

**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 Minnie Hill Palmer Residence (Homestead Acre)

and/or common Homestead Acre

## 2. Location

street & number Chatsworth Park South at the western end of Devonshire Street,  
about 3/4 mile west of Topanga Canyon Boulevard  not for publication

city, town Chatsworth  vicinity of congressional district 20

state California code 06 county Los Angeles code 037

## 3. Classification

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

## 4. Owner of Property

name City of Los Angeles, Department of Recreation and Parks

street & number 200 North Spring Street

city, town Los Angeles  vicinity of state California

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. City Clerk Land Records Section

street & number 200 North Spring Street

city, town Los Angeles  vicinity of state California

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historic Cultural Monument No. 133

has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date November 20, 1974

federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Cultural Heritage Board, 200 North Spring Street, Room 1500

city, town Los Angeles  vicinity of state California

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## 7. Description

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

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### **Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The Minnie Hill Palmer Cottage, located within the Homestead Acre, is a wood-framed structure of a bungalow-type. It is a cross between the Western Stick style architecture and the California Bungalow--mostly bungalow. "A house that is not a bungalow though built along bungalow lines." (p. 221, Marcus Whiffen, "American Architecture Since 1870".)

It is the type of house easily built by a pioneer with only a few general plans (although the bungalow plans were widely distributed and readily available to everyone in California.)

It was a home, built by a pioneer San Fernando Valley homesteader for his large family. It is in an isolated area, part of a city park. (Chatsworth Park South at the end of Devonshire, Chatsworth.) It was once part of a 230 acre ranch.

The house faces south and is nestled up against the rocky hill, out of the wind, which is often severe in the area.

General characteristics: It was in the beginning a rectangular building with a small open front porch. The porch was screened-in later with wooden panels at the bottom and vertical screens at the top.

The porch has a sawtooth wooden decoration around the top of the porch above the screens. A back service porch and a bathroom were added on later (in the fifties) giving a charming haphazard effect to the building and destroying its original rectangular shape.

Looking toward the house, the two additions, each with a broad gabled roof, give the house a large, softer effect.

The original part of the house is of single-wall construction--very good and surprisingly air tight. There are vertical wooden panels about 12 inches wide with batten covering the seams between the planks. It has a cement foundation and a plank framing the house horizontally, separating the foundation from the vertical paneling.

The roof has a broad gentle pitch with an unusual gable--seemingly purely for beauty (odd in a practical house such as this one). The roof is overhanging with eaves about every two feet. The narrow windows are framed with wide planks similar to most California bungalows.

There is no chimney and no fireplace. The house is one-story and very plain inside. The service porch was built onto the long narrow kitchen and the wider bathroom is more like a separate house added with its own gabled roof that has a sharper pitch. The outside paneling of the additions are horizontal.

The house used kerosene lamps until Mrs. Palmer's son came home from World War II and wired the house for electricity. All the wiring is visible along the walls in the house.

The doors are solid wood with horizontal panels and the locks and door knobs are brass.

# 8. Significance

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

**Specific dates** 1911 **Builder/Architect** Lovell Hill & Willard Johnson

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Minnie Hill Palmer Homestead Acre is the only pioneer cottage with surrounding garden and fruit trees left in the West San Fernando Valley. It is important to local history because it is the kind of cottage and surrounding garden and fruit trees that sustained the many early settlers who migrated to the area and settled in the vast San Fernando Valley. Today, the Valley is a major suburban area of the City of Los Angeles.

At one time there were many such cottages and gardens in the San Fernando Valley, but the Minnie Hill Palmer Cottage and surrounding homestead acre is the only one known to Valley historians that is still intact on the same land and virtually unchanged since it was built in 1911. The land has remained in the same family from the time Rhoda Jane Enlow Hill and her Civil War veteran husband James David Hill took up squatter's rights on the 110 acres in the spring of 1886. Later they bought an adjoining 120 acres.

The Hills were one of the early families in the West San Fernando Valley, probably the fourth to homestead in the area of Chatsworth before it had a name.

Mr. Hill was a peddler who sold fruit to the workers who built the Chatsworth tunnels and drove the wagon that delivered the dynamite for blasting. The dynamite shed is still standing in Chatsworth Park South nearby (but not on the nominated acre). Mrs. Hill and her daughters did the washing and ironing for the men who built the Chatsworth tunnels.

Lovell Hill (son of Rhoda Jane and James) was one of the early postmasters and co-owner of the Graves & Hill General Store, a significant factor in the growth of the area. He was active in promoting the town of Chatsworth after it received its name in 1888.

His sister, Minnie Hill Palmer, was born on the land in the fall of 1886 after her parents had arrived in the spring and lived on the homestead almost all of her life, leaving for only a few short years. She lived a pioneer existence on the one remaining acre of the one-time 230 acre homestead in the midst of the growing San Fernando Valley. While the Valley grew into a modern metropolis, she continued her pioneer existence, growing her own food in the garden, canning and preserving her own fruits and vegetables until she moved to a retirement residence in January, 1977.

An early house was built on the land; a second house was erected on the same site. The family lived in a tent while the house was under construction.

At the time the 1911 house was built, Chatsworth Park was one of the Valley's growing agricultural communities--a separate town with it's own identity, a Post Office, a railroad station, telegraph office and the already mentioned Graves & Hill General Store.

The Minnie Hill Palmer Cottage with its surrounding garden and fruit trees which the Chatsworth Historical Society chooses to call "The Homestead Acre", the Old Stage Coach Road and the Pioneer Church built in 1903, are all that is left of the "old days" when the family farm was the way of life.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Virginia Watson. A Child's History of Chatsworth. Published by Chatsworth Women's Club, Los Angeles, 1967.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1  
Quadrangle name Oat Mountain Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UMT References

A	<u>1 1</u>	<u>3 5 1 3 4 0</u>	<u>3 7 9 2 0 8 0</u>	B	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	D	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>
E	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	F	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>
G	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	H	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Located on the eastern edge of Chatsworth Park South in Los Angeles. It is at the western end of Devonshire Street, about 3/4 mile west of Topanga Canyon Boulevard. *See enclosed plat.*

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

state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sara Wright, Legislative Analyst

organization Office of the Chief Legislative Analyst date May 31, 1978

street & number 200 North Spring Street, Room 253 telephone (213) 485-6611

city or town Los Angeles state California 90012

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

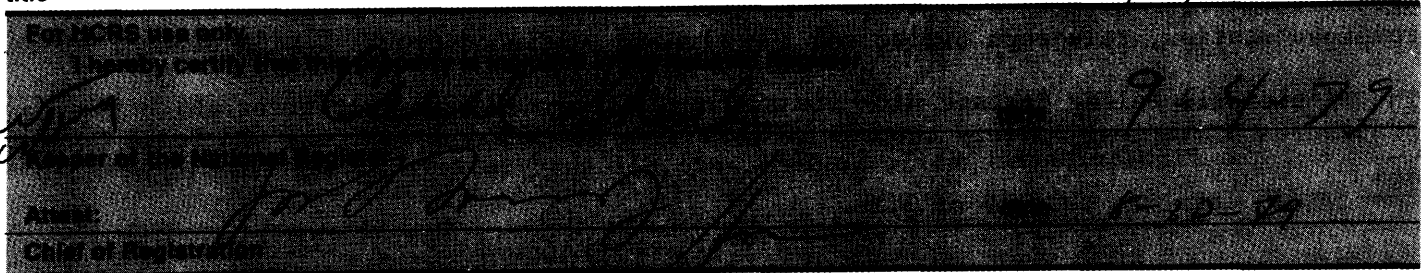
The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

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 Kerry Mellon

title \_\_\_\_\_ date 7/19/79



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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

FOR HCRS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JUL 24 1979
DATE ENTERED	SEP 4 1979

CONTINUATION SHEET      1                      ITEM NUMBER      7                      PAGE      1

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The house has three bedrooms and a living room about 15' x 19' which has the vertical boards mentioned before in the single-wall construction. The house is heated with a big old-fashioned heater that Minnie Hill Palmer left. It has a vent in the living room like the old-fashioned stoves.

The bedrooms are to the back of the house, opening off the living room and the dining room. There are no hallways. All the rooms in the house have the same wooden single-construction walls. The small dining room is to the west of the living room and has two small narrow windows. The long narrow kitchen and the service porch are to the west of the dining room and the bathroom is to the rear and west of the service porch.

There are two other buildings on the chain link fenced acre. A former pro-shop, left over from when a golf course surrounded the area in the fifties, is to the front and east of the house. The historical society proposes to use the building as a storage area and for a possible gift shop to sell related historical memorabilia.

A trailer parked toward the front of the property belongs to a man who works for the Dept. of Recreation and Parks and who is acting as a caretaker for the Homestead Acre.

There are big, beautiful shade trees, citrus trees, a large variety of fruit trees, grape vines, berry bushes and Minnie's large vegetable garden area as well as her many old-fashioned flowers.

*State Beach Road*

SEP 4 1970  
JUL 24 1970

- Legend:
1. Minnie Hill Palmer House
  2. Virgil Heumann Mobile Home
  3. Pro Shop--proposed gift shop, etc.
  4. Tennis Court--outside of area
  5. Minnie's Garden Area

*End Area*

