

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

For NPS use only

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

received JUL 29 1985
date entered AUG 29 1985

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

1. Name

historic Shadelands Ranch House

and/or common Shadelands Ranch Historical Museum

2. Location

street & number 2660 Ygnacio Valley Road not for publication

city, town Walnut Creek N/A vicinity of

state California code 06 county Contra Costa code 013

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input 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 City of Walnut Creek

street & number 1666 North Main St.

city, town Walnut Creek x vicinity of state California 94596

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Contra Costa County Recorder

street & number 822 Main St.

city, town Martinez state California 94549

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Point of Historical Interest has this property been determined eligible? yes no
CCC-005

date August 28, 1972 federal state county local

depository for survey records State of California Resources Agency, Dept. Parks and Recreation

city, town Sacramento state California

7. Description

Condition excellent good fair deteriorated ruins unexposed**Check one** unaltered altered**Check one** original site moved

date

N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Shadelands Ranch house sits in the center of 2.68 acres of fruit and nut orchards (no longer commercially used) and domestic gardens, all that remain of the 350-acre ranch of Hiram Penniman. It is accessed from Ygnacio Valley Road, a major artery to downtown Walnut Creek, some four miles to the west. The 1902 Colonial Revival house is the major existing building. It is a redwood frame, two-story plus attic and cellar, 12-room building, built for Penniman by Eckers and Sells, house builders of Oakland. A pumphouse also occupies the grounds. Other outbuildings have been lost over the years. The house is in good condition; alterations have been made to the side front porch.

Old fruit and nut trees, and many specimen palms and native valley oaks are dotted throughout the 2.68 acres around the house, as well as flower and vegetable gardens, and a large front lawn divided by the center drive, providing a general park-like atmosphere. At the back of the house are 13 pieces of large old farm equipment, remnants from the once large orchard operation. The original ranch acreage has been reduced through sales for administrative, professional, and research businesses, and this area is known as Shadelands Business Park.

The house measures 60 x 40 feet with a 20 x 20 foot ell extending to the back, or northwest. Most of the internal features are intact, such as wood lath and plaster walls, lower level oak floors, upper level pine floors overlaid with simulated oak linoleum. Foundation construction is of brick and concrete. Framing is with California redwood: 4 x 4 beams, 2 x 4 studs, joists, and supporting members. The hipped roof, porch, and dormers are shingled with redwood. Siding is redwood clapboard.

The house has never been out of the hands of the family, or family trustee, until deeded to the City of Walnut Creek. The family members were great "keepers" and, therefore, the house is complete with Penniman's furniture from 1902 and prior, and has all accessories, such as: kitchen utensils, much correspondence, books, ledgers, and family papers.

The south elevation of the building is two-story with a hipped roof. The main entrance porch wraps around the east side of the building. A dormer above the eaves is surrounded by cyma curved balustrade. The left front of the house is bowed on both stories; a half-round bay extends from the porch and second story on the right front. The original front porch, with clapboard bulkheads and paired wood Doric columns, was open. The porch was enclosed in 1943 and the paired columns were boxed on the inside, but remaining in view on the outside. This porch could be easily returned to its original condition by removal of the windows and boxing. This area is kept enclosed for exhibits now.

8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1902 **Builder/Architect** Eckers and Sells; Architect Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Shadelands Ranch house is the last remnant of a once larger ranch, which was significant for its historical association with agricultural development in Contra Costa County. Also, the ranch house is one of the best remaining examples of Colonial Revival architecture in Contra Costa County. It is the only major example in the Walnut Creek area, population approximately 90,000.

Hiram Penniman, builder of Shadelands, was one of the earliest pioneers in Ygnacio Valley, coming in 1852, and planting orchards of fruits and nuts. His sun-dried fruits, which were shipped to eastern markets, represented the first large-scale commercial orchard operation in Ygnacio Valley. His principal crops were prunes, peaches, apricots, pears, and almonds. Penniman was one of the founders of the Agricultural Society of Contra Costa County.

Of Hiram Penniman's children, only Mary and her younger sister Bessie were significantly involved with the operation of Shadelands. Bessie married Albert M. Johnson in 1896. After construction of the Shadelands Ranch house, Bessie and Albert visited many times and Albert became interested in growing walnuts on the property. It was he who provided the financial assistance to convert much of the acreage to English walnuts. Prior to World War II, Ygnacio Valley became world famous for its walnuts and pears, and the Shadelands Ranch was one of the leaders in this production.

Mary attended the New York Missionary Training College, but she never became a missionary. Instead, she returned to live with her family. After Bessie was married in 1896, Hiram decided to build the present larger house on the Shadeland's property. It has been suggested that one reason he did this was to provide for the security of Mary, who never married. Work on the house began in 1902. As her father was in his late seventies, Mary assisted in overseeing much of the detailed interior construction. In addition, she assumed the responsibility for supervising the bulk of the ranch work, which was done by Japanese share-croppers. Mary died in 1909 of influenza at the age of 49.

The ranch house design is Colonial Revival and with some craftsman details. The building implies a more sophisticated concept of the period's architecture than is generally evident in the local area. For the past twelve years, the Shadelands Ranch house has served as an historic house museum for the community, one of only three such historic houses in the county.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Brubaker, Isabelle 1850-1950 100 Years of Growth, Walnut Creek 1975
 Emanuels, George Ygnacio Valley 1854-1970, Diablo Books, Walnut Creek 1982
 Emanuels, George Walnut Creek, Arroyo de Las Nueces, Diablo Books, Walnut Creek 1984
 Johnston, Hank Death Valley Scotty, Trans-Anglo, Corona Del Mar, CA 1974

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 2.68

Quadrangle name Walnut Creek, CA

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

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 Zone Easting Northing

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Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet

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

state N/A code county N/A code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Carl L. Lindeken, Historical Researcher

organization Walnut Creek Historical Society date September 1, 1984

street & number 2660 Ygnacio Valley Road telephone 415-935-7871

city or town Walnut Creek state California 94598

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Marion Mitchell Wilson

title Dep. State Historic Preservation Officer date 3/12/85

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

John Albert Byers
 Keeper of the National Register

entered in the
 National Register

date 8/29/85

Attest:

Chief of Registration

date

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The east side continues the original open wraparound porch, including four pairs of double columns. The porch was altered in 1943 enclosing it with windows and boxing in the columns in the interior. The under structure suggests a possible stairs to east garden area from the porch of the original structure. A concrete block foundation is visible in the NE corner

The north side shows the end of the enclosed porch. To the right is a 1943 renovation of a bathroom wall using glass blocks to provide additional lighting. Exterior plumbing is visible adjacent to this glassed wall. The bulkhead leading to the cellar has its original doors. The back steps lead into a screened porch. The four grouped windows on the second floor provide light and ventilation for the main stairwell and landing. The third floor windows provide similar light to the attic.

The west side shows finer detail than the east or north, possibly because this was the main drive to the area in back. It has an 18" frontal protrusion of the dining room and large bedroom above. The dormer with its reverse balustrade, ball finials and curved joining is notable.

The major interior features are in the living room, dining room, and entry hall. There are two cupboards under the bracketed porch windows in the entry hall. The front door's exterior is a golden oak veneer, the interior is double paneled in redwood. The living room has 8-inch baseboards and double molding above the curved glass bay windows. Sliding pocket doors of redwood separate the entry hall from the dining room, and on the other side from the living room. The dining room contains a rough brick fireplace. An identical fireplace is located in the living room. The original gas-electric chandelier remains in the dining room. Gas was provided by acetylene produced from calcium carbide in a generator in the tank house adjacent to the house, which also housed the water supply. There is 5-foot wainscoting in the dining room and a leaded glass built-in cupboard with colonettes and dentils under a large cornice with plate grooves. The main staircase leading to the second floor has a square oak pendant and newel post with single square balusters. A window seat with hinged lid is located on the landing. The windows above the seat provide lighting for the stairwell and lower hallway. A bathroom on the second floor still has its original toilet, built-in linen drawers, wainscoting, and a footed bathtub with added shower arrangement. The linoleum is original. A bedroom on the second floor has the original gas-electric chandelier and wall gas brackets. Picture moldings are intact in nearly every room.

Only a pump house of the Shadelands out-buildings remains intact. This pump house NW of the main house supplied well water for both irrigation and house use. Constructed of clapboard and shingled hipped roof, the design is similar to that of the main house. The facility is no longer functional.

However, the most significant of the out-buildings was the "summer house," used for entertaining during the warm summer months. This structure was located in the SW corner of the present front yard. We believe it was built by the contractors (Ecker and Sells) shortly after they completed the main house. The large brick fireplace and brick flooring are all that remain.

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APPENDIX - HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The Shadelands Ranch Historical Museum is in the approximate center of the original Rancho Arroyo de Las Nueces y Bolbones. The ranch house and the 2.7 acres surrounding it are all that remain of the 370 acres Hiram Penniman and George Potwin purchased from Encarnacion Pacheco, daughter of the grantee of the rancho in 1856. The ranch house is now the only home left from early (1853) settlers in the area.

Hiram Penniman was quick to recognize the possibility of fruit farming in Ygnacio Valley and planted almonds, peaches, apricots, and prunes. The fruits were sun dried and shipped to eastern markets. This venture represented the first large-scale commercial orchard operation in the Ygnacio Valley, which later became world famous for its fruits and nuts. However, it remained for Penniman's son-in-law, Albert Johnson, to demonstrate the potential for walnut growing in this area, and it was Johnson who provided the financial assistance to convert most of the acreage to English walnuts. Thus, the local purpose for applying for nomination of the Shadelands Ranch site for entry in the National Register is to better recognize the strong agricultural heritage that this site represents.

Additional Background

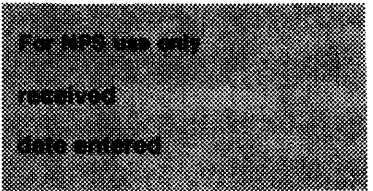
Hiram Penniman, his brother Arthur, and possibly his sister Harriet came to California about 1850. After a brief attempt at gold mining, during which they found that growing vegetables for sale was more profitable than prospecting, Hiram and Arthur came to Ygnacio Valley. In 1856, Hiram and George Potwin, who later married Harriet, purchased 370 acres of land from Encarnacion Pacheco, daughter of Dona Juana Sanchez de Pacheco, the original grantee of the Mexican rancho.

Penniman had strong interests in both agriculture and community activities, and these interests prompted him to help found the Contra Costa Agricultural Society in 1859. In 1865, he bought land in Walnut Creek, straightened the county road, which had followed the winding of the creek, and opened the present Main Street. He offered lots for sale and, thus, was instrumental in establishing the town of Walnut Creek.

Hiram's wife, Sarah, died in 1863, leaving him with two boys and an infant daughter. He remarried in 1866, and to this marriage, a daughter, Bessie, was born in 1872. Bessie attended Stanford University, but continued her education at Cornell in New York where she met Albert M. Johnson, whom she married in 1896. Bessie inherited the Shadelands property on the death of her half-sister, Mary. Bessie and Albert Johnson managed Shadelands Ranch from their home in Chicago until 1921, when they hired a full-time resident manager. Bessie died in 1943 and Albert died in 1948. He had put all his assets into a foundation, naming it the Gospel Foundation of California. The Shadelands Ranch home was used from 1952 to 1956 for a school for handicapped children. In 1970, the Gospel Foundation gave the house and acreage around it to the City of Walnut Creek.

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Historical Overview (Continued)

Since November 1972, the house has been managed by the Walnut Creek Historical Society for the City of Walnut Creek as an historical museum and a repository for Walnut Creek area history. The museum is furnished with original Penniman and Johnson family furniture and, in addition, contains a History Room with local and county historical reference material, available for public use. The museum is open to the public twice a week, and by appointment for special tours or History Room use, with trained docents from the Walnut Creek Historical Society.

It is the intent of the Walnut Creek Historical Society, supported by the county, city, and community interests, to preserve the Shadelands Ranch site, not only because of its connections with California's past, but because it represents a unique point of reference for students of California and local history.

The importance to the community of this ranch is illustrated by the fact that the business park development, now nearly surrounding the site, is called Shadelands Park and the street behind it is Shadelands Drive.

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Geographical Data

Verbal boundary description and justification.

Beginning at the most easterly corner of the property described in Contra Costa County Book of Official Records 6252, at Page 188 and shown on the Contra Costa County Assessor's Map (Fig. 26) attached, proceed Southwest along Ygnacio Valley Road 367.45 feet, then North $27^{\circ} 52' 43''$ West 311.65 feet, then North $62^{\circ} 53' 08''$ East 371.46 feet, then South $27^{\circ} 06' 52''$ East 317.40 feet to the point of beginning. The boundary lines enclose all that remains of the historic Shadelands Ranch property.

LOT 6, POR. LOT 5 VALLEY LAND, RO. SAN MIGUEL.

1969-1-5 P.M. 40 9-27-68 6-44 P.M. 32 & 33 4-30-75
 2-14 P.M. 13 9-17-70 7-55 P.M. 4 & 5 6-3-77
 3-23 P.M. 48 9-1-72 8-60 P.M. 37 12-2-77
 4-26 P.M. 29 2-26-73
 5-33 P.M. 32 5-3-74

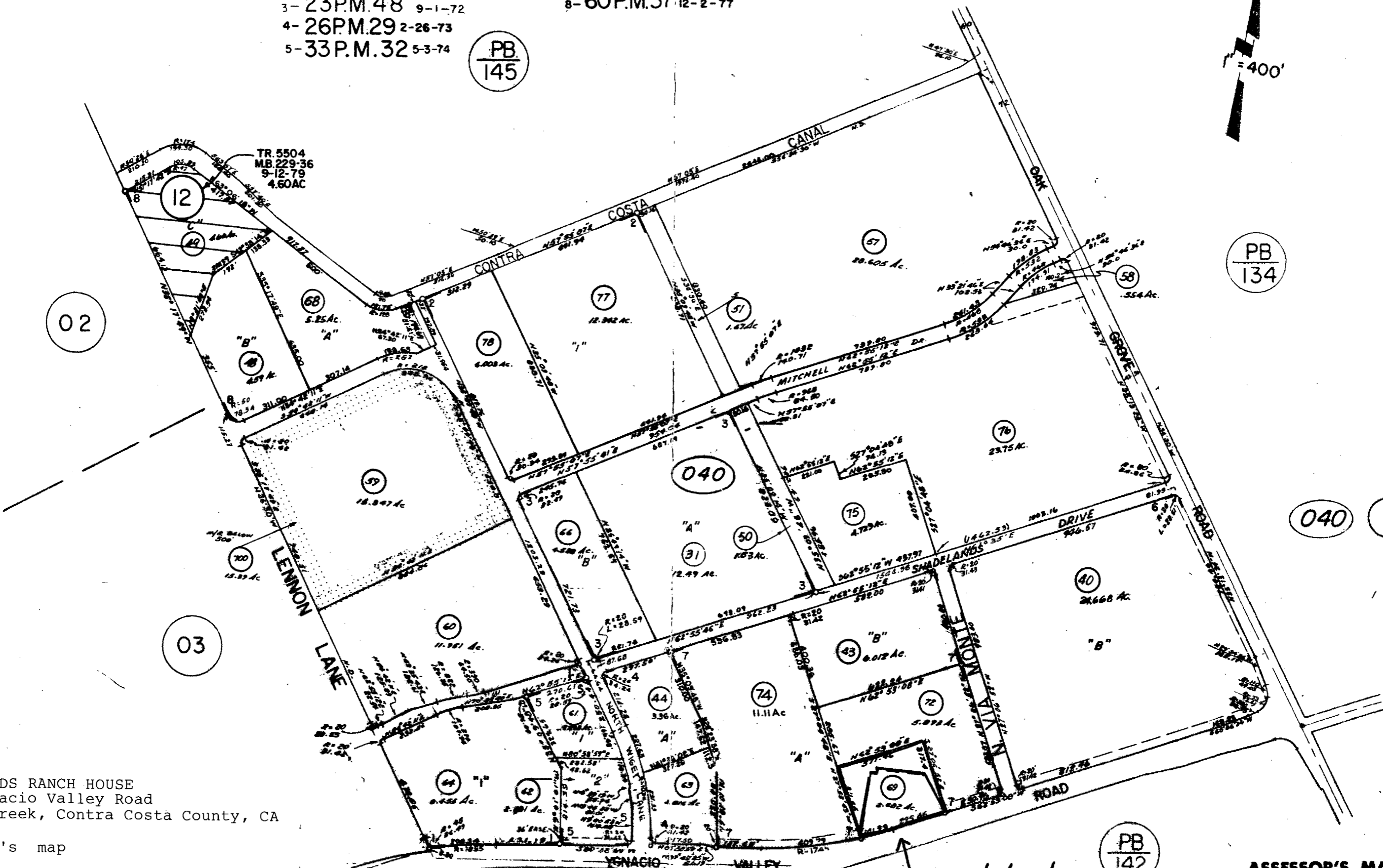
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SHADELANDS RANCH HOUSE
 2660 Ygnacio Valley Road
 Walnut Creek, Contra Costa County, CA

Assessor's map

Shadelands

Shadelands Ranch house
2660 Ygnacio Valley Rd., Walnut
Creek, Contra Costa County, CA
Assessor's Map, Contra Costa County
December 2, 1977