

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received FEB 2 1987

date entered MAR 9 1987

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

1. Name

historic Aetna Springs Resort

and/or common (same)

2. Location

street & number 1600 Aetna Springs Road N/A not for publication

city, town Pope Valley N/A vicinity of congressional district 2

state California code 06 county Napa code 055

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name New Educational Development Systems, Inc.

street & number 2929 Avalon Avenue

city, town Berkeley N/A vicinity of state California 94705

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Napa County Court House

street & number 825 Brown Street

city, town Napa state California

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Napa County Historic Resources Inventory has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1979  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records State Office of Historic Preservation, P.O. Box 2390,

city, town Sacramento state California 95811

# 7. Description

<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 <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

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

The Aetna Springs Historic District consists of 672 wooded acres containing the former mineral springs resort. The actual developed area is a compact concentration of 32 buildings and a number of associated structures and landscape features at the center of the property; these date from the 1870s to the early 1930s, the period of major development of the resort. Most of the buildings are rustic in character, often incorporating cobblestones, wood shingles, and expressed structure. The major buildings are the original lodge, the dining hall, social hall, and soda fountain building; numerous cottages and service buildings also exist. Several buildings were added or remodeled in the early 1930s, maintaining the earlier rustic character. Integrity remains generally high from this later period: 34 of the 40 property features contribute to the historic character of the district.

The core of the Aetna Springs Historic District consists of 32 buildings and a number of related landscape features such as a monumental stone boulder and wood entrance gate, extensive stone walls, two stone bridges over a creek, a wooden pergola, a swimming pool, and a golf course. A fragment of the concrete foundations remains from the former bottling works; the building itself, minus its tower section, exists in another part of the Pope Valley. With the exception of the remodeled golf clubhouse (4), the nearby washrooms and toilets (32), the showers (9), and a relatively modern spring house (F), the structure dates from the period of the resort's greatest development from c. 1877 to the 1930s. The resort continued to operate until the 1970s, but with little building activity. Some of the smaller sheds and service buildings of a utilitarian character have been altered over the years in ways that make the dates of such alterations very difficult to ascertain. Several of the guest cottages had their interiors stripped for remodeling by previous owners in the 1970s, but the remodeling was never completed. The present owners plan to restore the interiors. The building called the Main House (11) received many additions for which no plans remain. Yet, the main buildings: the Dining Hall (1), Social Hall (2), and the so-called Soda Fountain (3), along with the original lodge, Windship (17), and the guest cottages, preserve their architectural integrity. The only major building loss was the destruction by fire of the Len D. Owens House which stood on the hill across the road from the main building group. Some photographs show this house. The bathing facilities (5) and (33) are intact except for repairs and minor changes, although the swimming pool (5A) was enlarged in the 1950s. Although the well-watered vegetation of the late 19th century has suffered a certain loss from drought and age, there are venerable oak trees and other plantings which suggest the greater density that is visible in historic photographs. The grounds are still an oasis.

Most of the resort buildings lie south of the road. The group to the north of the road was less tied to lodging and more to services and the golf course and bottling works. The southern group spans a considerable period of time but is compatible through its rustic character which was achieved through consistent use of the same materials including heavy timbers, exposed framework, latticed porches, and shingled walls. This character was strengthened in the 1930s remodeling carried out in the office of Albert Farr and J. Frances Ward. The complex is harmoniously sited, particularly in relation to the creek banks.

Following is a detailed description of the major buildings and general descriptions of groups of minor buildings and landscape features. The buildings are keyed by numbers to the attached site plan.

# 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Tourism
<input type="checkbox"/> invention				

**Specific dates** 1877-1935 **Builder/Architect** 1877-c1925, unknown; c1925-c1935, Farr and Ward

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

Aetna Springs was one of California's famous mineral springs resorts of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The complex is largely intact, with few alterations subsequent to the last major renovation in the early 1930s, and is one of the finest remaining examples of its type and period in the state. A number of the buildings are architecturally distinguished, and the complex of rustic buildings and associated landscape features are a major statement of the regional "First Bay Tradition" of the Arts and Crafts design philosophy.

Under Criterion A, Aetna Springs is linked to the nationwide popularity of mineral hot springs as places for recreation and restoration of health in the 19th century. The advent of the field of germ pathology eroded the general belief in the cure-all properties of "taking the waters", but spas continued as popular recreation centers well after the turn of the century. Though not the first of the resorts in the Napa Valley associated with hot springs -- Napa Soda Springs, Calistoga Hot Springs, and White Sulphur Springs were developed in the 1850s and 1860s -- Aetna Springs has the distinction of continuous operation in the Napa Valley over the longest period of time, from 1877 to 1972. The popularity throughout the western states of the Aetna Mineral Water, first bottled in 1886, equaled and perhaps exceeded that of the waters of other spas in the state.

Under Criterion C, the complex of resort buildings represents an architecturally distinguished entity. Not only is the complex as a whole sympathetically integrated with its site, but several of the buildings are architecturally outstanding. Although the design of the Dining Hall and Social Halls has been attributed to Bernard Maybeck, there is no evidence to support this allegation beyond his friendship with the second proprietor, Len D. Owens. Still, the buildings are stylistically kin to Maybeck's work and are fine designs in their own right. Two other architects, Albert Farr and J. Frances Ward, prominent San Francisco practitioners, carried out the design of at least three of the cottages and the extensive remodeling of the other buildings around 1930.

In addition to the buildings, the development of the site as an oasis with bath houses, swimming pool, generous landscaping, extensive stone walls, gates, bridges, and a golf course is a significant man-made contribution to the natural environment. The golf course, originally a nine-hole course with sand greens, may have been laid out in the early 1890s under Len Owens' direction. If so, it might compete with the one at Monterey's Hotel Del Monte of 1895 for designation as the state's oldest.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Slocum, Bowen & Co., History of Napa and Lake Counties, S. F. 1881, p. 168.

Napa Register, numerous articles in the 1880s

St. Helena Star, articles in the 1870s and 1880s

Promotional pamphlet for Aetna Springs dated 1879, Bancroft Library, U. C. Berkeley

Promotional literature and photographs, California Historical Society

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 672

Quadrangle name Aetna Springs, CA

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	0	5	4	5	3	5	0	4	2	7	9	7	8	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

1	0	5	4	5	7	4	0	4	2	7	8	1	9	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

1	0	5	4	4	9	8	0	4	2	7	5	9	6	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

D 

1	0	5	4	4	2	8	0	4	2	7	5	9	6	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

E 

1	0	5	4	4	0	7	0	4	2	7	9	7	8	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

F 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

**Verbal boundary description and justification** All that portion of Sections 35 and 36 of Township 10 North, Range 6 West and Sections 1, 2, 11, 12, and 14 Township North, Range 6 West Mount Diablo Base and Meridian, Napa County, Ca., described as follows: Parcel 1. The west half of Section 12 and the Southeast quarter of the Southwest quarter of Section 1, all in

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

state	code	county	code
N/A		N/A	

state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sally B. Woodbridge, Architectural Historian

organization (none) date December 2, 1983

street & number 2273 Vine Street telephone (415) 848-4356

city or town Berkeley state California 94709

## 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 Kathryn Mattie

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 1/13/87

### For NPS use only

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

John Albrecht National Register date 3-9-87  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

Chief of Registration

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
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Representation in Existing Surveys (continued)

A Guide to Architecture in San Francisco and Northern California

By David Gebhard, Roger Montgomery, Robert Winter, John Woodbridge and  
Sally Woodbridge.

Published by Peregrine Smith, Inc. Salt Lake City and Santa Barbara, 1973.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet**

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Property features (keyed to site plan)

Contributing

- 1 Dining Hall
- 2 Social Hall
- 3 Soda Fountain Building
- 5 Bathhouse
- 6 Garage
- 7 Plumbing Shop
- 8 Tool Shed
- 10 Barn
- 11 Main House
- 12 Cottage
- 13 Living Quarters
- 14 Creekside Living Quarters
- 15 Linen Room and Living Quarters
- 16 Caroline (cottage)
- 17 Winship (original lodge)
- 18 Gassaway (cottage)
- 19 Munro
- 20 Locust
- 21 Hartson
- 22 Owl's Nest
- 23 Aetna
- 24 Acacia-Elm
- 25 Alger
- 26 Robin
- 27 Russ
- 28 Dewey
- 29 York
- 30 Frances Marion
- 31 Lawton
- 33 Mineral Bath
- A Entrance Gate and Stone Walls
- B Stone and Timber Bridge
- C Stone and Timber Bridge
- D Pergola at Social Hall

Non-contributing

- 4 Golf Club House
- 5A Pool
- 9 Showers and Pool Filter Building
- 32 Toilets
- E Golf Course
- F Spring House (Site of Bottling Works)

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#1 Dining Hall: 1905, cooling room, 1895, kitchen addition 1899, designer unknown

A basically rectangular structure with projecting wings composed of the main dining hall facing SW, a so-called children's dining hall to the NW, a spring house or cooling room off the east wall of the children's dining hall, and a large kitchen wing, which appears to have been several rooms at one time and possibly built as an addition to a dining hall that formerly stood on the site of the present main hall. The rooms comprising the present two main halls are consistent in style and construction; the cooling room is known to have been built before these two and was probably saved because it is a stone wall structure. The dining halls have a stone boulder foundation and are sided with channeled boards. The siding is exposed on the inside of the kitchen as if the wall had been considered an outside wall. This consultant's theory is that the present kitchen and service rooms were later additions to the older building which was demolished for the present one, while the additions were, for unknown reasons retained. Judging from newspaper accounts, the dining hall was built in 1905. It has been attributed to Bernard Maybeck, who was a friend of the owner's, but no written account of any contract or plans has been found. The exterior of the 1905 building is simple and functional. A shed-roofed porch with a central gable on square posts runs across the front. The main hall is one gable-roofed space about two stories high with broadly projecting eaves. Tall, narrow windows of wood sash set in white frames are grouped in threes and divided into four sections of six lights each. The bottom sash is double-hung. Above the double wood entrance doors is a large window with a gabled head set with diamond panes of colored glass. The interior is finished in wood with boards set diagonally in the upper part of the entrance and rear walls. A high wainscoting with wide battens occupies the spaces between windows. The roof is braced with a truss made of laminated wood members; roof purlins are exposed. The rear wall has a built-in serving cabinet with eight cabinets and drawers set between heavy square posts surmounted by a balcony with a railing. The back wall of wide boards appears to have been moved several feet back at some time, perhaps to accommodate a large group of musicians. Two lanterns are suspended from the corner balcony posts. Similar metal lanterns with glass panels hang from carved, curved beam-ends spliced into wall brackets and ceiling beams. The interior of the children's dining room, which is about one-and-one-half stories high, is similarly finished, but the roof truss, also of laminated members, has arched braces and shorter, pegged king posts. The same lanterns embellish the interior. The character of the roof trusses and wall finish in both rooms is decidedly Maybeckian. The kitchen and service spaces in the rear wing are finished in tongue-and-groove on walls and ceilings and have no distinguishing details. The cooling room is also undistinguished except for the stone walls.

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#2 Social Hall:(also called Amusement Hall), 1906, designer unknown

The building is an irregular rectangle in plan consisting of one large hall rising clear to the roof on the NW side and a section divided into two stories of three rooms each on the S side. A one-story office wing projects to SW. A one-story veranda with projecting porticos on the SW and NE corners encircles the ground floor of the main building block. A second-floor shingled balcony projects from the chimney area. The gable-roofed structure is clad in board-and-batten. Double-hung, wood sash windows with 6/6 lights are grouped in twos and threes; double wood doors provide entrances. Heavy timber brackets elaborated into "tree" forms on the veranda porticos enforce the building's rustic character. The interior of the main hall is also rustic in character with a massive stone boulder fireplace at one end and boulder chimney breast rising to the roof through a balcony on heavy timber brackets which runs across the NE end. The roof is braced with cross beams and king post trusses of laminated members at either end; the center rafters are not trussed. The wooden walls have a grid of wide battens laid over them; floors are also wood. The set of rooms on the S side contain, on the ground floor, a stage alcove raised four steps above the floor; subsidiary rooms are on either side while storage rooms occupy the three spaces on the second floor. Access to the second floor is provided by stairways at the E and W ends of this section. Old photographs show the hall furnished with rustic chairs, rockers, and tables; a piano is in the alcove. Like the dining hall, the social hall strongly resembles the work of Bernard Maybeck. A free-standing pergola (D), approximately contemporary with the social hall, is located immediately to the south.

#3 Soda Fountain: orig. club room c1880; main part 1908, designer unknown

This structure consists of a large rectangular element containing two main rooms and a number of smaller service rooms. The larger of the main rooms served as a bar and appears to have been the original structure which was enlarged by the additions of rooms on the back side and a two-bay porch on the NE side. A gable roof covers the whole. A separately roofed, open pavilion is appended to the SE corner and formerly housed two raised bowling lanes, now removed. The structure has walls of board-and-batten with the battens formed of small tree limbs or trunks cut in half. This rustic character is also conveyed by the peeled-log, post-and-beam support structure of the porch and pavilion. The other strong rustic element is the stone boulder hearth and wall forming one side of the second main room. The interiors are otherwise undistinguished by any particular architectural treatment. The whole building is raised on a stone boulder foundation. There is a variety of small-paned 8/8 double-hung windows and glazed and wood-paneled doors. In general, this building has a more generic rustic character than the dining and social halls and is less tied to the work of Bernard Maybeck.



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#17 Winship: 1893, remodeled c1930, Farr and Ward

This surviving structure from the 19th century resort was moved in 1906 and considerably altered in 1930. Judging from old photographs a two-story veranda replaced the original one-story one, and the structure was re-sided and set on a stone boulder foundation. A set of specifications from Farr and Ward indicate that the exterior and interior were re-done and the structure received new concrete foundations. It appears that the basic frame with roof and cupola were retained; the interior was modernized, and the exterior porches totally altered. The building has a square plan, a stone boulder foundation for the two-story encircling veranda, a hip roof, and a central cupola with a high-peaked, "witch's hat" roof. The porches have a simple stick railing with lattice-screens on some sections, and square wood posts. Windows are both double-hung and casement with wood sash; doors have wood paneled lower sections, glazed upper sections and glazed transoms. There are four main-floor rooms, each with a bath. A central stair leads to seven rooms on the second floor with two baths. Ceilings are 9'6" on the first floor and 10' on the second. Interior walls are stripped except for one suite on the ground floor. Exterior walls have horizontal drop siding of Oregon Pine; roofs have Red Cedar shingles. Winship's architectural character is typical of simple 19th century resort buildings; its rustic character was heightened in its 1930 remodeling to conform to the other buildings designed and built by Farr and Ward at this time.

#18 Gassaway: c1890, remodeled c1930, Farr and Ward

A one-story, rectangular cottage originally composed of three interior spaces with three bathrooms and lattice-screened porches, except where the bathrooms occur. The interior appears to have been remodeled as one space in a Maybeckian manner with paired box beams bracing the gabled roof which is set above a section of a lower ceiling resting on paired triangular braces. The effect is of a type of "cathedral" ceiling. Double-hung windows of sixteen lights each and wooden double doors with eighteen lights as well as other types of openings occur. An old photograph of an unknown date shows a board-and-batten room with a gable-roof ceiling of exposed rafters and purlins containing two billard tables, but it is not clear whether this is the same space shown in another undated photograph of the Maybeckian interior, also with billard tables. The cottage exterior has v-groove siding and lattices screening the foundation.

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#28 Dewey and #29 York: c1895, designer unknown, remodeled c1930, Farr and Ward

Both of these cottages have the same vocabulary of materials and similar forms. Drawings for details of porches and roof brackets exist for Dewey from Farr and Ward's office; no drawings exist for York. Plans are the typical arrangement of rooms with closets adjoined to bathrooms and with access to the encircling porch. Wood shingled, gabled roofs cover the main building block which is raised above a crawl or air space. Porches are reached by a short flight of steps, roofed with pent or shed roofs, and screened with wood lattices. Interiors have been stripped.

#24 Acacia-Elm: c1885, designer unknown

This is a double cottage with a party wall containing two rooms each with closets, and bathrooms, and a porch on the S side. The structure has a wood-shingled gable roof clipped at the ridge to make an attic vent; the porches have shed or pent roofs and lattice screens. The building is raised above an air space screened with lattices. Doors are wood; windows vary, but generally have double-hung, wood sash.

#25 Alger: c1885, #26 Robin: c1885, #27 Russ: c1895, designer unknown, remodeled c1930, Farr and Ward

#25 and #26 have three rooms; #27 has four. The arrangement is typical with closets, bathrooms, and access to porches as in the other buildings described above. Although there is some use of shingles on the walls, channeled siding is more typical of this set, perhaps indicating an earlier date for their construction. The cottages have gabled roofs and shed or pent roofs over the porches. Doors are generally of wood; some have glazed upper sections. Windows are double-hung, generally with 6/6 lights. The buildings are raised above air spaces with some use of lattices.

#19 Munro: c1925, Farr and Ward

An irregular U-plan composed of three rooms and adjoining closets, bathrooms, and screened porches. The building was stripped inside and out in the mid-1970s; shingled walls and hipped, gable roof remain. Since the plan is intact and the interior/exterior finish could be restored, it appears to be contributing.

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#20 Locust: c1925, Farr and Ward (?)

A small two-room cottage with the typical arrangement of spaces and a screened porch projecting on the west side. The vocabulary of materials: shingled walls, lattice screens for porches and foundation, and shingled gable roof, hipped at the ends, suggest the work of Farr and Ward, but there are no drawings. Doors are wooden with glazed upper sections, windows are wood sash, double-hung, and set in wide wood frames. The building is very similar to Munroe in form and use of materials. Interiors are undistinguished.

#21 Hartson: c1880, remodeled by Farr and Ward c1925?

A four-room square cottage with the typical arrangement of spaces, encircled by porches with three short flights of steps. The main structure is gable-roofed; porches are separately roofed and have lattice screens. Interiors are undistinguished.

#22 Owl's Nest: c1895, remodeled by Farr and Ward, c1925

A four-room cottage with the main section square in plan and the closets and bathrooms grouped across the center; porches are accessible off the rooms on each side of the building. The shingled, gable roof over the main section is clipped at the ridge to make an attic vent; porches have pent or shed roofs with lattice screens. The structure is raised above a lattice-covered air space with steps leading to the porches. The building conforms stylistically to numbers 19-21 as well as to those on the opposite side of the creek designed or remodeled by Farr and Ward. Numbers 19-22 are sited more or less in a line on the high ground above the south bank of the creek.

#23 Aetna: 1893, designer unknown, remodeled c1930, Farr and Ward

This is the largest of the guest buildings and, except for Hartson, preceded the others on this side of the creek although the use of wood shingles and lattices on the porches and to screen the foundation suggests that it was remodeled in the period of the 1930s with the others. A gable roof with hip-roof dormer vents at opposite ends of the ridge covers the main structure; porches are shed roofed. Tall, wood-paneled doors have glazed transoms; windows are tall, double-hung, and have 2/2 lights. The interior which is mostly wallpapered has wood trim around the doors and windows which is typical of the late 19th and turn-of-the-century. The molded trim is joined at the corners with square blocks with a raised "doughnut". Doors have two tall upper panels and two short lower panels beneath a two-part glazed transom. Closet doors have five panels.

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#33 Mineral Bath Pavilion: c1900?

This is a rustic peeled-log pavilion with a metal roof and stone boulder base set on the lower bank of the creek near a small pool damned with boulders. A concrete pool inside was filled with water until 1970. The pavilion is sited near the mine addit, now closed, which runs under Windship. The addit was abandoned because of continuous flooding with the hot mineral spring water which later fed the pool.

#5 Bath Houses: 1877, remodeled in the 1920s; pool enlarged in 1894 and the 1950s

A rectangular, gable-roofed structure with board-and-batten walls which use thin tree limbs or trunks split in half as battens as in the original bar room of the Soda Fountain building (3). Dressing rooms have vertical tongue-in-groove board walls and a concrete floor; doors are wood paneled. The bath house sits at one end of the long swimming pool (5A). At the opposite end is another wooden structure (9), built in the 1950s, with showers and the pool filter.

Two stone and timber bridges (B,C) cross the creek east of the Mineral Bath House (33) and near the Bath House and Pool (5). Their dates are unknown, they may be contemporary with the mid-1880s stone walls.

#30 Frances Marion: 1925 Farr and Ward

This is the only building for which a full set of plans exist from the office of Albert Farr and J. Frances Ward, dated 1925. The cottage is well sited along the top of the creek bank and designed to harmonize with its topography. In plan it is an irregular rectangle about 60' long running NE-SW with nine rooms which correspond to eight sleeping porches and adjoining closets and bathrooms. The materials used here: shingled walls and roofs, latticed porch screens and foundation screens, wooden doors and shutters, and stone chimney, are generally used for all the guest cottages with variations in use depending on whether they were designed by this firm or remodeled by them. (There are no exact dates for most of the cottages.) Frances Marion is the most architecturally distinguished of the cottages. The low, rambling structure has a broadly pitched, shingled roof over each section of the plan, clipped at the ridge to create an attic vent. Beam ends are exposed at the eaves and the eave is arched over the round-arched main door in the NW elevation. Casement windows have board shutters. Shed-roofed porches have their eaves cut back creating an irregular line reminiscent of the English cottage prototypes which Farr used in other residential work. Lattice screens shield the creekside foundations. Screened porches at the ends are separately roofed.

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#16 Caroline: c1925, Farr and Ward

This cottage is so close in character and use of materials to #30 that it seems certain to have been by Farr and Ward, however no plans exist for it. Nearly square in plan, it contains two rooms with closets and bathrooms adjoining and a screened porch on the E and W sides. Wood-shingled, gabled roofs cover the main part of the building and the porches. The front has a shed-roofed, shallow porch with the eave lifted over the entrance doors. Windows and doors are the same as in Frances Marion. Porches are screened with wood lattice as are the foundations which extend a story down on the creek side. Interiors are very simple.

#31 Lawton: date unknown, c1900

A one-and-one-half story six unit building with a gable roof and encircling shed-roofed porches on a raised foundation. The roof and column brackets are composed of several cross and bracing members. There is a round window or vent in the gable end of the west side. There are glazed, 10-light doors and multiple-light, double-hung windows both set in heavy wood frames. The building is clad in channeled siding and relates stylistically more to the dining hall than to the style of the shingled cottages or the soda fountain building. It appears to date from the turn-of-the-century rather than the building campaign of the 1920s.

In the middle of a central open space of the resort compound bounded by the Social Hall (2), Lawton (31), and Frances Marion (30), stands a pergola made of square wood timbers with lattice in-fill (C). Originally there were two pergolas, both designed by Albert Farr and J. Frances Ward. Drawings for them exist but are undated. Presumably they were built in the 1930s when the firm was commissioned to provide additional buildings and remodel old ones.

#11 Main House: date unknown, c1890s, designer unknown

This building, which was apparently intended as the manager's house and so used for many years, has had several additions. According to Mr. Heibel, the previous owner, rooms were added around the outside at various times without any formal plan. The result is a rambling building with several separately roofed wings clad with shingles. There are several porches as well. The architectural character is that of a rustic cottage or bungalow. Windows and doors vary. In plan the building is an irregular rectangle.

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A. Stone Entrance Gates and Walls, 1880s-1890s

A tri-partite entrance gate composed of two high massive stone boulder piers (possibly with a steel or concrete core) bridged by a wooden arch with a wood shingle coping and shingled pyramidal caps over the piers has two flanking pedestrian-scale gates. The outer piers are also of stone boulders and are capped with shingled gable roofs. Heavy square timbers project from the high piers just under the caps. "AETNA" in large wooden letters runs across the arch. Stone boulder walls, which date back to 1886, punctuated with square piers at intervals connect to the gate and run along the road on both sides bordering the main resort compound. The original main gate was composed of wood piers and was less obviously rustic. The present gate may well have been built at the time of the new dining and social halls. The Len D. Owens House, a large shingled bungalow, completed in 1905, formerly stood on the hill opposite the main gate; it burned in 1908.

#8 Tool Shed, #12 Cottage, #13 Living Quarters, #14 Creekside, #15  
Linen Room and Living Quarters

This group of service buildings and living quarters is a miscellaneous collection of buildings of no particular architectural distinction which may have been moved here at an early date or built here in a general service yard associated with the dining hall. The so-called Linen room and Living quarters (15) may date from the same time as the original part of the Soda Fountain Building (3) and the Bath House (5) because of the wall construction which is of board-and-battens with the battens made of split tree limbs or thin trunks of saplings. The building is rectangular in plan with a shingled gable roof and a separately roofed front porch on log posts. Doors are of vertical boards and windows are 9-light casements. The back room flooring appears to be the former bowling alley-ways, but there is no knowledge of how they got there. The nearby Creekside quarters (14) is a simple rectangular, three-room shed with shingled, gable roof, board-and-batten walls, horizontal base boards and wood paneled doors. There is a flat-roofed, front porch with a wood floor. The building is sited on a slope with a base story in back. The date is indeterminate; the interior has been remodeled. Cottage (12) is a gable-roofed building with lean-tos which may have been sleeping porches. The exterior has been re-sided with horizontal boards. The structure is architecturally undistinguished. Living quarters (13) is composed of three gable-roofed wood buildings joined together and sited on a slope. The building at the SW end has board-and-batten siding; the others are shingled. Windows and doors vary. It is probable that the buildings could have been moved together; it seems unlikely that they were built this way. They are simple buildings with no particular architectural distinction.

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The tool shed (8) is a wooden rectangular shed with horizontal siding and a gable roof of corrugated metal vented by a monitor. Openings are 4-light, wood sash windows and sliding doors. Date is unknown.

#7 Plumbing Shop, #6 Garage, #10 Barn, #4 Golf Clubhouse, #32 Toilets and Showers

Across the road from the main entrance is a group of five buildings which occupy the site before the golf course. The most significant building is the barn (10), a two-story-plus gable-roofed main structure running north-south, with lean-tos on the east and west sides. The building, which appears in 1880s photographs, is clad with wide boards and battens; openings have been cut directly into the walls and consist of doors, 12-light casement windows, double doors for cattle and vehicles, and hay mow doors. The lower floor is divided into a broad aisle with stalls on either side in the lean-tos. At one end is a staircase leading to the upper floor which is a clear-spanned single space braced with cross beams set between the exposed rafters. The space was used for large dances and parties reported in the 1890s and years after; it has a strong wood floor. An undated photo shows the cross beams tied with garlands and a group of women in costumes.

Buildings #6 and #7, the present garage and plumbing shop, are rectangular sheds with gable roofs of corrugated metal and board-and-batten walls. They are largely windowless and have both sliding and wide double doors. Although they may date from the same period as the barn, the boards appear newer. It is not possible to date them with any accuracy, but their utilitarian character suggests that they are contributing to the resort in its period of greatest activity which continued into the 1950s. The golf clubhouse (4) and nearby toilets and showers (32) are non-contributing because of their recent major remodeling -- in the case of the clubhouse -- and the nearly contemporary date of (32). Both are undistinguished, functional buildings. The date of the golf course (E) is also difficult to ascertain; the best evidence suggests it was laid out in the 1890s, one of the earliest in the state. Originally a nine-hole course, it has been enlarged considerably and modernized; it no longer retains its historic appearance and does not contribute to the district. The original bottling works was on the course and housed in a rectangular wooden shed, one-story high, attached to a high tower, open at the bottom, with battered walls tapering toward the top and terminating in a box-like observatory room with a hipped roof. The shed part of the structure still exists at another site in Pope Valley; the tower is gone. A small, modern spring house is located on the site along with a part of the concrete foundation (F); it is not a contributing feature. A contemporary open shed and a barbecue pit are the only other structures on the golf course.

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Resource Count:

29 contributing buildings

5 contributing structures (A, B, C, D, 33: entrance gate and walls, two  
bridges, pergola, mineral bath pavillion)

4 non-contributing buildings (4, 9, 32, F: golf clubhouse, showers, toilets,  
modern spring house)

1 non-contributing structure (5A: enlarged swimming pool)

1 non-contributing site (E: golf course)

TOTAL: 34 contributing features (6 non-contributors)



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The resort's major period of activity and development occurred between the 1870s and the 1930s; its history is chronicled below.

Before the resort era, for which the property is most famous, mercury mining drew settlers to upper Pope Valley. Prospecting for gold and silver in the late 1850s revealed inadequate quantities of these metals. Yet, rich deposits of mercury, a valuable resource in the quartz mining period, were discovered, and in 1867 a claim was filed by the Valley Mining Co. for 82.62 acres which encompassed the springs area and the golf course. The initial mine shaft was sunk in the bed of Aetna Springs Creek, but was almost constantly flooded with hot water from the springs. A drastic drop in mercury prices combined with the difficulties of operating the mine caused its closure in 1877 and sale to Chancellor Hartson of Napa. Hartson capitalized on the well known curative properties of the springs which contributed to the failure of the mining enterprise. The main spring was called the American Ems; its water was advertised as having the same composition as the EMS water from a spring in Germany that was world famous. Other springs on the property acquired the names of Potassium, Mirror Iron, Bath House and Summer House. (The latter two were named for their location.) These had a temperature of about 98 degrees F. The springs had been known to early settlers in the valley as well as to the local Indians who had been accustomed to camping near them for generations.

With the help of his nephew, W.H. Lidell, who became the manager, Hartson remodeled some of the miner's cabins and the boarding house on the property and opened a health resort. A regular stage run began in 1878. A dozen or so buildings were reported in the St. Helena Star, including a 12-room, 75' x 25' bath house which was pre-fabricated in Napa and hauled over to Aetna Springs. Others were a kitchen and dining hall, a reading room and library, a boarding house, and camp sites. A barn, which appears in 1880s photographs, still stands; its upper level was well floored for dancing. According to various reports in the St. Helena Star in the 1880s, the resort continued to grow. A "swimming bath" which preceded the present pool, was announced in 1880, and in 1881, a billiard and bowling room. By 1885, the Napa Register reported that there were 20, neat white cottages and new landscaping with a stone wall about one mile long constructed by Chinese coolies. Unfortunately, none of these buildings is described so that their survival or location cannot be ascertained.

In December, 1891, the Star announced the purchase of the Aetna Springs property by L.D. Owens from the estate of Chancellor Hartson for \$5,000. The article also reported Owens' plans for the construction of a fine new hotel for the coming season. Lidell

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continued as manager; however, in 1893 William Mitchell assumed the management and supervision of extensive improvements including the removal of the old hall (perhaps to become the clubroom nucleus of the present Soda Fountain) and the construction of a two-story building on its site. The remodeling of the cottages is reported as well as the building of Aetna. The grounds were to be lit with electric lights.

The grand opening in 1893 was reported in the Star, with dancing at the bottling works and livery stables. The new hotel building's spacious parlor and reception rooms are mentioned as well as the fine chambers on the second floor. By 1895 the building had a post office on the ground floor. The main guest accommodations were in Lawton, Hartson, and the newly constructed Aetna. Mitchell's cottage (Main House) was reportedly moved and altered. Improvements continued over the years: in 1902 the bottling works were completed; in 1904 Len Owens' bungalow was completed; it burned in 1908. In 1905, the completion of the new dining hall with smaller hall attached was announced, and in 1906 the Star carried a report of the removal of the hotel to a new location and beginning construction of a new structure, presumably the present Social Hall (also called the Amusement Hall). The last building in this major program appears to have been the new clubhouse, presumably the present Soda Fountain, which may incorporate the old clubhouse room.

Although social occasions continue to be enthusiastically reported in the local newspapers, no further building activity is noted until the mid-1920s and 1930s. At this time Owens commissioned the San Francisco firm of Albert Farr and J. Frances Ward to design new cottages and remodel the older ones. (Farr had been a student of Maybeck's at U.C. Berkeley.) They also presented plans for major remodeling of the first hotel structure (Winship). Preliminary plans and sketches for "new cottages" are dated as early as 1923, but these do not exactly correspond to any one of the present cottages that date from this period. The plans were probably modified. Of the four cottages that date from this campaign: Francis Marion, Caroline, Munro, and Locust, a full set of plans exists only for Francis Marion. However, Caroline is closely tied to the prototype design of 1923. A contract with specifications exists for the alteration of the "Hotel" (Winship) and is dated January 1930. This suggests that the design phase for this building program took several years. It is not possible to determine the exact dates for any of the construction.

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Len Owens died in 1945 having sold the property in 1944 to George Heibel. The resort continued to be popular through the 1950s and 1960s with an average weekend use of 250-270 residents. The swimming pool and golf course were remodeled in the mid-1950s, but no major changes occurred in the buildings. In 1972 the Heibels sold the property and the resort ceased operation.

Of the people associated with the Aetna Springs Resort, Chancellor Hartson, Len D. Owens and his daughter Frances Marion are known beyond their association with the resort. Hartson was a prominent citizen of Napa, engaged in many enterprises. Len D. Owens formed the outdoor advertising company, Owens, Varney and Green, which, in 1901 became Foster and Kleiser. Frances Marion, for whom one of the cottages is named, was a successful screen writer and author of a number of books including The Valley People, which is a fictional account of her life in the Pope Valley.

The acreage is potentially rich in prehistoric information. The property was surveyed by archaeologists from California State University, Sonoma. A total of twelve sites were discovered, of which nine were aboriginal and three were from the historic period. Aboriginal artifacts were found scattered over the entire site. The level of specific site investigation, however, is insufficient to justify the inclusion of archaeology as an area of significance in the nomination at this time. However, the potential for significance exists and may be eventually justified when additional information is known. The Aetna Springs Resort site number is CA-NAP-463H.

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Township 9 North, Range 6 West, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian. Excepting therefrom all that portion of the SE quarter of the SW quarter to said Section 1 lying within Lot 86 and lying N of the County Road as shown upon Map 246. Also excepting therefrom all that portion of said Section 12 and Section 1 lying SE of the following described deed line:

Beginning at a point on the W line of said Section 12 from which the W quarter corner of said Section 12 bears N 38.37 feet; thence on a true Meridian N 34°02' 10" East 1535.66 feet to a 3/4" iron pipe; thence N 21°47' 50" E 439.30 feet to a 3/4" I.P.; thence N 46°31' 20" E 1226.16 feet to a 3/4" I.P.; thence N 52°05' 10" E 749.60 feet to a 3/4" I.P.; thence N 17°17' 40" E to the County Road as shown on said Map 246.

Parcel 2

The N half of the NE quarter of Section 14, and the E half of Section 11, all within Township 9 N, Range 6 W, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian. Excepting therefrom all that portion of the E half of the Section 11 lying NW of the following described line:

Beginning at the intersection of the E line of said Section 11 with an existing fence line from which the East quarter corner of said Section 11 bears S 1580.19 feet; thence along said fence line the following courses and distances: S 33°58' W 292.0 feet, S 22°44' W 153.0 feet, S 35°12' W 68.0 feet, S 47°22' W 189.0 feet, S 27°29' West 334.0 feet, S 29°54' West 101.0 feet, S 17°22' West 659.8 feet, S 16°23' West 325.0 feet, S 25°54' West 249.0 feet, S 69°54' West 63.1 feet, N 52°33' West 293.4 feet, N 60°00' West 60.8 feet, N 49°49' West 121.0 feet, S 33°05' West 180.9 feet, S 61°50' West 238.17 feet, S 44°20' West 113.75 feet, S 13°25' West 410.95 feet, S 69°10' West 151.43 feet, S 16°00' West 90.90 feet, S 32°20' West 212.37 feet and S 21°35' West 209.48 feet to the W line of the E half of said Section 11.

Also excepting therefrom all that portion of the East half of the SE quarter of said Section 11 and the N half of the NE quarter of said Section 14 lying E of the following line: Beginning at a point on the E line of said Section 11 from the the east quarter corner of said section 11 bears N 38.37 feet; thence S 34°02' 10" West 1116.82 feet to a 3/4" I.P.; thence S 16°03' 25" E 1426.03 feet to a 3/4" I.P.; thence S 1°17' 49" E to the S line of the N half of the NE quarter of said Section 14.

Parcel 4

The Aetna Mineral Springs property, consisting of about 82.62 acres in the Hope Valley, recorded 4/20/1887 in Book C of Patents at page 476 to which is made for a full description. Excepting therefrom this parcel:

Commencing at the most W corner of Lot 42 of Township 9 N, Range 6 West, Mount Diablo Meridian, running thence from said point of commencement along the W line of said mine N 14°15' East 725.75 feet; thence S 75°45' East 7.87 feet; thence S 2°15' West 457.92 feet; thence S 4°50' East 294.0 feet to the S line of said mine, the Valley Mine; thence along the last mentioned line N 75°45' West 199.19 feet to the point of commencement.

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Parcel 5

Lots 1, 2, 5, 7, and 8 and the SE quarter of the NE quarter of Section 2, in Township 9 North, Range 6 West, Mount Diablo Meridian.

Parcel 6

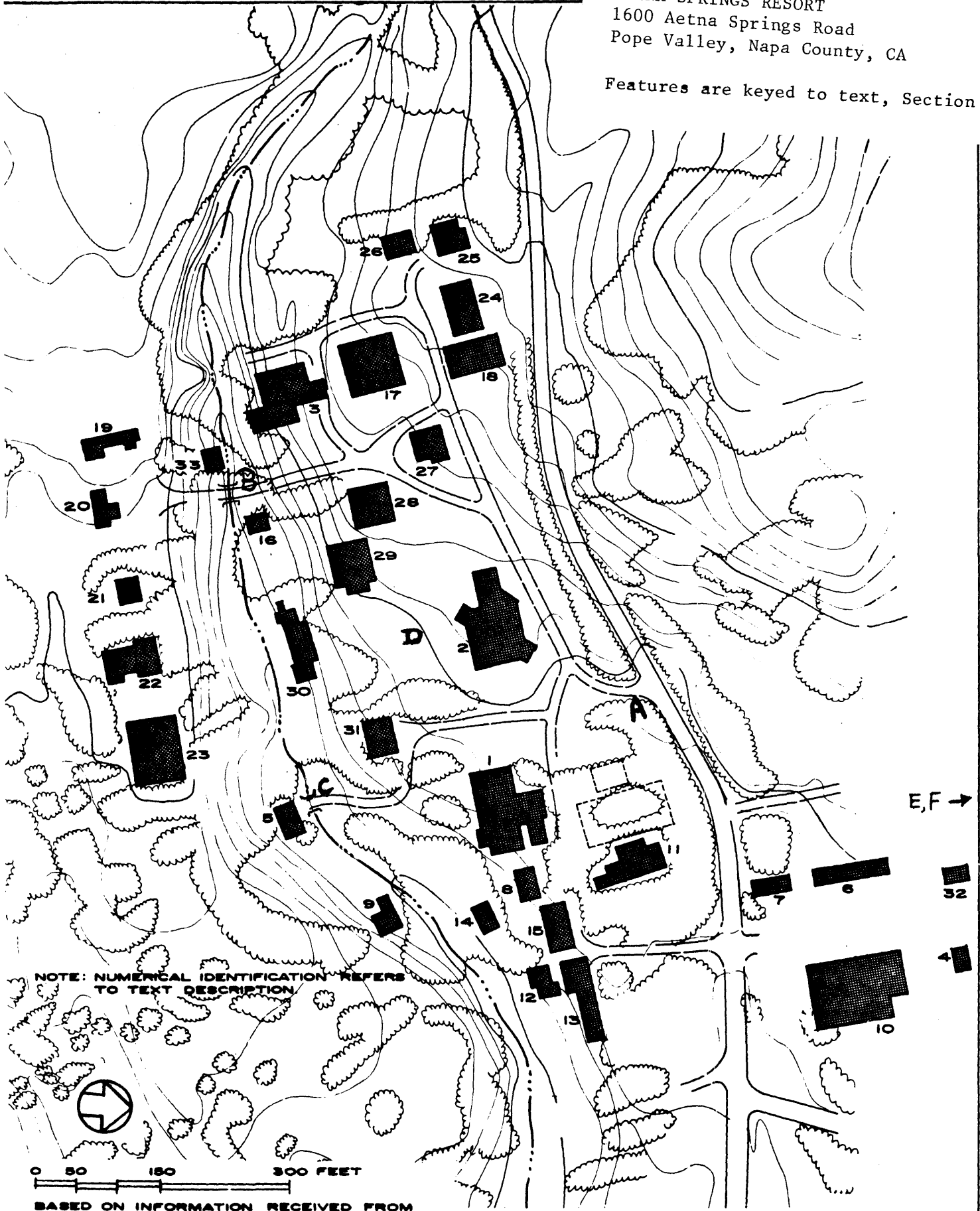
Lots 53, 81, 83, 84, and 85 as shown on Map 246 referred to above, in Book 2, at p. 26, of Maps in the office of the Napa County Recorder. Excepting from said Lot 53 that parcel of land quitclaimed to Albert E. Sayers etux, filed in Book 193, p. 292. Also excepting from said Lot 53 that poirtion filed in Book 685, p. 920 in the office of the said Recorder.

Excepting from said Lots 81 and 82 the N 1,100 feet as described in Book 811, p. 261 of official records filed in the office of that said Recorder.

Justification: Boundaries are drawn on current lot lines within single ownership and encompass all of the components of the historic Aetna Springs Resort.

AETNA SPRINGS RESORT  
1600 Aetna Springs Road  
Pope Valley, Napa County, CA

Features are keyed to text, Section 7



NOTE: NUMERICAL IDENTIFICATION REFERS TO TEXT DESCRIPTION

0 50 150 300 FEET

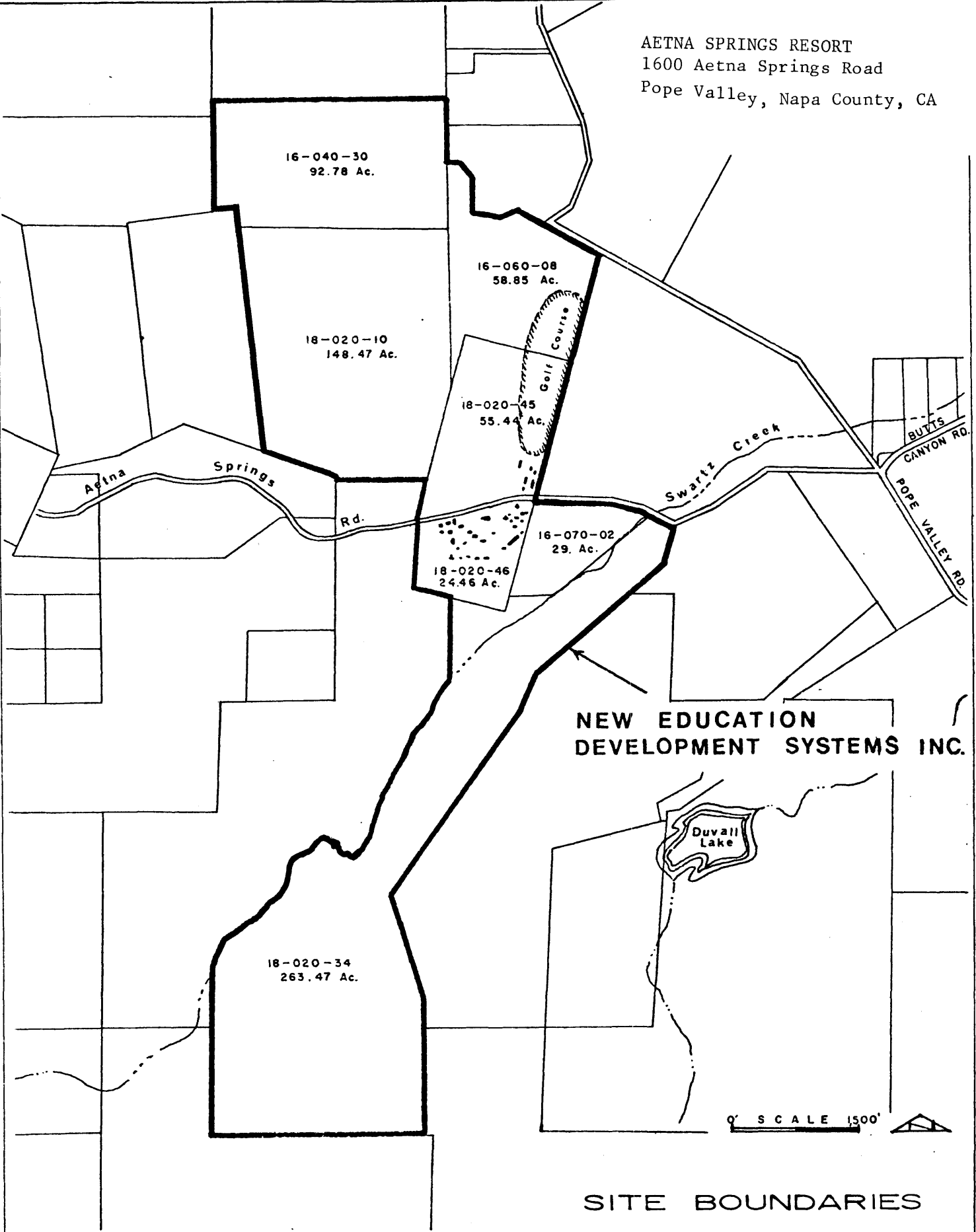
BASED ON INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM G. HEIBEL, AND CALIFORNIA AERO TOPO INC.

EXISTING STRUCTURES

AETNA SPRINGS

NAPA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

AETNA SPRINGS RESORT  
1600 Aetna Springs Road  
Pope Valley, Napa County, CA



AETNA SPRINGS

NAPA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA