

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

DEC 4 1989

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Clarke Estate
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 10211 Pioneer Boulevard N/A not for publication
city, town Santa Fe Springs N/A vicinity
state California code CA county Los Angeles code 037 zip code 90670

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>2</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u>1</u> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.

Kathryn Swallen 11/27/89
Signature of certifying official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

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

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register. **Entered in the National Register** 1/4/90

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 of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Single Dwelling

Work In Progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

Other: Mission Reduction - Irving Gill

foundation Concretewalls Concrete - poured in place

roof _____

other Cast Concrete

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Clarke Estate is a large two-story single family residence designed in 1921 by Irving Gill in a U-shaped plan with an interior courtyard enclosed on the fourth side by a porte cochere. The house was constructed of poured in place reinforced concrete with cast concrete decorative features. The exterior elevations consist of one- and two-story unadorned planes and cubic masses. The interior is characterized by clear spatial volumes and simple window openings typical of Gill. The property also includes a decorative fountain located immediately southwest of the porte cochere and part of the original design, a wooden building located northwest of the residence which was used to pack oranges when the adjacent area was an orange grove, a decorative pool located northwest of the residence which was constructed in the 1950s as a swimming pool and modified in 1989 to its present appearance, and a concrete block wall adjacent to the wooden building which was constructed in the 1950s to provide privacy near the swimming pool. The 3.11-acre heavily landscaped setting includes mature palms, cork oak, bamboo, a variety of flowering plants, and a bowling green. The house, while slightly modified over the years, retains the major characteristics of its distinctive design and careful workmanship.

The residence is designed in a reductive Mission Revival Style typical of Irving Gill's work of that period. The exterior elevations consist of one- and two-story unadorned planes and cubic masses. The exterior design is influenced by Mission elements while the interior courtyard contains cast concrete decorative features with Mediterranean Revival influence. The resulting juxtaposition of styles creates an energetic division between inner and outer spaces.

The Clarke Residence is constructed of poured in place concrete. Reinforcing rods were laid in a wall form along with steel frames for door and window openings from the patented "Gill System". Concrete was poured, allowed to cure, and skim coated with a fine cement outer coating.

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The building is oriented along a north-south axis with the main entrance on the southern elevation. The south facade consists of a centrally located porte cochere articulated by a set of arches. The arches on the southern elevation of the porte cochere are detailed in a manner similar to that of a triumphal arch, making the entry into the interior court. The porte cochere is flanked by two wings which are articulated by window openings. A fountain is located in front of the porte cochere.

The east elevation includes one- and two-story elements with balconies over the one-story elements. The arched entrance in this elevation is designed as a punched doorway opening. A small raised patio area is located directly in front of the doorway. The windows on the eastern elevation are arranged in a largely conventional manner. However, subtle changes in the placement and size of the window openings impart a certain dynamic quality to the entire facade.

The west facade also consists of both one- and two-story building elements. A two-car garage is located at the southern end of the facade. An entry area with twin arched entrance openings is cut into the middle of the facade. The north elevation consists of both one- and two-story building components. The two-story element on the east end of the facade has a unique corner window with a flat roof overhang that is a forerunner of later International Style detailing.

The interior courtyard consists of an arcade of columns at the lower level with balconies, and bedrooms above. The columns are indicative of the reductive style that characterizes the architect's work during this period. The north, east, and west interior elevations at the second story level consist of a wall surface articulated by triple arched window openings with a shallow concrete balcony. Cast concrete decorative elements at the arched windows show a Mediterranean Revival influence and are very ornate, in sharp contrast to the clean lines of the building. The southern interior elevation consists of a semi-enclosed balcony area that overlooks the courtyard. The floor of the courtyard is magnesite with decorative motifs in a Mayan design, and was surfaced with egg whites during finishing to give a soft green patina. Fine cooper wires cross the courtyard at roof level and were originally designed to support a sun screen. The building also includes a small projection area from which movies could be shown in the interior courtyard. The overall effect is not unlike that of a theatrical stage, a dramatic and unusual architectural design.

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Although the overall building design uses minimal ornamentation, considerable attention is given to decorative detail in the courtyard. The ornate Mediterranean-styled window surrounds and the Mayan motif in the magnesite floor add a richness to this area. Mrs. Clarke and her husband acquired the wood railings on the courtyard balconies in China during their trip around the world in 1904. Additionally, leaf patterns are cast directly into the skim coating on the concrete walls, and decorative concrete scuppers are used throughout. Discussions with James Seimon, who worked for the Clarkes and later inherited the property, indicate that these decorative elements were a direct result of Mrs. Clarke's influence on the design.

The building retains a high level of integrity although alterations have occurred. The northern exterior elevation has been modified by the enclosure of a second floor balcony in the library. Exterior plumbing/piping, which had been added at all exterior elevations, has been removed as part of a rehabilitation program. Any new plumbing will be concealed in interior walls. Oriental styled wood flower boxes were added in the 1950s as were a swimming pool and planters which have an Oriental influence. Other modifications made in the 1950s include a fiberglass enclosure over the kitchen court and some exterior light fixtures.

On the interior, many original decorative features remain. Cabinetry and shelving in the kitchen, library, and dressing room are original and in good condition. The domed ceiling in the entry area is distinctive, and the magnesite floor with coving is unusual. Some interior modifications were made in the 1950s including the additional parquet floors in the upper hall and some bedrooms. Brick and glass block additions were made on the two fireplaces. Nearly all of the original windows have been replaced, and a set of French doors has been replaced with aluminum sliders. The original architectural intent and overall integrity of design and detailing have not been altered by these reversible modifications.

The Santa Fe Springs residence was the Clarkes' primary home for only two years, and Gill's design of the site and landscaping were never completed. The swimming pool was remodeled in 1989 to become a decorative element, designed to be compatible with the original theme of the setting.

The wood packing house predates the residence, possibly from the 1910s. It was used for packing oranges when the area was in agricultural use prior to the construction of the estate. It is approximately 60 by 20 feet in size, single-story, with wood siding and a composite shingle roof.

The location, design, landscape features, detailing, and integrity of the Clarke Estate serve to make it a unique and unusual architectural landmark.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

Architecture

1921

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Significant Person

NA

Architect/Builder

Gill, Irving John

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Clarke Estate is significant in the architectural history of Southern California under Criterion C as the work of a master -- Irving Gill. The loss of the Walter Dodge house in Hollywood and the destructive remodeling of the Ellen Browning Scripps house in La Jolla give the Clarke house the distinction of being the best preserved major residence of Irving Gill's mature style. The poured in place concrete planes and cubic masses of the exterior elevations and the clear spatial volumes and simple openings of the interior are highly reflective of Gill's contribution to modern architecture.

Mr. and Mrs. Chauncey Clarke acquired 80 acres of orange groves in Santa Fe Springs for a country home. For this reason, the elegant residence is reminiscent of a contemporary grove house. The Clarks lived in the house from 1921 until 1923, when oil was discovered nearby. The area quickly changes; oil derricks, noise, fumes, traffic, and the development of a boom town outside their front gates diminished the appeal of their "retreat". Also, they received offers to lease their land for drilling. Mrs. Clarke continued to own the property until her death in 1948.

Irving Gill:

Late in 1919, Marie and Chauncey Clarke engaged the firm of Gill and Pearson (Irving Gill) to design and construct a home on their property in Santa Fe Springs. Irving Gill is now recognized as an architect of international importance, having influenced the course of architecture as a precursor of the International Style. Gill's architecture has been equated with cubism because of his use of concrete and the elimination of interior and exterior moldings and details. Gill trained at the office of Adler & Sullivan, along with Frank Lloyd Wright. After moving to California in 1893, Gill worked with a series of partners and originally designed homes in the English and American Colonial styles, then popular.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Unpublished Sources

Gebhard, David; University of California, Santa Barbara; letter dated July 26, 1988 (attached).

Gill, Irving; Ranch House for Mr. Chauncey D. Clarke; 1920 (working drawings signed by Gill); City of Santa Fe Springs collection.

Kamerling, Bruce; Curator of Collections, San Diego Historical Society; letter dated June 2, 1988 (attached).

Koeper, Frederick; California Polytechnic University at Pomona; letter dated June 2, 1988 (attached).

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 3.11 ac.

UTM References

A

1	1
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4	0	0	0	8	0
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3	7	5	6	2	2	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

C

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B

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 Zone Easting Northing

D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

An irregular shaped parcel consisting of approximately 3.11 acres abutting Alburdis Avenue to the west, Santa Fe Springs Town Center (Civic Center) to the north and east, and vacant land and existing single family homes to the south. See Attachment "B" for further information.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The Site Boundary shown on Attachment "B" can be justified as follows:

1. The boundary encompasses all known significant structures, site features, and landscape features contributing to the physical significance and integrity of this site.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jill Sterrett, Associate John C. Loomis, Secretary and Chief Financial Officer
 organization Thirtieth Street Architects, Inc. date 12/88 REVISED 8/89 9/89
 street & number 2821 Newport Boulevard telephone (714) 673-2643
 city or town Newport Beach state California zip code 92663

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His personal style became more evident after 1906, using a Mission Revival/Mediterranean Style cleaned of ornamental detail. The exteriors he designed became a series of cubes with flat walls and punched window openings and articulated with arches. Architectural historian Dr. Frederick Koeper calls Gill "America's first minimalist architect". His influence was widespread through articles by or about him in The Craftsman, Sunset and Architectural Record. In describing his design philosophy, he wrote that architects "must have the courage to fling aside every device that distracts the eye from structural beauty". American historians, notably Esther McCoy, have rightfully brought Gill's reputation into parallel focus with contemporary European avant-garde developments.

Although the majority of his work was built in San Diego, Gill worked in the Los Angeles area, particularly in the 1910 to the early 1920s period. During this time, he was chief architect along with Olmsted and Olmsted for the City of Torrance (1913-1914). His bungalow courts in the Los Angeles area (the Lewis Courts (1910) in Sierra Madre and Horatio West Courts (1919) in Santa Monica) built in that period illustrate his interest in lower income housing. The Dodge house of 1914-1916 in Los Angeles was considered the most complete embodiment of his architectural principles, but was demolished in the 1960s. The Scripps house (1915-1916) in La Jolla, which was similar in concept to the Dodge house, had been known as Gill's last major remaining residence, but has been severely remodeled as to be unrecognizable.

The Clarke Estate, which was completed in 1921 -- five years after the Dodge house -- extends the known work of this influential architect. Similar in design to the Dodge house, the Clarke residence is also of the Reductive Mission Style, configured as a series of cubes, and constructed of poured in place concrete. The exterior design reveals his cubist approach to architecture with Mission and Mediterranean influences in the use of the arch. The courtyard scheme of the Clarke Estate is also distinctively Gill. The severe "Tuscan" columns and crisp detailing is a distilled abstraction of a classic Mediterranean courtyard and could not be mistaken for the work of another architect, according to historian Frederick Koeper.

The courtyard floor plan and the inclusion of balconies were common features of Gill's design. He tried to make the outdoors a part of every room -- often with French doors connecting to balconies or courtyards from bedrooms as well as central living spaces.

Gill's emphasis on hygiene and labor-saving devices is well documented. In the Clarke Estate, Gill employed radius corners, or coving, at both the floor and ceiling and designed an integral finished magnesite tub surround --

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intended to avoid places dirt could collect. The house is unusual among his designs of the period in its use of detailing. These are believed to be the result of Mrs. Clarke's influence. Gill usually omitted ornament in his reductive style of design. Mrs. Clarke had a unique working relationship with Gill, unlike his other commissions, resulting in a degree of personal influence not seen in his other work. Gill permitted Mrs. Clarke to make her signature on the residence in the tri-arched window groupings, Chinese railings on the courtyard balconies, patterned floor, and leaves pressed into the walls. The Mayan cross pattern on the courtyard floor is distinguishable only from the distance of the upstairs windows. These decorative elements are limited primarily to the courtyard and are quite subtle. The overall exterior design is distinctly Gill.

Gill's reductionist style was controversial in his own time among architects who preferred lavish ornamentation. The Panama California International Exhibition of 1916 in San Diego popularized the Churrigueresque style of Mission Colonial Revivalism, and Gill's work was no longer in vogue. The Clarke commission was his last major residence. He had no major commissions until 1929. In the interim, Gill had only minor projects. His health and finances were rather poor for the last few years of his life.

Marie Rankin Clarke

It is interesting to note the contribution of Mrs. Chauncey Clarke to cultural opportunities in the Los Angeles area and her prominence in local society. The property on which the Clarke Estate now stands was purchased by the Clarke family in 1914 and was initially developed as an orange grove. Chauncey Dwight Clarke was originally from Illinois, where his father, Charles Clarke, established the Clarke Distilleries. Marie Rankin Clarke devoted her life to the promotion of arts and culture. Guests to her home included film stars Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford. She was one of the founders of the Hollywood Bowl and an organizer of the 1932 Olympics in Los Angeles.

Construction on the Clarke Estate in Santa Fe Springs was completed in 1921. The Clarkes actually resided in the house for only a short time. Since oil had been discovered in the area, Mr. Clarke was pressured to lease some of his land for drilling. The first well on Clarke property came in June of 1923. The Clarkes subsequently purchased property in Idyllwild and in Palm Desert and spent most of their time at these locations. However, after Chauncey Clarke's death in 1926, Mrs. Clarke maintained the estate in Santa Fe Springs until she died in 1948.

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Although the Clarkes resided in the Santa Fe Springs house only from 1921 to 1923, the period coincides with the date of the first performance (1922) at the Hollywood Bowl, for which Mrs. Clarke's involvement was crucial. Mrs. Clarke together with Mrs. Christine Witherill Stevenson envisioned the site's potential use as an amphitheater and purchased the property for that purpose around 1912 or 1913. Mrs. Clarke spearheaded the project in the City of Los Angeles to establish the amphitheater and served on the Bowl's Board of Directors from its inception until her death in 1948. The Hollywood Bowl is a major venue for musical events and frequently hosts artists of international prominence.

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Siemon, James (owner of Clarke Estate following the Clarkes); oral interview conducted with Ann Bartunek, Santa Fe Springs Library; February 11, 1981.

Published Sources

Ferris, Helen M.; "Irving John Gill: San Diego Architect"; The Journal of San Diego History; XVII (Fall, 1971).

Foly, Mary Mix; The American House; New York; Harper & Row; 1980.

Gebhard, David; "Irving Gill"; California Design 1910; Pasadena; California Design Publications; 1974.

Gill, Irving; "The Home of the Future. The New Architecture of the West: Small Homes for a Great Country"; The Craftsman; May, 1916.

Kamerling, Bruce; Irving Gill: The Artist as Architect.

McCoy, Esther; Five California Architects; New York; Prager Publishers; 1975.

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2. The boundary includes all significant historic and contemporary site and landscape improvements which were associated with the Clarke Estate and which were constructed at the conclusion of the building of the main residence or later.

3. The proposed boundary clearly captures the physical setting of this estate and preserves the site context. Within these proposed boundaries, the visual perception of time and place is essentially the same as it was in 1921 as evidenced in the historic photographs of the completed residence which accompany this application.

4. The proposed boundary follows existing landscape features which naturally define the limits of the historic setting while providing a buffer between the historic site and adjacent properties.

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Photographs 1

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Attachment A

Information for all recent photographs:

- 1) Clarke Estate 10211 Pioneer Boulevard
- 2) Santa Fe Springs, California
- 3) William O'Rourke
- 4) March 25, 1988
- 5) Thirtieth Street Architects, Inc.
2821 Newport Boulevard
Newport Beach, CA. 92663
- 6) Description of view, see list below:

- #1. Entry at porte cochere, east elevation . Fountain in foreground.
- #2. Detail of entry doors, east elevation
- #3. North elevation, east end, port cochere arch
- #4. North elevation, west end, door to living room
- #5. West elevation, north end, enclosed balcony off library
- #6. West elevation, south end, enclosed balcony off library
- #7. South elevation, west end
- #8. South elevation, center section Dog run (metal railings) has been removed.
- #9. South elevation, east end, garage . Dog run (metal railings) has been removed.
- #10. Southeast elevation, garage
- #11. Southeast elevation, porte cochere
- #12. Interior courtyard, view toward porte cochere

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- #13. Interior courtyard, wires for sunscreen visible
- #14. Front entrance from courtyard to vestibule, north elevation
- #15. Entrance from courtyard, south elevation
- #16. Leaf detail, embedded design in wall in courtyard
- #17. Detail of glass over door to living room

Information for historic photographs:

- 1) Clarke Estate
10211 Pioneer Boulevard
- 2) Santa Fe Springs, California
- 3) Unknown
- 4) 1921 for building photos, ca. 1925 for aerial photos
- 5) Thirtieth Street architects, Inc.
2821 Newport Boulevard
Newport Beach, CA. 92663
- 6) Description of view, see list below:

- #18. North and east elevations
- #19. East elevation
- #20. North elevation
- #21. South and east elevations
- #22. West and north elevations
- #23. East elevation, looking through porte cochere to courtyard
- #24. East elevation interior of courtyard Marie and Chauncey Clarke on balcony

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Photographs 3

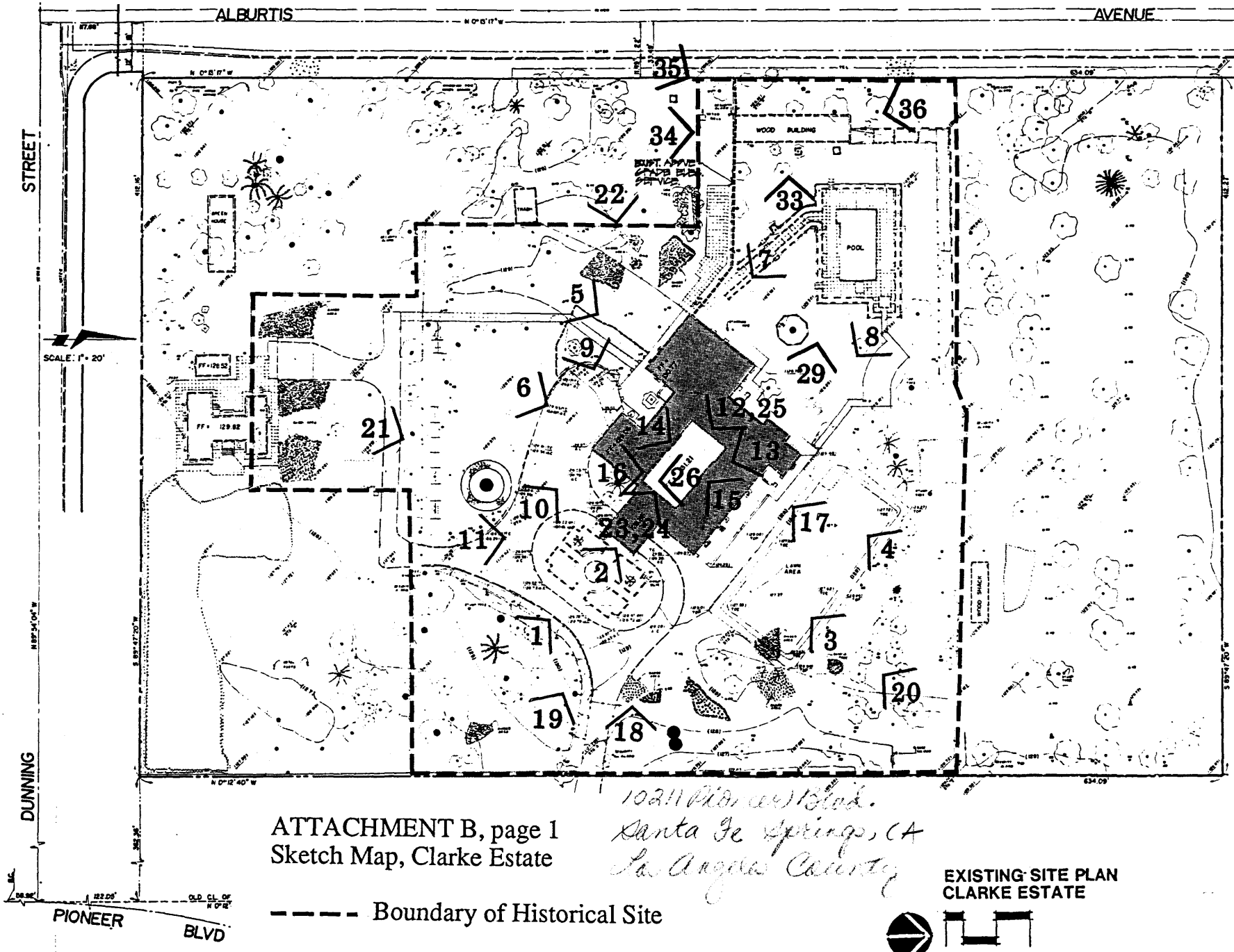
Section number _____ Page _____

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SEP 15 1989

- #25. West elevation interior of courtyard
- #26. Entry to kitchen court, southwest corner of courtyard, and Mrs. Marie Clarke.
- #27. Clarke Estate visible in lower right corner
- #28. Clarke Estate visible near clump of trees, lower right corner

Information for additional photographs:

- 1) Clarke Estate, 10211 Pioneer Boulevard
- 2) Santa FE Springs, California
- 3) Damon S. Barda
- 4) August 1989
- 5) Thirtieth Street ARchitects, Inc.
2821 Newport Boulevard
Newport Beach, California 92663
- 6,7) Description of view, photograph number. See below.
- #29 Decorative pool, looking to northwest
- #30 Chinese railing on northwest balcony in courtyard
- #31 Chinese railing on northeast balcony in courtyard
- #32 Chinese railing on southwest balcony in courtyard
- #33 Wood building, east elevation
- #34 Wood building, south elevation
- #35 Wood building, west elevation
- #36 Wood building, north elevation



TOWN CENTER PLAN
CITY OF SANTA FE SPRINGS

ATTACHMENT B, page 1
Sketch Map, Clarke Estate

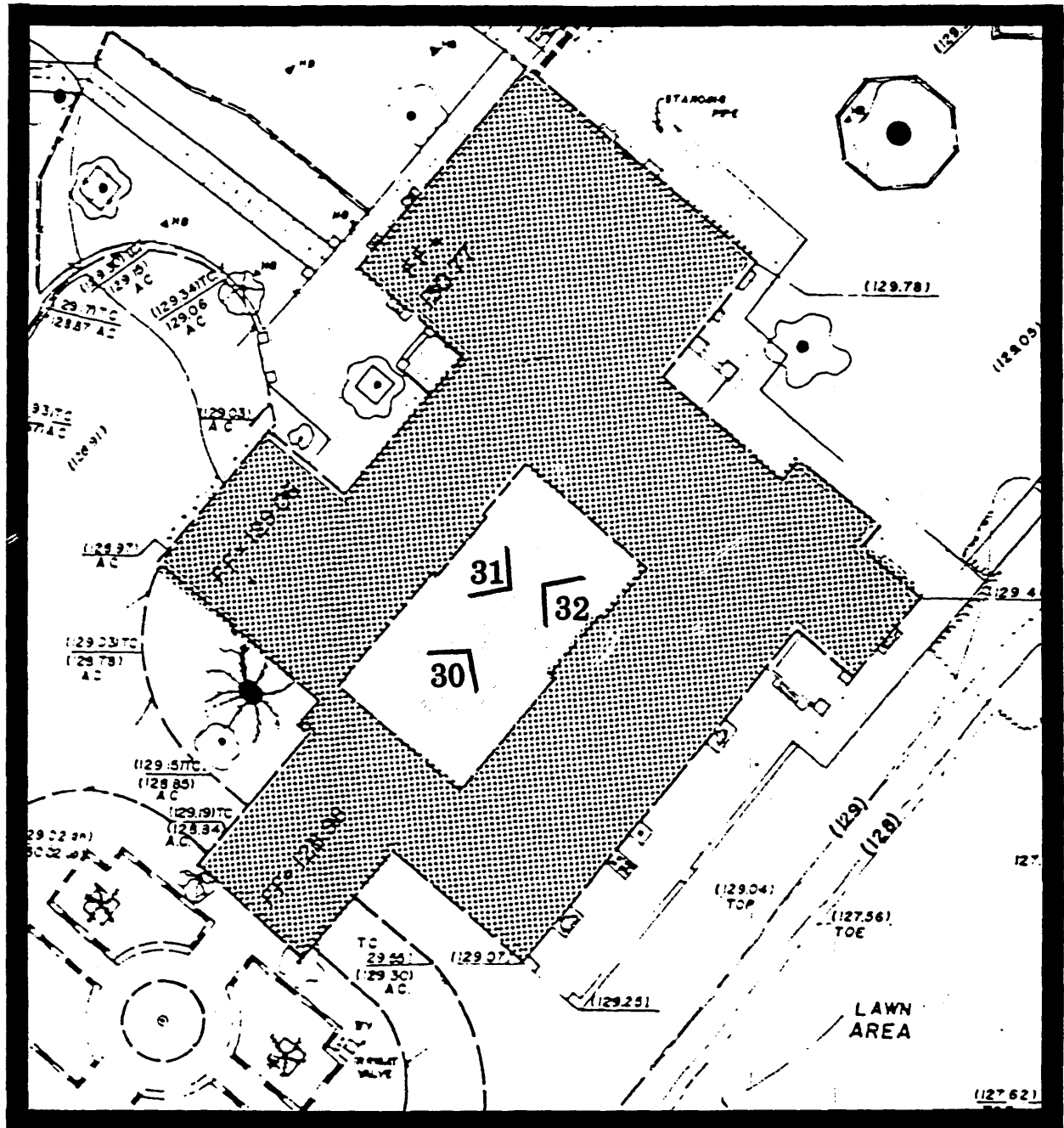
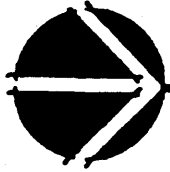
*10241 Old West Blvd.
Santa Fe Springs, CA
Los Angeles County*

----- Boundary of Historical Site

EXISTING SITE PLAN
CLARKE ESTATE



34 > Numbers of Photographs in Attachment A.
Numbers indicate position of photographer,
arrows show direction of view.



ATTACHMENT B, page 2
Sketch Map, Clarke Estate

31 > Numbers of Photographs
in Attachment A.
Numbers indicate
position of photographer,
arrows show direction of view.

*10311 Pimentel Blvd.
Santa Fe Springs, CA
Los Angeles County*