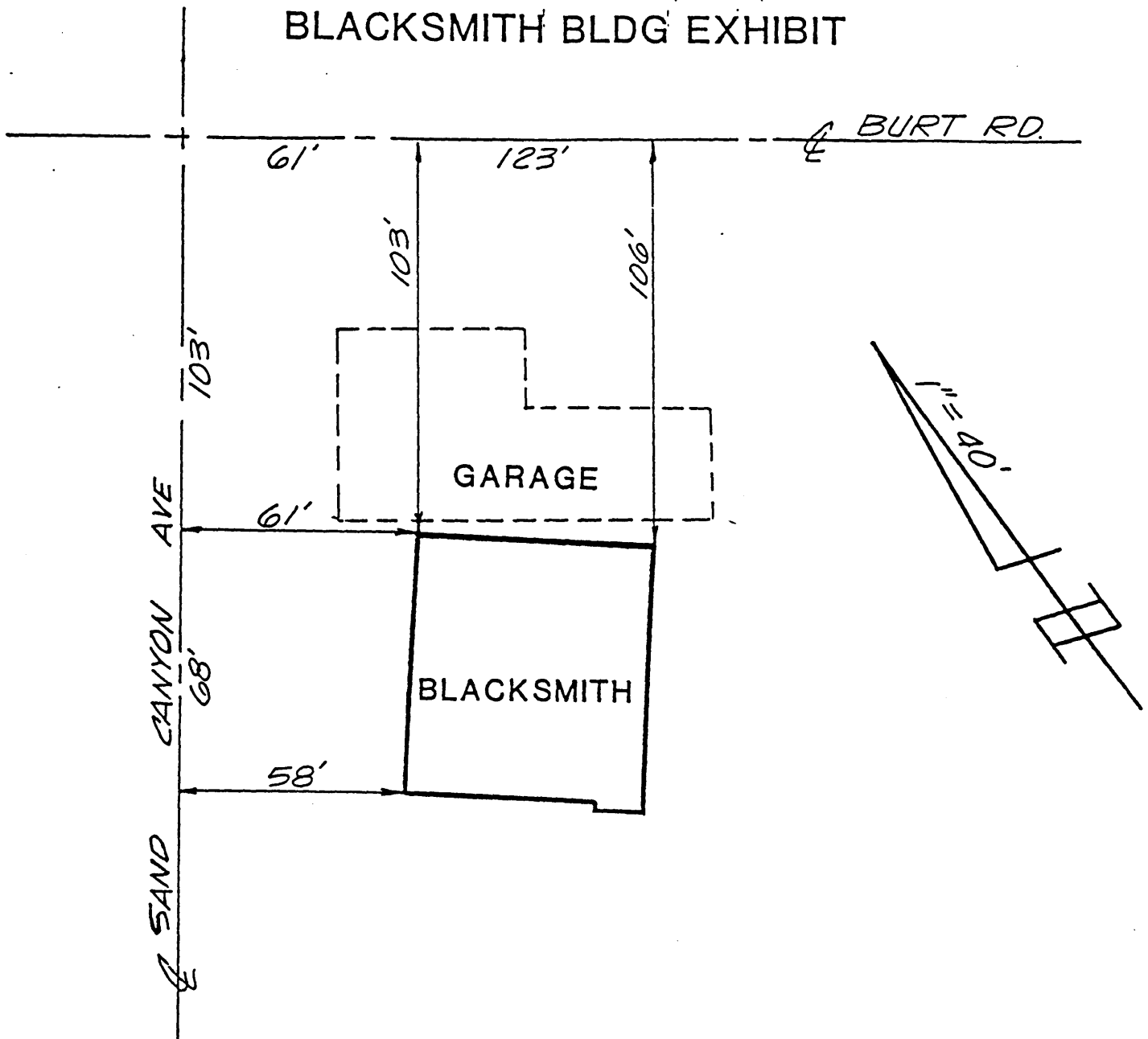
Page 1

The East Irvine Blacksmith Shop is located on Parcel 1 of Parcel Map No. 84-619, in the City of Irvine, County of Orange, State of California, as shown on a map filed in Book 194, pages 48-50 inclusive, of Parcel Maps, in the Office of the County Recorder of said county.

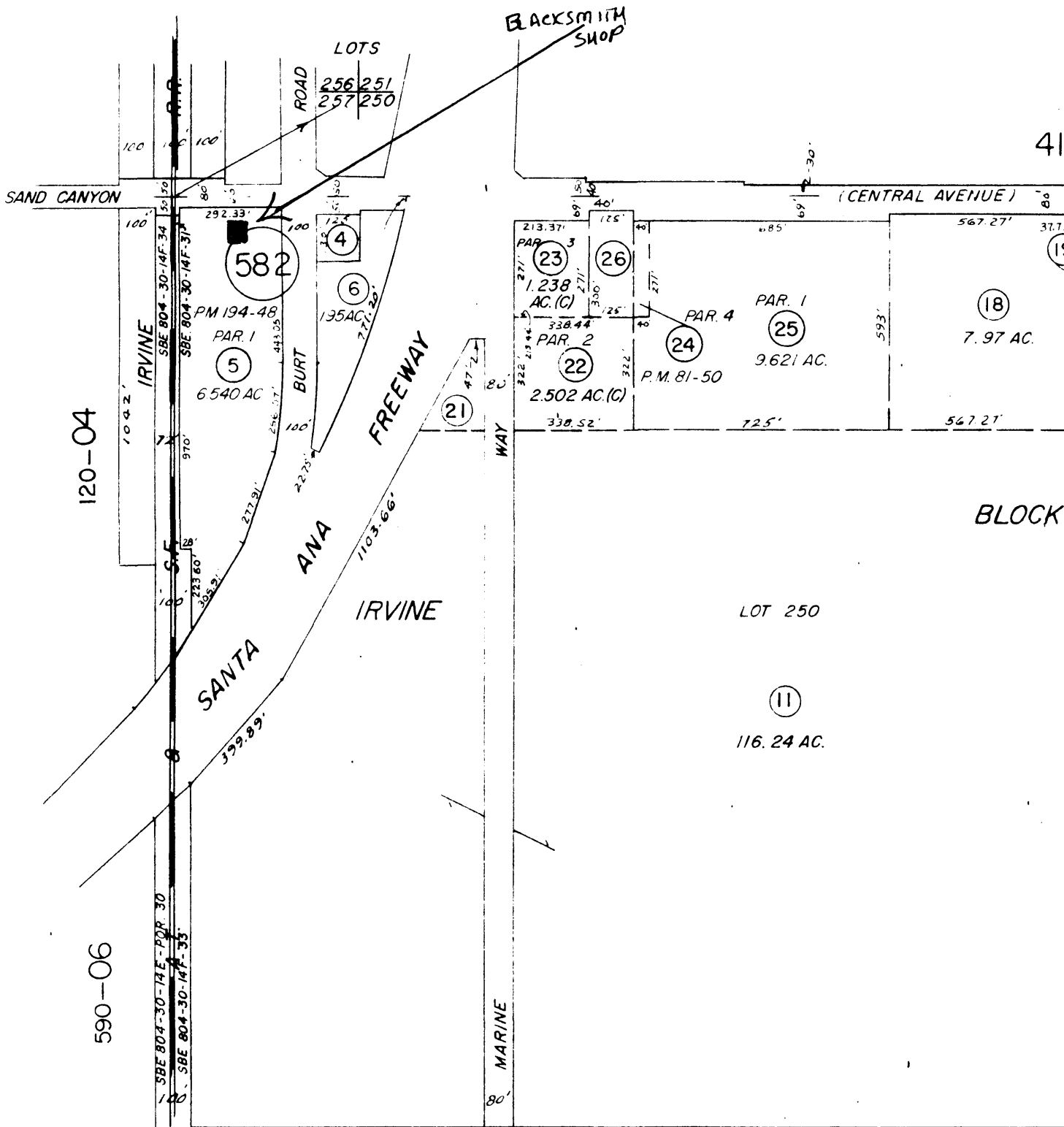
The blacksmith shop portion of Parcel 1 is located 103' south of the centerline of Burt Road and 58' east of the centerline of Sand Canyon Avenue. The southwest corner of the building is 3' closer to the centerline of Sand Canyon than the northwest corner, and the northwest corner is 3' closer to the centerline of Burt Road than the northeast corner. The measurements were taken on July 13, 1984 and are within + or - 2".

The above described boundary description is justified as it includes the portion of the legal parcel described above and includes the overhang of the blacksmith shop eaves.

EXHIBIT A GEOGRAPHICAL DATA
BLACKSMITH BLDG EXHIBIT



THIS MAP WAS PREPARED FOR ORANGE COUNTY AND IS TO BE USED ONLY FOR THE PURPOSES FOR WHICH IT WAS PREPARED. THE ASSESSEE IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ITS ACCURACY OR FOR ANY LIABILITY FOR OTHER USES. NOT TO BE REPRODUCED WITHOUT PERMISSION.
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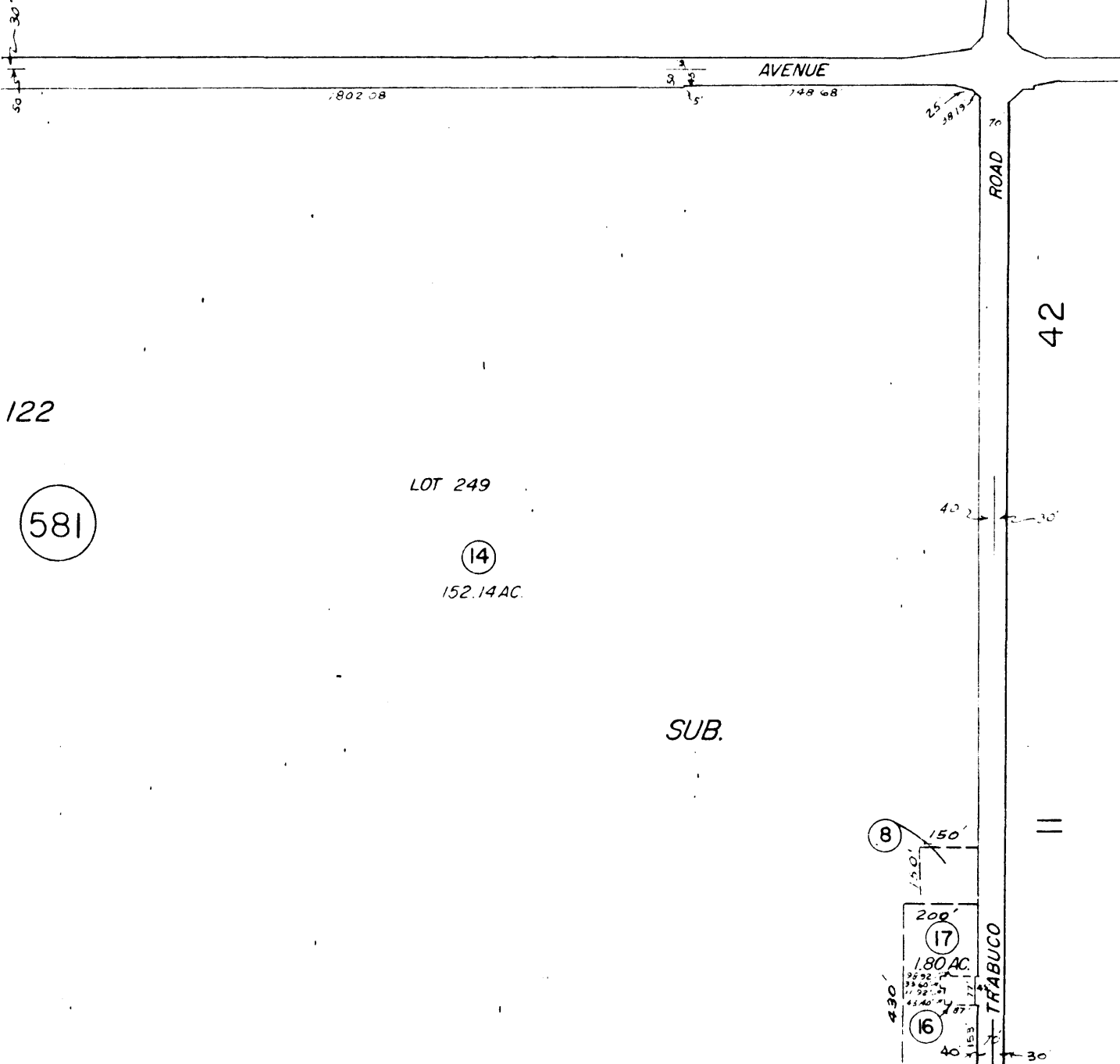
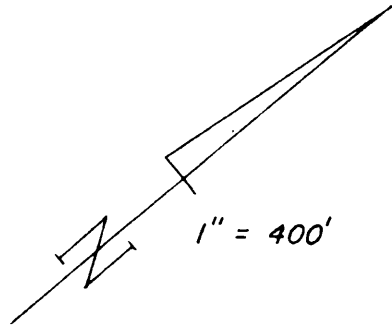


MARCH 1962

IRVINE SUB. M.M. 1-88
 PARCEL MAP P.M. 81-50, 14

IRVINE BLACKSMITH SHOP
14972 Sand Canyon Rd.
Irvine, CA Orange County

Assessor's Parcel Map



122

581

LOT 249

14

152.14 AC.

SUB.

8

17

16

200'
180 AC.

NOTE ASSESSOR'S BLOCK 8
PARCEL NUMBERS
SHOWN IN CIRCLES

ASSESSOR'S MAP
BOOK 104 PAGE 58
COUNTY OF ORANGE

48,49,50

3-1-85