

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 the **NATIONAL PARK SERVICE 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 an 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, wordprocessor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Val Verde

other names/site number Ludington, Wright, House

2. Location

street & number 2549 Sycamore Canyon Road NA not for publication

city or town Santa Barbara NA vicinity

state California code CA county Santa Barbara code 083 zip code 93108

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 nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 2/21/95
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
State Historic Preservation Officer

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 certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that the 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] 3/31/95
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
Edson H. Beall

Val Verde
Name of Property

Santa Barbara Co., CA
County and State

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	
5	4	buildings
1		sites
10	1	structures
4	2	objects
20	7	Total

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

NA

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th century revivals
Mediterranean Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation
walls stucco
roof red tile
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 to 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 of age or achieved significance within past 50 years

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite 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 37) 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)

Architecture

Landscape Architecture

Period of Significance

1918

1926-49

Significant Dates

1918

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

NA

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Architect/Builder

Goodhue, Bertram G.; de Forest III (Jr.), Lockwood

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Montecito History Committee; Val Verde; U.C.S.B.

Val Verde
Name of Property

Santa Barbara, CA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 8.87 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on continuation sheet.)

1. 11 256645 3813940

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 Alexandra C. Cole, Principal

organization Preservation Planning Associates date December 21, 1994

street & number 519 Fig Avenue telephone (805) 962-1715

city or town Santa Barbara state CA zip code 93101

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 SHPO or FPO.)

name Dr. Warren R. Austin

street & number 2549 Sycamore Canyon Road telephone (805) 969-1053

city or town Santa Barbara state CA zip code 93108

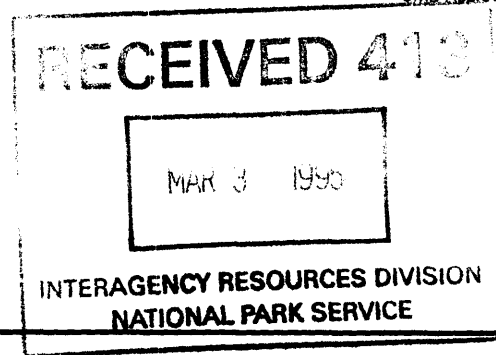
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance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

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Val Verde, Santa Barbara County, CA



Historic Name

Dias Felices; Dater, Henry, house; Austin, Dr. Warren, house

Narrative Description

Val Verde, the Ludington house, is a two story Mediterranean Revival style house, built around an open patio. Built in 1918 for the New Yorker Henry Dater Jr., it was designed by the architect Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, of national reputation not only for his residences but also for his civic and ecclesiastical buildings. Constructed of hollow clay tile covered with an ochre stucco weathering to gray, its main block has a red tiled hipped roof and its wings have flat roofs. Set within 17+ acres (8.87 of these acres are considered historic; the remainder are on a separate parcel acquired after the period of significance and have no buildings on them), the house is reached by a long asphalt and sandstone driveway that leads from the entrance on Sycamore Canyon Road, a winding road in the rural village of Montecito, California, a community east of Santa Barbara known for its large estates. Behind the house are two stucco garages, three stucco cottages, a board and batten cottage, a wooden barn, a lath house used as a garage, and a modern carport. The extensive formal landscaping surrounding the house contains not only terraced plantings but also structures such as the entrance court, service court with high stucco walls, an undulating wall connecting the service court to the gardens below, a beer garden, one large pool with lily pads and a lion's head fountain, five smaller reflecting pools, two circular rooms connected by low stepped walls, three colonnades of oversize square columns connecting various elements of the garden, and two free-standing fountains. The land beyond the formal gardens is left in its natural setting of native oak and sycamore trees; Montecito Creek runs along the eastern edge of the property. The property is in good condition, and has had several alterations to it since its period of significance, most notably window alterations on the servant's wing and the addition of new striped awnings.

Buildings

1. Main house

One contributing building

The house is almost square in plan; the main block, two wings, and entrance corridor form a quadrangle around a central open patio of black slate and sandstone. The two-story main block on the east or garden side quadrant, is topped with a red tile hipped roof. Two large stuccoed chimneys pierce the ridge near each hip. The two-story wings

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Val Verde, Santa Barbara County, CA

Narrative Description (continued)

have flat roofs, as does the one-story entrance corridor which forms the western side of the quadrangle. The flat roof of the entrance corridor forms an azotea, or roof deck, for the two upstairs adjacent bedrooms. Another two-story flat roof wing extends from the north end wall of the main block to which is connected a one-story flat roof ell which extends to the west, housing the kitchen and servants' quarters.

The imposing five-bay central section on the east elevation, which overlooks the terraced gardens, has five large arched openings on the ground floor with multi-light, wood-frame French doors and lunettes. The two outside bays project slightly, and the three central bays of the ground floor are recessed. The terrace extending from these walls is partially covered by the overhanging second story of the central bay, supported by large corbelled beams.

The more modest five-bay west elevation, which opens onto the sandstone motor court, has a one-story three-bay central section flanked by two-story bays that project forward. The central double entrance doors, of paneled wood, are reached by three brick stairs leading to a landing.

A two-story flat roof wing extends to the north, connected to it is a one-story ell housing the kitchen and servants' quarters, which extend to the west. An enclosed service court is formed by this wing and the main house. Made of hollow clay tile, the walls of the house are tan stucco which has weathered in spots to a soft gray.

A terrace extends to the east, a service court is formed between the dining room wing and the servants' quarters, and a small raised terrace extends to the south.

The majority of the windows are triple pane casement windows with wood sash, with the exception of two large picture windows in the dining room. The tall double entrance doors, reached by a raised brick terrace, are panelled wood. Five French doors with arched transoms and eight panes each lead from the living room onto the eastern terrace. Heavy louvered shutters cover the arched transoms and frame the doors.

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Val Verde, Santa Barbara County, CA

Narrative Description (continued)

The house is intentionally spare with little exterior ornamentation except for rectangular concrete grilles with either a grid or a Moorish triangular pattern which pierce the second story walls, and an eight-pointed star in bas relief over the front door. Certain stylistic elements are drawn from North Africa, such as the cube-like structures comprising the various elements of the house, the flat roofs, the arched openings, and the window openings with pierced concrete window grilles as the sole decoration. It is also the physical manifestation of a new direction that the architect Bertram Goodhue was taking at this point in his career, towards simplicity of form and materials, a simplicity he had noted in the Indian adobes of New Mexico, which he had visited during the same period he was designing Val Verde.¹

The entry corridor leads to the service wing to the north and to the reception room and staircase hall to the south. Both wings lead to the main block in which the central living room is flanked by the library and office. The north wing houses the dining room. A U-shaped brick staircase, with wrought iron railings, in the south wing leads to the master and guest bedrooms. The modest brick staircase in the north wing provides access to the servants' wing, now guest bedrooms. Most of the floors are deep brown polished tile painted black. The living room has a heavy open beam ceiling and a large fireplace at the north end. The library and office have coffered ceilings.

2. Caretaker's Cottage

One non-contributing building

Connected to the servants' wing of the main house by an arched breezeway, this stucco cottage has a flat roof and triple pane casement windows with wood sash. Originally a one room laundry facility, it was constructed in 1918 with the rest of the main house. In the 1920s a bedroom, bath, and kitchen were added, and in 1975 it was further enlarged in a compatible style. The changes have compromised the integrity of this building.

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Val Verde, Santa Barbara County, CA

Narrative Description (continued)

3. Bunny's Warren

One contributing building

An L-shaped one story stucco cottage with two rooms lies to the northwest of the main house. Two narrow wood plank doors, up two steps, with overscale wood trellises extending over the lintels, provide access on the east and south sides of the cottage. The east door is embellished with rectangular metal bosses. The triple pane wood sash casement windows are covered with simple geometric wrought iron grilles. The cottage was designed by Lockwood de Forest c. 1926 as part of the garage court complex.

4. Lee's Lair

One contributing building

A stucco one room cottage with a flat roof is connected by a breezeway to Bunny's Warren. The entrance, on the west side, is reached through an overscale keyhole arch in the wall with a curved open-work screen of concrete blocks. The casement windows are tripled paned with wood sash. This cottage was designed by Lockwood de Forest c. 1926 as part of the garage court complex.

5. Garage

One contributing building

A two car stucco garage with a low pitched red-tile roof and open bays is connected to Lee's Lair by a wall and is set at right angles to it. The garage was designed by Lockwood de Forest c. 1926 as part of the garage court complex.

6. Garage

One contributing building

A three-car garage with roll-up wood and metal doors lies across the service court to the east of Bunny's Warren. Corbelled wood lintels frame the single pane casement windows on the north and south sides light the interior. It was designed by Lockwood de Forest c. 1926 as part of the garage court complex.

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Val Verde, Santa Barbara County, CA

Narrative Description (continued)

7. Millie's Cottage

One non-contributing building

A board and batten cottage, on a raised foundation of wood posts and pre-cast concrete piers, lies near the edge of Montecito Creek to the northeast of the main house. Its original L-shape has been altered with a flat roof addition to the north and three bay windows with 12 pane lights to the north, south, and east. The original section has a shingle gable roof with a shed roof extending to the north. The 6/6 light wood sash windows are double-hung. A raised front porch, on a cobblestone foundation, has been added to the south.

It is not clear when the house was built. Possibly it could be the Gardener's Cottage shown in the northwest corner of the property on a Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of 1918. The construction materials - redwood 12" boards with full 1" x 3" battens, interior tongue and groove panelling, four-panel doors with white china knobs - indicate that the house could date from the 1890s to 1900s, although it is difficult to date a vernacular cottage. The Assessor's records indicate that it was constructed in 1900. The 1918 and 1942 maps show no house where the house is now located, so possibly it was moved to its present location by the owner, Wright Ludington, in the 1940s or 1950s. The present owner Dr. Austin added the flat roof addition in 1977. Its many alterations have removed its historic integrity.

8. Barn

One non-contributing building

A one-and-one-half story barn was added in 1963 in the northwestern portion of the property to house tools and Dr. Austin's daughter's animals. It was constructed, by a local college student, of grooved plywood panels on a raised concrete foundation, and has two entrances with sliding plywood doors at the north and south sides and three stall windows on the east side.

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Val Verde, Santa Barbara County, CA

Narrative Description (continued)

9. Carport

One non-contributing building

A three-car carport with pipe rail supports, a metal gable roof, and wood lath sides is located in the northwest corner of the property. This structure formerly was a potting shed. The date of this structure is not known, although possibly it is the lath house mentioned in the list of de Forest's drawings for the estate, dated 1926-1930.

10. Carport

One non-contributing structure

A two-car carport, with wood posts on concrete piers and a rolled asphalt roof over plywood, is also located in the northwest corner of the property. Because of its age, the carport is a non-contributing structure.

Site

Landscape Features

One contributing site

The landscape is a contributing site to the district as the work of the major Santa Barbara landscape architect Lockwood de Forest working from the original gardens of the Pasadena landscape architect Charles Gibbs Adams. The landscape consists of numerous man-made elements such as walls, brick pathways, colonnades, and pools that are complemented by formal plantings of olive, citrus, cypress, ficus, and oak trees and boxwood hedges. The formal landscape in turn is complemented by the native sycamore and oak trees in their natural setting at the edges of the property near Montecito Creek.

Although the extensive landscaping is interconnected, for the sake of description, its man-made elements will be enumerated as separate structures and objects.

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Val Verde, Santa Barbara County, CA

Narrative Description (continued)

Structures

11. Entrance Court Wall

One contributing structure

A low concrete wall with concrete posts and wrought iron railings, now covered with ivy, surrounds an octagonal court paved with black slate and sandstone. This wall serves to emphasize the court as a central axis with the front door to the east, a path to the Baptistery to the left, and the asphalt and sandstone drive to the north and south. The driveway continues beyond the walled entrance court through a breezeway to the garage court and garages.

12. Garage Court Walls

One contributing structure

From the entry court, the asphalt and sandstone driveway extends under the breezeway separating the caretaker's cottage from the servants' wing of the main house into the asphalt garage court. At the head of this court, on a north/south axis with the front entry court, is a brick terrace flanked by 10-foot high walls. The east wall extends from the northeast corner of the garage and runs north to form one side of the terrace. The west wall extends from the northeast wall of Bunny's Warren to form the other side of the terrace. Made of hollow clay tile with an ochre stucco coating now mottled with gray, the walls are unadorned except at their north ends that are finished with piers topped by ball finials. The east wall has a curved cut in its top to make room for a large oak branch, now pruned away. A simple open gateway leads through the east wall; the west side of this wall entrance is decorated with a stone surround embellished with urns, flowers, heads, leaves and shields in bas relief. This wall was designed by Lockwood de Forest c. 1926 as part of the garage court complex.

13. Undulating Wall

One contributing structure

Leading from this entrance in the west wall is a brick pathway at the top edge of the bank that winds down several sets of steps to the terraced gardens. Adjoining this

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Val Verde, Santa Barbara County, CA

Narrative Description (continued)

pathway on the uphill side is an undulating wall eight feet high, in which bas-reliefs of animals, birds, and religious figures have been embedded. The wall was designed by Lockwood de Forest c. 1926.

14. Beer Garden Wall and Patio

One contributing structure

Two thirds of the way along this path, an opening in the undulating wall leads to a walled garden. Down six steps is a sunken circular patio, retained by a 20" high sandstone wall with a top wide enough for sitting on. The floor of the patio is covered with an eight-pointed star picked out in black and white cobblestones, which according to the owner came from the Dodecanese Islands of Greece. Five metal hooks in the east and west walls possibly originally provided the hardware for a retractable canvas awning. Against the south wall is a rectangular concrete water trough with a heraldic shield in stone above it on the wall. Designed by Lockwood de Forest, this "Beer Garden" is now called Alice-in-Wonderland's Tea Room.

15. North Reflecting Pool: Upper Terrace

One contributing structure

To the north of the house is a long narrow reflecting pool, viewed from the dining room, lined with an allée of olive trees and framed at the north end by a semi-circular concrete wall providing a visual backdrop for a bust of Minerva. An adjacent boxwood maze lies to the east, on a lower level.

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Narrative Description (continued)

16. South Reflecting Pools: Upper Terrace

One contributing structure

At the south end of the house are two long narrow reflecting pools flanking a larger swimming pool. An urn on a raised base sits in the shallow end of the swimming pool. Planters between the pools contain citrus trees and low growing plants. Viewed from the raised terrace at the south of the house, these pools and planters are perceived as one large pool with floating gardens. Connecting the pools on the south with the pool on the north is a brick walkway along the east side of the house.

17. Colonnade

One contributing structure

The long brick walkway running the length of the upper terrace along the east side of the house is lined with a dramatic series of overscale square concrete pillars with simple flat capitals suggestive of a ruin. Two rows of nine columns each flank the walkway to the north and south of the main house, connected by a balustrade on the garden side and by low hedges on the house side. A similar set of sixteen columns, eight to a side, flank the western reflecting pool to the south of the house (#16). Complementing these pillars are two large oak trees which frame the house. Below the colonnade are two stepped terraces consisting of brick paths lined with low geometrically pruned boxwood hedges running parallel to the colonnade.

18. South Garden Contemplation Chambers

One contributing structure

Two intimate circular contemplation chambers, with benches and urns on raised pedestals, are located at the southeast and southwest corners of the rectangular brick walkway in the south garden. They are reached by a series of interconnected stepped brick paths.

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Val Verde, Santa Barbara County, CA

Narrative Description (continued)

19. Large Reflecting Pool at Lower Terrace

One contributing structure

The lower terrace, visible from the upper terrace off the living room, consists of a large ornately shaped rectangular pool running north/south, with a wide concrete surround. Designed by Bertram Goodhue, it also has a lion's head fountain, set into the landing wall below the balustrade, that spills water into the pool.

20. Small Reflecting Pool at Lower Terrace

One contributing structure

At the south end of the pool is a smaller reflecting pool with a simple concrete coping. It is framed by low hedging that forms an apse at the south end.

Objects

21. Spanish Fountain

One contributing object

Just north of the garage court, in the center of a brick terrace, is a large fountain modelled on the fountain at the head of the Spanish Steps in Rome, in front of the French Institute. It is a large circular concrete bowl with a circular foot set on an octagonal base that in turn sits in a shallow octagonal pool with coved coping. To the north of the fountain the grade drops steeply to a road below; a flight of sandstone steps leads from the terrace to a sandstone path ending at two obelisks now overgrown with trees.

22. Octagonal Fountain

One contributing object

Set at the center of the south garden is an octagonal fountain, with two stone benches, on an octagonal brick terrace. A brick path lined with cut sandstone curbs leads south from the three reflecting pools to this fountain. Some 20" high, the fountain is made of concrete with a pink marble coping. Spanish tiles decorate the sides. Two concrete

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Narrative Description (continued)

benches are set on its east and west sides. This fountain is in a deteriorated condition with the marble cracking and efflorescence covering many of the tiles.

23-24. Obelisks

Two contributing objects

Two obelisks, now hidden by trees, are placed on either side of a sandstone path, across a service road to the north of the garage court. These obelisks were brought to the property by Lockwood de Forest during his work with Wright Ludington on the gardens.

25. Bust of Minerva

One non-contributing object

At the end of the small reflecting pool on the north end of the house is a bust of Minerva. This sculpture, bought by Dr. and Mrs. Austin in 1955, does not date to the period of significance of the landscaping.

26. Statue of woman

One non-contributing object

A small statue of a woman is located to the right of the entrance to the caretaker's cottage. This sculpture, once part of a group representing the seasons, was bought by Wright Ludington in a market as a decorative item.

Alterations

In 1925 the property was purchased from Henry Dater Jr. by Charles Ludington, who with Lockwood de Forest added Bunny's Warren (#3), Lee's Lair (#4), two garages (#5, #6), the garage court walls (#12), the undulating wall (#13), and the Spanish fountain (#21) circa 1926. In either 1929 or 1930 his son Wright inherited the property. Wright Ludington made a number of alterations to the house to fit it for year-round living. According to him the house appeared rustic.² It appears that with these modifications he was attempting to make the house more classical and less Moorish in feeling. He removed the south loggia and trellis, added shutters to a number of the windows, replaced the ornament over the front door with a simpler eight-pointed star, changed the

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Narrative Description (continued)

French doors in the dining room into large single-pane windows to provide a clearer relationship to the new reflecting pool, simplified the capitals on the patio arches, and closed in a window in the entrance hall which looked onto the central patio.

Modifications in recent years include the remodelling of the servant's quarters to include a new door, diamond panes in some of the windows, and replacement of other windows with French doors; the addition of diamond pane muntins to several second floor windows overlooking the central patio; and a new awning over the front door.

The removal of the loggia to the south removed a balancing element to the dining room wing to the north; the balance and scale of the loggia was replaced with the addition of the four overscale columns and the rectangular reflecting pool installed where the loggia had been. This was the most major alteration; the other changes concerned size of window lights within original window openings, addition of shutters and non-historic awnings. Even with these alterations, the house remains an important example of Goodhue's work, as the majority of his design has been retained.

Lockwood de Forest's alterations to the landscape were more far-reaching, and were designed to provide a suitable background for Ludington's sculpture collection. The bare bones of Goodhue's and Adam's design remained with the retention of the large reflecting pool at the base of the hill and much of the hardscape, such as the classical balustrades and brick walkways running north/south along the east side of the house, but the tropical planting designed by Charles Gibbs Adams was exchanged for simpler more abstract plantings and a greater emphasis on native oak and sycamore trees rather than the existing tropical plantings. Further additions included: the entrance court walls and slate and sandstone paving (#11); enlargement of the caretaker's cottage (#2); the creation of the walled beer garden (#14); and the widening of the east terrace.

De Forest's work on the Val Verde gardens represents a combination of the Beaux Arts tradition in which he started his professional life and the modernist thought that was entering landscape architectural theory in the mid-1930s. His emphasis on including architectural elements as an integral part of the landscape plan comes from the Beaux Arts tradition, while his remodel of the gardens to integrate the outdoors with the indoors, as well as his simplification of plantings and architectural elements, and the use

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Val Verde, Santa Barbara County, CA

Narrative Description (continued)

of single trees as sculptural elements reflects his inclusion of modernist landscape ideas.

His integration of indoors and outdoors came with the removal of the loggia and lawn to the south of the house and its replacement with three reflecting pools and the replacement of lawn with the dining room garden and reflecting pool to the north of the house. His simplification of design is revealed in his replacement of the flower gardens and lawn on the sloping hills leading to the lower reflecting pool with 300' low clipped boxwood hedges. The architectural elements added by de Forest also were spare and geometric, including the simple surrounds on the reflecting pools (in contrast to Charles Gibbs Adam's ornate Italianate reflecting pool), the stepped concrete walls and contemplation chambers in the south garden, and the colonnade. The spare architectural design for the terraced gardens, outdoor rooms, and oblong reflecting pools, with the long rows of boxwood hedges and stark overscale columns reinforce the rectangular shape of the house and its simplicity of design.

It is difficult to date these changes with precision. The catalog of de Forest's works on the Ludington estate, located at the University of California, Berkeley, includes the inclusive dates of 1930-1949. Of these papers, the dining room garden and pools have a date for the drawing as 1931, the columns are dated to 1936. The rest are undated, but according to the information given by landscape architect William Peter's, they were begun in the late 1930s.³

Narrative Statement of Significance

The Wright Ludington House, built in 1918, was designed by the New York architect Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, of national reputation not only for his residences but also for his civic and ecclesiastical buildings, for a fellow New Yorker, Henry Dater, Jr. It is a product of the opulent age in Montecito, California, from 1900-1920 when the rural town became noted for its substantial winter homes based on European residential models, commissioned by wealthy easterners and midwesterners from well-known national and regional architects. It relates as well to the context of southern California landscape architecture for its gardens, redeveloped by landscape architect Lockwood de Forest between 1926-1945. The house meets National Register criterion C in the area of Architecture at the local level as the best, least-altered Bertram Goodhue-designed

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Val Verde, Santa Barbara County, CA

Narrative Statement of Significance. History of the Property

building in Montecito. The gardens meet National Register Criterion C in the area of Landscape Architecture at the state level as a major residential example in Santa Barbara of the transition from the Beaux Arts to the modernist phase in the professional career of the California landscape architect Lockwood de Forest.

History of the Property

The 17+ acre parcel on which Val Verde is located originally belonged to the Chumash Indians, with their village of Shalawa located in Montecito along the coast. When the Spanish settlers arrived in the area in 1782, to establish a Mission and Presidio, they claimed the land for the mission, intending to hold it for the Indians. When the Presidio was disbanded, this area of Montecito became part of city lands, which were then granted in small parcels to former Presidio soldiers. Jose Dominguez received the land in question.⁴

At some time in the 1880s, the land was sold to Owen Stafford and his wife Clarinda, who in turn sold its 17.75 acres to Isaac G. Waterman in 1893. In 1896 Waterman sold the east 10.71 acres plus ten shares of the Montecito Creek Water Company to Henry Dater, Jr. of New York.⁵ Dater, a trader on the New York Coffee Exchange, had wintered in Montecito in 1894 and continued to visit the area for many years. It was not until 1915 however that he commissioned the New York City architect Bertram G. Goodhue to build his house, and Charles Gibbs Adams of Pasadena to design the gardens. When finished in 1918, the estate was named "Dias Felices", or Happy Days.

Dater and his family never lived in the house for any length of time, renting it to various visitors for the season until he sold it in 1925 to Charles H. Ludington, of Philadelphia, a lawyer and vice-President of the Curtis Publishing Company.⁶ Unlike Dater, Ludington chose to live in the house year-round, with his two sons Wright S. and Nicholas S. Ludington. Wright Ludington, a major art patron in Santa Barbara who was instrumental in establishing the Santa Barbara Museum of Art in 1941, inherited the house at his father's death in the late 1920s and with the help of landscape architect Lockwood de Forest he added several cottages and garages and transformed the gardens, renaming the property Val Verde. His friendship with de Forest, begun at Thacher School, was long-standing, and his interest in art inspired many of the architectural projects within the

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Val Verde, Santa Barbara County, CA

Narrative Statement of Significance. History of the Property (continued)

estate which he commissioned de Forest to design. According to de Forest's widow, Elizabeth, the two "seemed to 'spark' each other", and their twenty three year professional relationship had an extraordinary impact on the shape and form of the grounds, designed as they were to highlight Ludington's sculpture collection.⁷

In the 1940s Ludington sold off the west three plus acres (APN 11-120-2). He lived on the property until 1955, when he sold the property to Marjorie Buell, of Denver, Colorado. Mrs. Buell never lived in the house but sold it almost immediately to Heath Horton Gillat of Chicago, who married Dr. Warren R. Austin, who was living on the property, in June 1956.⁸ Dr. Austin bought 8.56 acres of land to the south and east as a buffer zone for the estate (APN 11-120-39). Mrs. Austin died in 1991, leaving the house and property to her husband. Dr. Austin divides his time between this house and his property in the San Juan Islands, Washington.

Context: Montecito Architecture

The Val Verde estate is significant within the local context of the architectural evolution of Montecito, California, a rural town adjoining Santa Barbara to the east, that consists of winding tree and hedge-lined roads punctuated by sandstone walls and wrought iron entrance gates leading to large estates. The historical development of Montecito, after the Chumash Indians were displaced, went through four phases; it was first settled in the early 1800s by descendants of Mexican soldiers from the Santa Barbara Presidio who were given land in Montecito, in lieu of pay, on which they built small adobe or wood homes. The second phase came after California became a state in 1850; eastern and midwestern farmers, lured by cheap land and the temperate climate moved to Montecito, built Victorian farmhouses cottages of redwood, and planted citrus and field crops as well as dairying.

With the advent of the transcontinental railroad into Santa Barbara in 1887 and the publication of books promoting the healthful climate of the area, Montecito became a mecca for wealthy easterners and midwesterners, who bought large tracts of land on which to build winter homes. During this third phase in the architectural development of Montecito, from 1900 to 1920, great estate houses in the Mediterranean Revival, Italian Renaissance, English Tudor styles were built by national architects such as Bertram

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Val Verde, Santa Barbara County, CA

Narrative Statement of Significance. Context (continued)

Goodhue, Frank Lloyd Wright and Guy Lowell, regional architects such as F. Garvin Hodson, Reginald Johnson, and Carleton M. Winslow, and by local architects Francis Underhill and Francis Wilson. These immense houses were surrounded with exotic gardens suited to the area's Mediterranean climate and were given equally suitable Mediterranean names such as "Las Tejas", "Cuesta Linda" or "Ca di Sopra".

Within this framework of architect-designed houses, Val Verde stands out as one of the few in Montecito that was designed by an architect of national stature. Goodhue designed two other houses in Montecito, the Gillespie house, "El Fureidis", in 1906 as an Italian villa, and his own house in 1918, which was a remodel of an existing house into a French country farmhouse. Val Verde has been the least altered of Goodhue's buildings in Montecito. It represented a new departure in residential architecture for Goodhue, embodying his desire, at this point in his career, to move away from a reference to historical style towards a simpler more personal style, to simplify forms, use almost no ornamentation, and allow the proportions of the house and the texture of the walls to provide visual interest. He had become interested in the vernacular architecture of the southwest Indian adobes, whose simplicity he had incorporated into residences at his commission for a Phelps Dodge company town in Tyrone, New Mexico, built at the same time as he was designing Val Verde (1915-1918). His use of Southwest forms is seen in the flat roofs and flat wall surfaces. In fact Val Verde was the first residence in which Goodhue used the simplicity he had developed at Tyrone.⁹ Goodhue at this time was also influenced by the spare style of Harrie T. Lindeberg, and Irving Gill of Pasadena.¹⁰

During the fourth period, from 1920-1940, Montecito architecture turned to a more self-consciously regional style suitable to southern California, that of the Spanish Colonial Revival. Many of the residences built at this time were smaller in scale than those built during the previous twenty years, with their historical antecedents being rural Andalusian residences rather than Roman villas. The landscaping became less Beaux-Arts inspired, with grand vistas along a central axis, and more reminiscent of the smaller, more intimate walled Spanish gardens. Such noted regional architects as George Washington Smith, Reginald Johnson, Wallace Neff, Carleton Winslow, and Joseph Plunkett and William Albert Edwards built houses in this style in Montecito.

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Val Verde, Santa Barbara County, CA

Narrative Statement of Significance. Context (continued)

Context: Montecito Landscape Architecture

The Val Verde estate fits as well into the local context of the development of landscape architecture in Montecito. Not surprisingly the development of landscaping went hand in hand with that of architecture in the area. It is not known what kind of landscaping was used during the first period in Montecito's development, that of the early 1800s. There were few settlements and the majority of the landscape was heavily wooded with small streams and Montecito Creek running through the area. During the second period, from 1850 -1900, the easterners and midwesterners tended to surround their houses with the traditional Victorian landscape they had left behind, a large lawn bordered by flower beds, adding however such local plants as palms, orange trees, and jasmine vines to the plan. This was the era when Santa Barbara and Montecito attracted horticulturalists/nurserymen, who developed and stocked rare and exotic plants in response to the growing demand for them by estate owners.

It was not until the third period, 1900-1920, to which Val Verde belongs, that the idea of developing gardens using not only exotic plants but exotic plans as well came into vogue. The Gillespie estate, adjacent to Val Verde and designed by Goodhue for a cousin of Henry Dater, was the first estate to make use of Italian and Persian garden design which saw the garden as "a green oasis" in which water figured prominently, in pools, canals, and fountains.¹¹ The immense estates mentioned above were noted not only for their architecture but for their gardens modelled on European landscape, which tended to be in the classical Beaux-Arts tradition of formal gardens with long vistas. Val Verde's original garden layout, by the Pasadena landscape architect Charles Gibbs Adams, was based on the Beaux Arts model, with an Italianate reflecting pool, long classical balustrades, and a geometric layout of paths. Additionally it was full of tropical plantings.

The fourth period, 1920-40, coinciding with the era of Spanish Colonial Revival houses in Montecito saw the advent of the Spanish garden, which included series of walled gardens with fountains, on a more intimate scale and without the grand vistas of the Beaux Arts tradition. During the 1930s the modern movement in architecture, the International style, begun in Europe, proposed a departure from ornamentation and busyness towards simplification and clean lines. Landscape architecture in the 1930s was undergoing a transformation towards the same simplicity, in this case spurred also by the Depression.

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Val Verde, Santa Barbara County, CA

Narrative Statement of Significance. Context (continued)

Landscape design of necessity had to be simpler and of low maintenance. This modernism led to changes in landscape design that included a greater emphasis on relating the indoors to the outdoors, and on simplifying the plantings, using paving, clipped hedges, and individual trees as sculpture. However, most of the estate gardens being planned at this time continued in the old style, for the modern movement did not take hold in Montecito until after World War II.¹²

Within Montecito during this period the major landscape architect was Lockwood de Forest, who was involved in landscape design for almost thirty years, from 1920 to his death in 1949. He was a prolific designer; a catalog of his works at the Berkeley Environmental Design Documents Collection lists 270 clients. His biographer, William Peters, reflected that "The distinguishing feature of Lockwood de Forest's work is a quality of simple, understated elegance." He was able to juxtapose "natural landscape features against refined man-made scenery..."¹³ He was known for his concern for structure and form and his ability to match his landscape with the architecture of the building.

The work de Forest undertook at Val Verde from 1926 until his death in 1949, in collaboration with Wright Ludington, is representative of a landscape design that is transitional between the Beaux Arts and the modern. He embraced certain modernistic ideas earlier than did some of his fellow local landscape architects. Of his work on the estates in Montecito, his design for Val Verde represents not only his longest commission, giving him the chance to see his designs come to fruition, but his most stunning in terms of scale, use of architectural elements, and simplicity.

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Val Verde, Santa Barbara County, CA

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1. Oliver, Richard. *Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue*. New York: The Architectural History Foundation, 1983, pp. 144-166.

2. Peters, William F. *Lockwood de Forest, Landscape Architect, Santa Barbara, California, 1896-1949*. M.A. thesis, U.C. Berkeley, 1980, p. 46.

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6. Myrick, 1987, p. 179; Myrick, David M. *The Days of the Great Estates of Montecito and Santa Barbara*. Glendale: Trans Anglo Books, 1991. Volume II. *The Days of the Great Estates*, pp. 450-1.

7. Peters 1980, p. 48.

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Maps

"Montecito, California". Sanborn Map 1918

"Montecito, California". Sanborn Map 1918 corrected to 1942

"Map of Montecito, California". H.G. Chase n.d. [c.1918]

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Val Verde, Santa Barbara County, CA

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the property is the boundary delineated as Assessor's Parcel Number 11-120-3.

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the significant parcel of 8.87 acres includes the main house, outbuildings and gardens which have historically been part of the Val Verde estate. The 8.56 acreage to the south and east (APN 11-120-39), currently belonging to the estate, was excluded because it was not part of the estate during its period of significance. The 3.97 acre parcel of the original estate to the west (APN 11-120-2), containing a pool, pool house, and baptistery, has been excluded because it was subdivided from the estate and is visually separated from it by a hedge which has been planted between the two properties.

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Section number Map Key Page 23

Val Verde, Santa Barbara County, CA

List of Contributing (C) and Non-Contributing (NC) Buildings, Structures, Objects

1. Main house C
2. Caretaker's Cottage NC
3. Bunny's Warren C
4. Lee's Lair C
5. Garage C
6. Garage C
7. Millie's Cottage NC
8. Barn NC
9. Carport NC
10. Carport NC
11. Entrance Court Walls C
12. Garage Court Walls C
13. Undulating Wall C
14. Beer Garden Wall C
15. North Reflecting Pool: Upper Terrace C
16. South Reflecting Pools: Upper Terrace C
17. Colonnade C
18. South Garden Contemplation Rooms C
19. Large Reflecting Pool: Lower Terrace C
20. Small Reflecting Pool: Lower Terrace C
21. Spanish Fountain C
22. Octagonal Fountain C
23. Obelisk C
24. Obelisk C
25. Bust of Minerva NC
26. Statue of Woman NC

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Val Verde, Santa Barbara County, CA

The photographs were taken by Alexandra C. Cole in January of 1994. The negatives are in the collection of Preservation Planning Associates, 519 Fig Avenue, Santa Barbara, CA 93101.

Photographic Information:

1. View of the main house (#1) looking south-east at the front entry door on the motor court.
2. View of the main house (#1) looking west across the terrace from the lower fountain.
3. View of the main house (#1) looking north showing the swimming pool.
4. View of the main house (#1) looking south from the upper terrace across the labyrinth hedge.
5. View looking south-east of the servants' wing showing alterations to the windows. The breezeway from the motor court is at the right.
6. View looking north-west showing, from left to right, garage (#5), Lee's Lair (#4), and Bunny's Warren (#3).
7. View looking east showing three-car garage (#6).
8. View looking east at Millie's Cottage (#7).
9. View looking south along the upper terrace showing the colonnade (#17) east of the main house.
10. View looking west showing garage court wall (#12) and Spanish fountain (#21).
11. View looking north showing barn (#8).
12. View looking northwest showing carport (#9).

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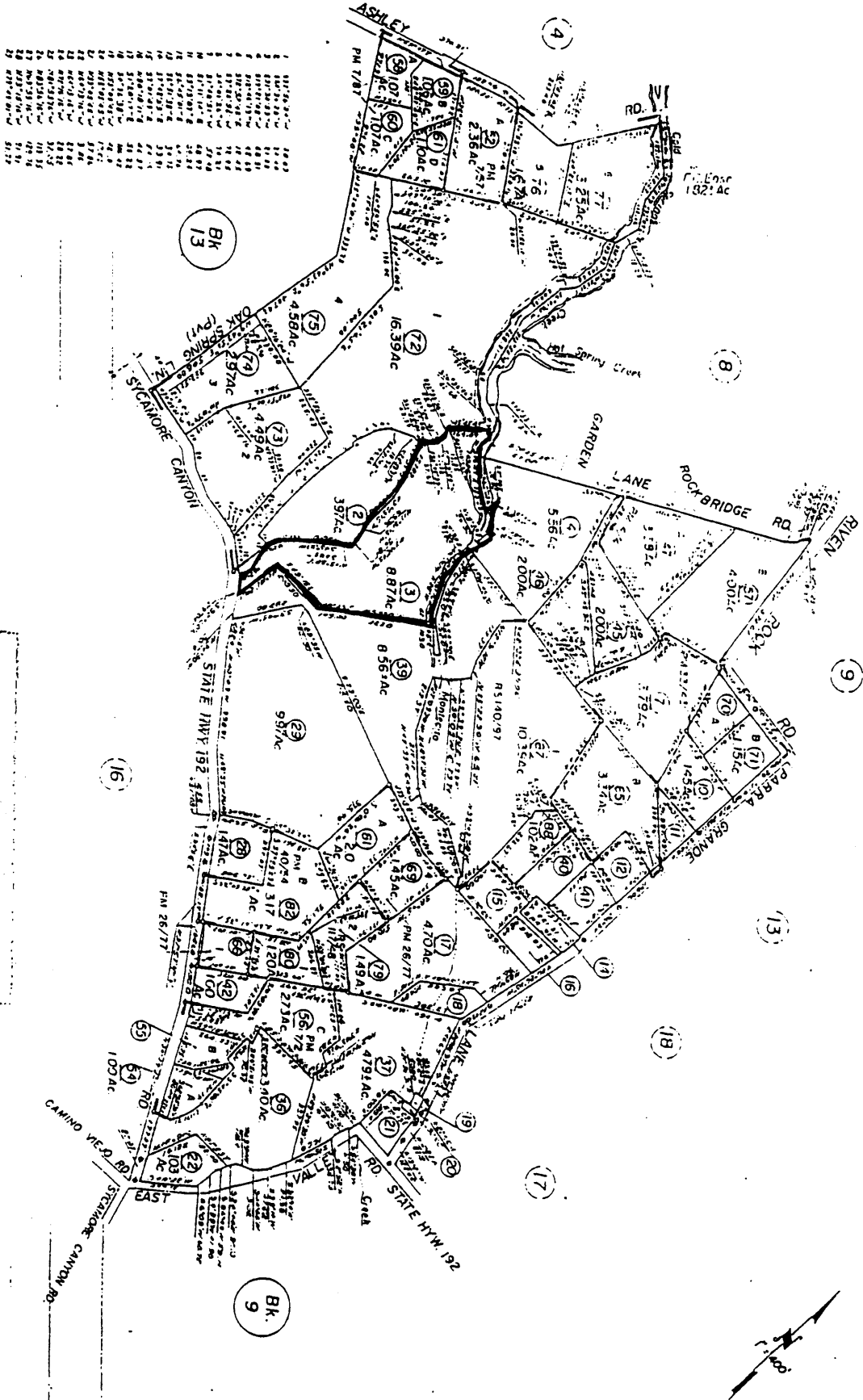
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Section number Photographs Page 25

Val Verde, Santa Barbara County, CA

13. View looking west showing carport (#10).
14. View looking southwest showing Caretaker's Cottage (#2) and Statue of Woman (#26).
15. View looking north showing entrance court walls (#11).
16. View looking northeast showing Spanish fountain on brick terrace (#21) and garage court wall (#12).
17. View looking west showing undulating wall (#13), with entrance to beer garden (#14) on the left.
18. View looking south into the beer garden (#14) from the entrance at the undulating wall.
19. View looking north showing the north reflecting pool (#15) and bust of Minerva (#24) from the dining room window.
20. View looking south showing one of the contemplation chambers (#18) in the south garden.
21. View looking southwest showing a portion of the large reflecting pool (#19) at the lower terrace.
22. View looking south showing the small reflecting pool (#20) at the lower terrace.
23. View looking south showing the octagonal fountain (#22) in the center of the south garden .

8/9/85 R. M. Bk. 128, Pg. 60-64 Tract 13, 418



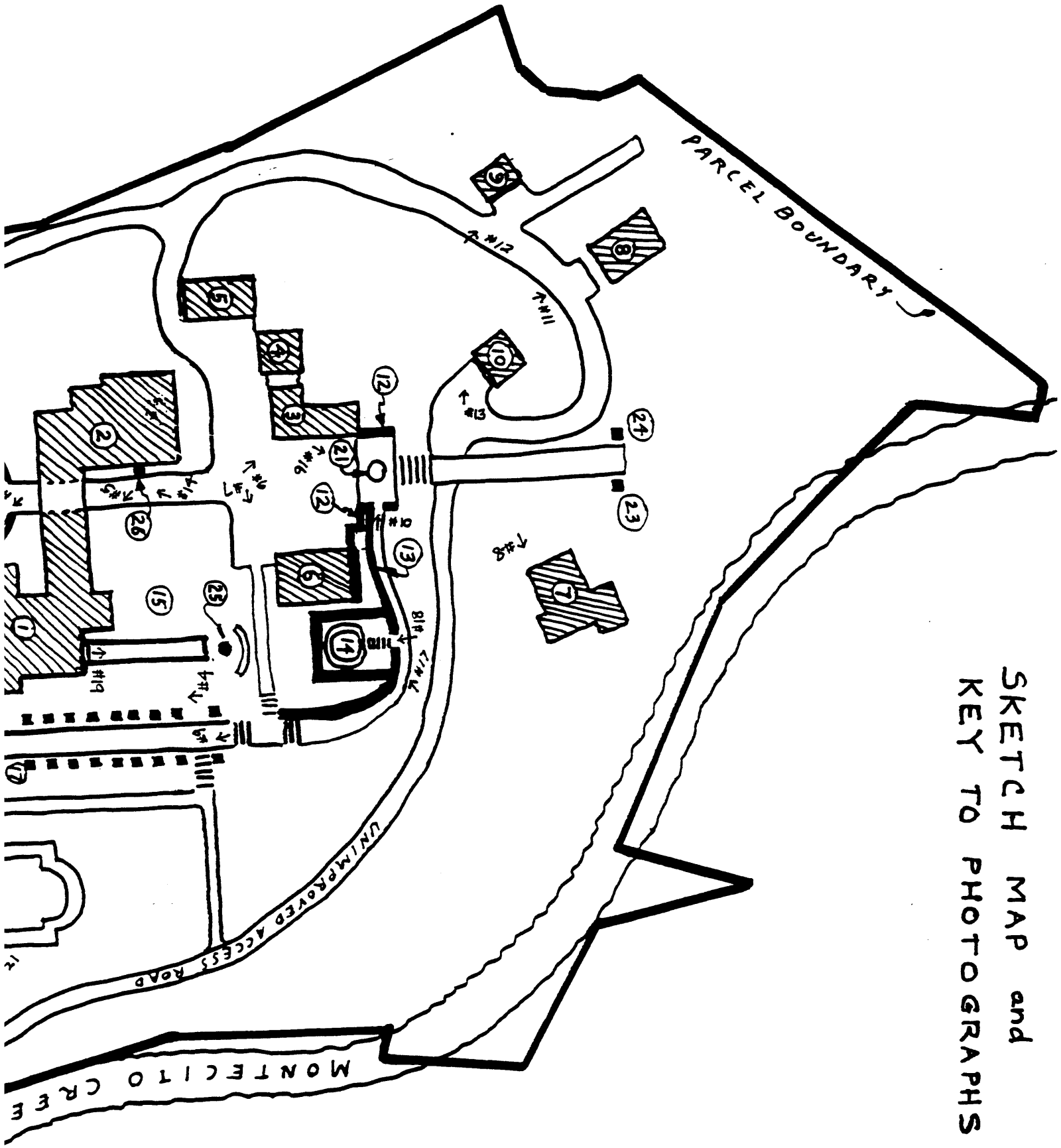
PUEBLO LANDS

11-12

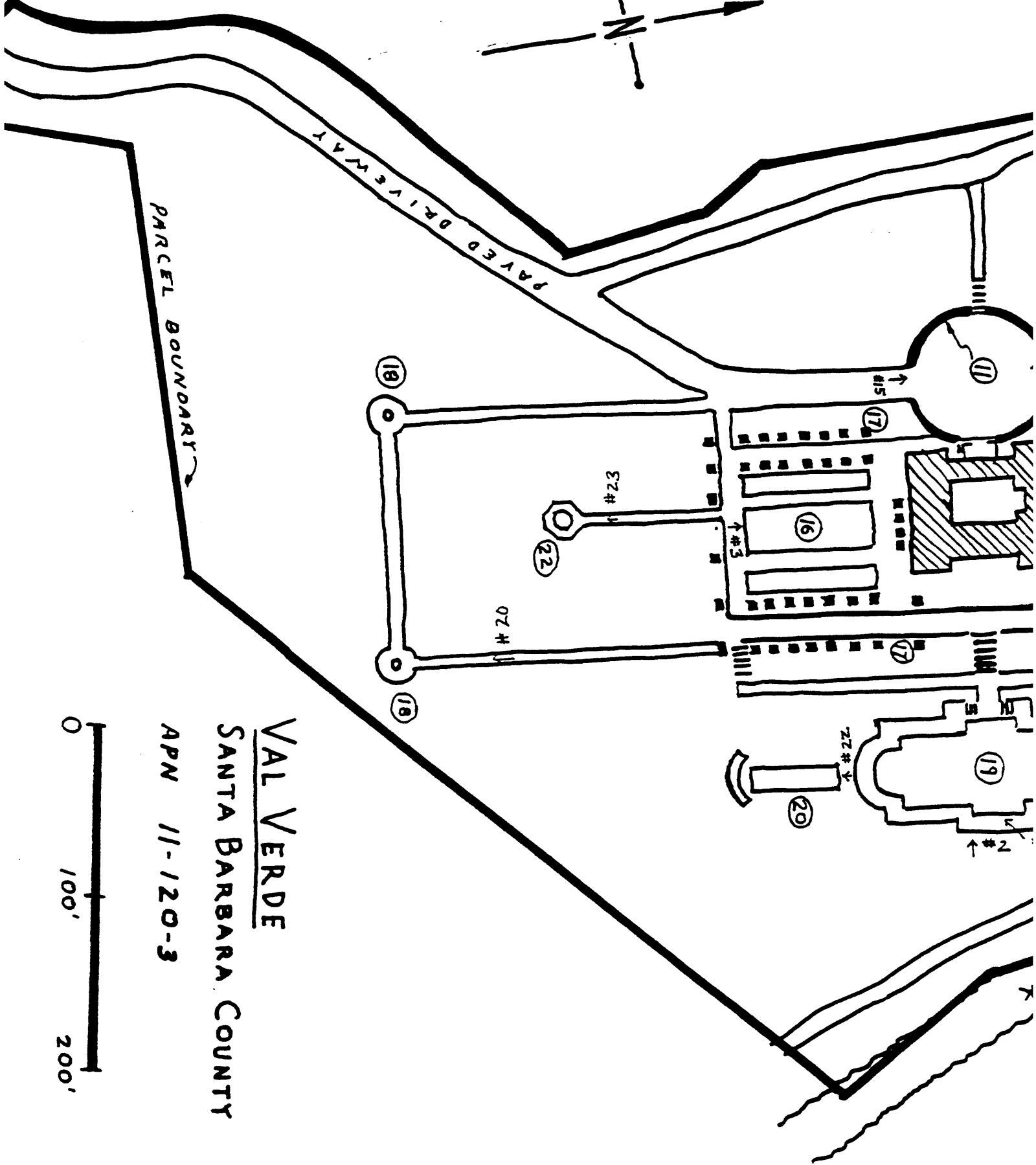
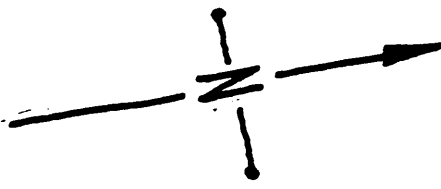
NOTE - Assessor's Parcel Numbers Shown in Figures

Assessor's Map Bk. 11 - Pg. 12
County of Santa Barbara, Calif.

SKETCH MAP and
KEY TO PHOTOGRAPHS



YCAMORK
NYON
70N



PARCEL BOUNDARY

PAVED DRIVEWAY

VAL VERDE
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

APN 11-120-3

