

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

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

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

1. Name

historic historic Oscar Easley Block

and/or common House of Music Building

2. Location

street & number 101 El Camino Real n/a not for publication

city, town San Clemente n/a vicinity of congressional district 40th

state California 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> n/a	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Leo F. and Ethel G. Fessenden

street & number 65 Mira Collado

city, town San Clemente n/a vicinity of state California 92672

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder, County of Orange

street & number 630 North Broadway

city, town Santa Ana state California

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Cultural Heritage Board, (Tax Certification, Part I, 5-25-82)
title City of San Clemente has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1980 federal state county local

depository for survey records City Hall, 100 Avenida Presidio

city, town San Clemente state California

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Oscar Easley Block is a two-story, rectangular office-financial building fronting on El Camino Real. It is constructed of steel-reinforced, poured concrete and finished with a smooth textured, irregular plaster. The 12-inch square support columns define a three bay (width) by seven bay (depth) structure measuring 60 feet by 100 feet. The low-pitched roof was previously adorned with Spanish tile; tiles still remain at the top of the facade gable.

The focal point is an impressive, two-story entry portico that immediately establishes the Moorish architectural theme with two recessed 16-foot high arches topped by pre-cast decorative concrete block, a masonry soffit, and a recessed, circular attic vent. The entry is flanked on either side by arched, recessed windows leading up to second floor balconies decorated with wrought iron railings. Hand-troweled masonry cornices crown this primary elevation. The interior of the ground level has 14-foot high ceilings and a central core of the original high-fired Spanish tile flooring below a two and one-half story atrium (presently covered by a 16-foot high fabricated overhead) measuring 14 feet by 28 feet. Pronounced masonry molding is projected from the atrium walls at the 15-foot level of the atrium.

Entry to the second level is provided only from outside the building. Twenty feet to the right (southeast) of the entry portico, double doors enter on to a curved stairway, again with the original high-fired, Spanish tile on the steps, accentuated by hand-painted decorative tiles of non-repetitive designs on each riser. The second level is highlighted by the atrium, which is viewed from arched, fruitwood sash, double windows opening into fixed staff-moldings (duplicating the design of the upper area of the entry portico) and through which is provided natural light for much of the interior hallway. Due to the interior configuration (atrium surrounded by rectangular hallway) all office areas are within 15 feet of outside windows. The second level interior is further highlighted by the original fruitwood doors and jambs with solid brass hardware. The second level exit is also a separate entry from a grade level street (Camino de la Estrella). The "rear" exterior is finished with recessed windows and arched molding, as are both side exteriors.

Alterations to the building have not been structural, consisting primarily of removal of most of the tile roof, attached advertising signs, the application of non-white exterior paint, the aforementioned atrium cover, and a few door and sash replacements. All alterations are easily reversible.

Both the Cultural Heritage Board, City of San Clemente, and the San Clemente Historical Society have designated this building as a historically and architecturally significant landmark.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
			<input type="checkbox"/> science
			<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
			<input type="checkbox"/> social/humanitarian
			<input type="checkbox"/> theater
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates Completed Aug., 1929 **Builder/Architect** Leroy M. Strang/Virgil Westbrook

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph) The Oscar Easley Block is the strongest example of Spanish-Moorish revival architecture in San Clemente, a planned community developed in the Spanish style of architecture in the 1920's. Appropriately, it occupies one of the most prominent commercial sites in the City and initially housed the City's first bank, the Chamber of Commerce, and the offices of the City's founder, Ole Hanson. Upon completion, it was described as the City's "finest business structure."

"San Clemente, The Spanish Village" (the official name of the City) was incorporated in February, 1928, barely two years after Oscar Easley's street grading crews turned the first piece of soil on the new subdivision which was the first in Orange County to impose architectural restrictions. Less than two weeks after Easley began his work, the first lot sales were conducted on December 6, 1925, in a tent raised across the street from the subject property by the City's founder, Ole Hanson. Hanson's sales success at a location equidistant between Los Angeles and San Diego was credited to both the community planning and architectural control programs he instituted. The City was laid out with carefully defined uses with the primary focal point being the intersection of Avenida Del Mar with El Camino Real (State Highway 1). Easley acquired the 60-foot wide El Camino Real frontage directly opposite the 80-foot wide Avenida Del Mar in October, 1926, to thereafter afford an unobstructed view of the Pacific Ocean from the dominant commercial site in the new City. Easley is also credited with building the first beachfront home in San Clemente, and as "the contractor who built the foundation on which Ole Hanson erected his dream city".

A March, 1929, building permit called for the construction of a two-story bank and office building. The building was completed within six months.

Virgil Westbrook was the architect, having also designed the San Clemente Beach Club, the City's sole entry into the National Register. The builder, Leroy M. Strang, later served as mayor for a longer period (nearly seven years) than any person in the City's 53-year history. Both Easley and Strang were elected in 1928 to the first five-member City Council, servicing respectively as the first Commissioner of Streets and Sidewalks and Commissioner of Police and Fire Departments.

The building's initial first floor occupants were the Bank of America of California (which had acquired the Bank of San Clemente), and the Chamber of Commerce. The second floor served as the headquarters of the Ole Hanson Organization, which moved from its original offices across the street. Subsequently, the second floor was used as the City Hall (8/31 to 3/37). The Bank of America became a dominant force in the City from this location due to the deepening effects to the 1930's Depression. After more than 30 years occupancy by the Bank of America (which had also acquired ownership of the building through a 1936 foreclosure action), the building was acquired by the current owner who conducted a retail music business on the premises.

The building is being renovated to resemble its original exterior and interior appearance for use as a combination retail and office facility. The work is being carried out in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for rehabilitation projects.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Banks, H. The Story of San Clemente, The Spanish Village, San Clemente: El Herald, 1939
 Heywood, R. T. San Clemente, City of White Houses, Laguna Niguel: Crown Valley Publishing Co., 1970
 Parker, C. E. A Manual of Orange County History, First American Title Insurance Co., 1964
 "Oscar Easley Dies" El Herald de San Clemente, Vol. IV. No. 9, Feb. 28, 1930.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 0.138

Quadrangle name San Clemente

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1	1	4	4	3	1	4	0	3	6	9	8	6	8	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 Property occupies its historic parcel, described as Lot 63 and the southeasterly 1/2 of Lot 64, Tract 789, of the City of San Clemente, The Spanish Village. Said property measures 60 feet by 100 feet.

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

state n/a code county n/a code

state n/a code county n/a code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Philip H. Thompson, Vice President

organization The Hammond Company

date 2/11/82

street & number 4910 Campus Drive

telephone (714) 752-6671

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

R. M. Ellison

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 1/13/83

For HCRS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register

date 2/17/83

Alvina Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

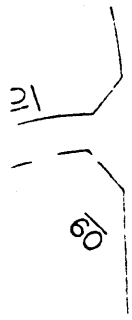
MARCH 1950

TR. NO 898

M. M. 28-1,2,3,4

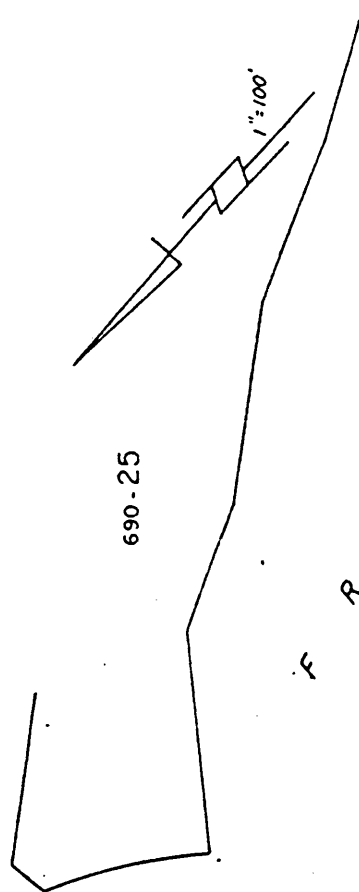
NOTE - ASSESSOR'S BLOCK 8
PARCEL NUMBERS
SHOWN IN CIRCLES

ASSESSOR'S MAP
BOOK 57 PAGE 10
COUNTY OF ORANGE



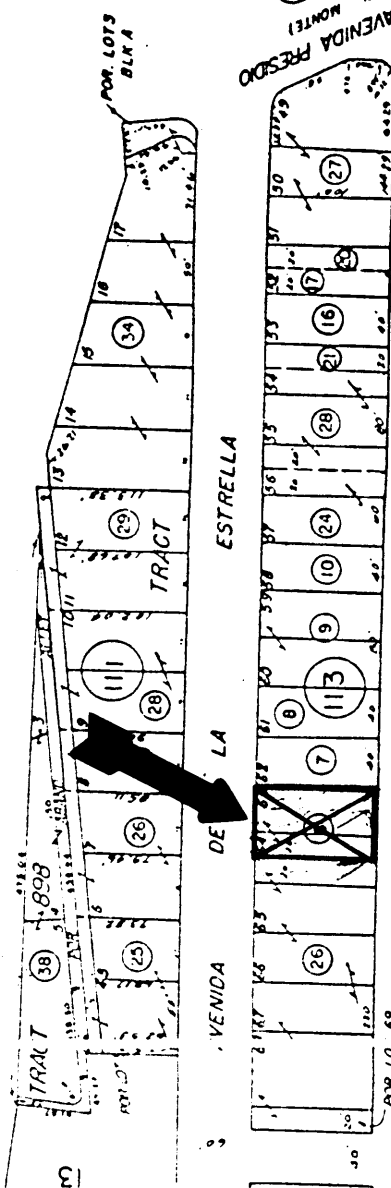
690-01

57-11

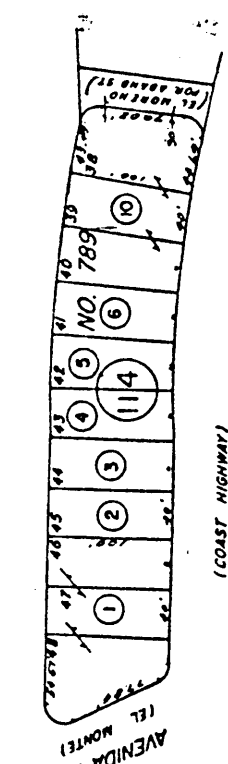


FREEWAY

FREEWAY



12

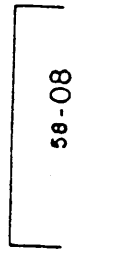
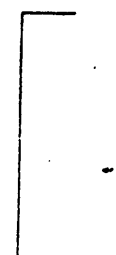


(COAST HIGHWAY)

REAL

CAMINO

EL



MARCH 1950

TR. NO 789
TR. NO 898

M.M. 23-44
M.M. 28-1,2,4

NOTE - ASSESSOR'S BLOCK 8
PARCEL NUMBERS
SHOWN IN CIRCLES

ASSESSOR'S MAP
BOOK 57 PAGE 11
COUNTY OF ORANGE

THIS MAP IS A 10% IMPROVEMENT MAP AND IS SUBJECT TO THE 1950 IMPROVEMENT MAP ACT.

4509

OSCAR EASLEY BLOCK, 101 El Camino Real, San Clemente, Orange County, California