

# Historical Resource Evaluation



## **Warring Stone House 837 Park Lane, Piru**

**Portion of the Southwest Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of  
Section 20 Township 4 North, Range 18 West, SBS&M  
Shown as Parcel 2 in Book 15, Page 2 of Parcel Maps**

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County of Ventura  
January 24, 2022  
Cultural Heritage Board Meeting  
Item 7a  
Exhibit 3 – 2012 Historical Resource Evaluation

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## *Section I*

### *Executive Summary*

The purpose of this report is to evaluate the structure located at 837 Park Street, in the unincorporated town of Piru, California, to determine whether it meets the requirements as a historical resource in accordance with Section 15064.5 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines more specifically for the purpose of designation as a Cultural Heritage Landmark by the County of Ventura, California and the establishment of a Mills Act contract. The ultimate conclusions in this report represent the professional opinions of the author and are based on the data that has been found through research of the historical and architectural background of the subject property that was available at the time of preparation, as well as the application of local, state and federal criteria of eligibility as well as the best professional practices.

This report has been prepared for the property owners, Kenneth R. Wiseman and Betty-Lou Wiseman, for the purpose of nominating the resource as a Ventura County Cultural Heritage Landmark in order to establish eligibility for participation in the Mills Act program. The report looks at the resource at the National level in order to determine a California Historical Resource Status Code, however it is specifically discussed at the local level for the purpose of establishing its eligibility under the Ventura County ordinance.

The author is a professional historian with extensive experience in property research and historic preservation, dating from the mid 1980's. This background includes the research, preparation and/or advocacy of over 140 Historic Cultural Monument Nominations for the City of Los Angeles, two for Ventura County and one in the City of Ojai, as well as research and documentation of numerous other historic structures. Other qualifications include work as a past president and board member of the Highland Park Heritage Trust, past co-chair of the Cultural Resources Committee of the Los Angeles Conservancy, president of the Heritage Coalition of Southern California and 28 years doing property research for Transamerica Real Estate Tax Service.

The resource to be evaluated is a 1-story, 7-room single-family residential building built in 1934 located at the center of the property, referred to as the Warring Stone House aka Floyd Warring Residence, named for its original owner. It is sited on a approximately 21,876 square foot, nearly rectangular portion of the Southwest Quarter of Section 20, Township 4 North, Range 18 West, which is just to the West of the Rancho San Francisco, which is recorded in Book 1, Pages 521 and 522 of Patents in the Office of the County Recorder of Los Angeles County, and is identified with Ventura County Assessor's Parcel No. 056-0-030-150. The land was subdivided to its present configuration in 1973.

The structure is not presently listed on any local, state or federal register nor is it listed as a contributor to any local, state or federal historic district. However, it has been documented as a historic resource on September 11, 1987 by Architectural Historian Judy Triem for the Ventura County Cultural Heritage Board in conjunction with the nearby Cook or Piru Mansion (Ventura County Historic Landmark No. 4).

The full legal description of the property is as follows:

**THAT PORTION OF THE WEST HALF OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 20, TOWNSHIP 4 NORTH, RANGE 18 WEST, SAN BERNARDINO BASE AND MERIDIAN, IN THE COUNTY OF VENTURA, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, ACCORDING TO THE OFFICIAL PLAT THEREOF, DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:**

**COMMENCING AT A POINT IN THE NORTHERLY LINE OF PARK AVENUE, AS SHOWN ON THE MAP OF TOWN OF PIRU, RECORDED IN BOOK 5, PAGE 4 OF MAPS, IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY RECORDER OF SAID COUNTY, AT THE MOST EASTERLY CORNER OF THE LAND DESCRIBED IN TRACT 2, IN THE DEED TO DAVID HOTNER, RECORDED JUNE 21, 1921 IN BOOK 180, PAGE 415 OF DEEDS: THENCE ALONG SAID NORTHERLY LINE OF PARK AVENUE BY THE FOLLOWING TWO COURSES:**

**NORTH 38° 46' 00" EAST 134.98 FEET; THENCE**

**NORTH 60° 49' 00" EAST 127.28 FEET TO THE TRUE POINT OF BEGINNING; THENCE,**

**1<sup>ST</sup> : NORTH 22° 53' 00" WEST 120.24 FEET; THENCE'**

**2<sup>ND</sup> : NORTH 60° 46' 00" EAST 181.88 FEET; THENCE'**

**3<sup>RD</sup> : SOUTH 23° 14' 54" EAST 120.16 FEET TO A POINT IN SAID NORTHERLY LINE OF PARK STREET; THENCE ALONG SAID NORTHERLY LINE ,**

**4<sup>TH</sup> : SOUTH 60° 46' 00" WEST 182.65 FEET TO THE TRUE POINT OF BEGINNING.**

**TOGETHER WITH THAT PORTION OF PARK STREET, SHOWN ON SAID MAP AS PARK AVENUE, 50 FEET IN WIDTH, VACATED BY RESOLUTION OF ABANDONMENT BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF VENTURA, A COPY OF WHICH RECORDED SEPTEMBER 11, 1978 AS INSTRUMENT NO. 96683, IN BOOK 5205, PAGE 783 OF OFFICIAL RECORDS, TITLE TO WHICH WOULD PASS WITH A LEGAL CONVEYANCE OF THE ABOVE DESCRIBED LAND.**

**SAID LAND IS ALSO SHOWN AS PARCEL 2 FILED IN BOOK 15, PAGE 2 OF PARCEL MAPS.**

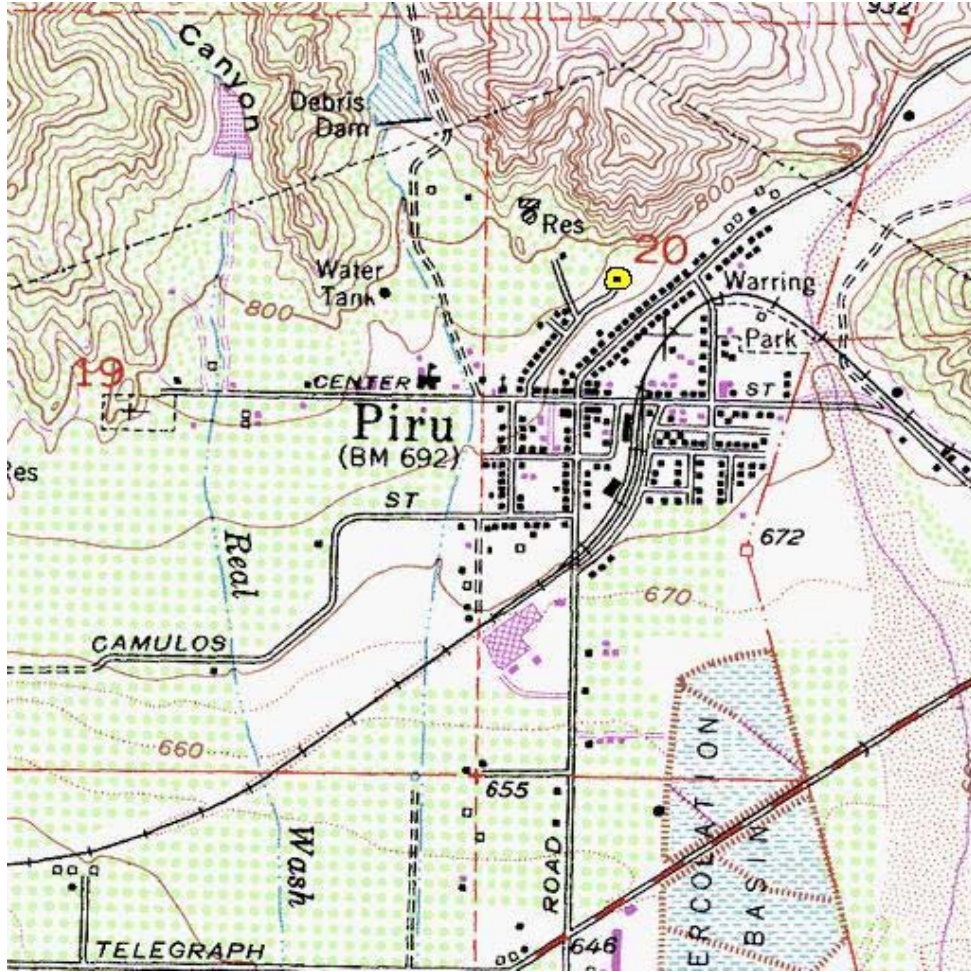
**SAID LAND IS ALSO SHOWN AND DELINIATED AS PARCEL 1 OF PARCEL MAP RECORDED IN BOOK 7, PAGE 25 OF PARCEL MAPS IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY RECORDER OF SAID COUNTY.**



The subject stone house and adjacent garage and front fountain were designed by Santa Paula architect Roy C. Wilson, who is well established as a master builder/designer who influenced his age.

The site is situated just to the North the unincorporated Town of Piru and is located at N34.41754° - W118.79280°, just outside and to the west of the boundaries of the original Rancho San Francisco.

There does not appear to be an extant historic context statement for the area but there is an existing report on the Piru Mansion that was prepared in 2007 by San Buenaventura Research Associates that notes the subject resource.



*Warring Stone House highlighted in yellow on detail of United States Department of Interior Topographic Map of Piru Quadrangle, Ventura County, California.*

## *Section II*

### *Methodology*

In evaluating a potential historic property, several criteria are employed, including an analysis of architectural and historical significance, as well as specific evaluations as to whether the subject property meets the various requirements for it to be considered historic.

These requirements may include the age and rarity of the design, significance of an architect, builder or owner/resident of the property, along with how the structure relates to its historic context, how much of its own architectural integrity has survived as well as whether non-historic alterations can be easily reversed.

Age and integrity are important criteria here because the structure was built 77 years ago, as one of the guest house for the original Piru Mansion.

The architect of the building was Roy C. Wilson who was well known as one of the most important and influential architects of the mid Twentieth Century Ventura County. Wilson designed homes and commercial buildings throughout the county, which are recognized as important historic/architectural landmarks.

A site visit was made on July 23, 2010 when photos were taken both the interior and exterior of the subject property.

An analysis was also made of the history of the structure including owners, occupants, using various public records, such as census data, death records and newspaper citations. Some historical context was also gathered from previously published books and articles as noted in the bibliography.

### *Section III*

## *Historic Property Regulations*

In a determination of eligibility a potential historic resource must be considered under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to determine if it is either eligible for the California Register of Historic Resources (California Register). The California Register is modeled after the National Register of Historic Places (National Register). There are only a handful of differences in the standards for the National and California Registers. The California Register has a slightly lower integrity requirement than the National Register. A resource is also presumed to be historic if it is locally listed or has been identified as historically significant in a historic resources survey.

However, a preponderance of evidence could show that a property so is either no longer historic due to alterations subsequent to a survey or further examination has found that it does not meet the criteria and requirements set forth in the California Register. The National and California Register programs are discussed below.

#### National Register of Historic Places

The National Register is described in Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations as “an authoritative guide to be used by federal, state or local governments, private groups and citizens to identify the nation’s cultural resources and to indicate what properties should be protected from destruction or impairment.”

To be eligible for listing in the National Register, the resource must normally be at least 50 years of age and must possess significance in American history and culture, architecture or archeology. To be considered significant, a property must meet one or more of the following four established criteria:

- A. It must be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. It must be associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. It must embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. That it yield, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

The resource must also have integrity so that, according to National Register Bulletin #15 on How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation, “to be eligible for the National Register, a property must not only be shown to be significant under National Register criteria, but it must also have integrity”, which is the ability of the resource to convey its significance. In other words, a property must not be so altered from the condition during the period of significance, that it fails to show the reasons for that significance.

A resource should also be significant within a historic context to be eligible for listing. According to National Register Bulletin #15, historic contexts are “those patterns, themes or trends in history by which a specific occurrence, property, or site is understood and its meaning (and ultimately its significance) within history or prehistory is made clear.” The significance of a historic property can be determined only when it is evaluated within its historic context. The resource must represent an important aspect of the area’s history or prehistory and still have the integrity to convey that to qualify for the National Register.

The National Register also allows for the establishment of historic districts, where the properties may not be eligible for individual listing, but as a grouping, convey both the integrity and context to meet one or more of the four criteria.

### California Register of Historic Resources

The California Register was established in 1992, when Governor Pete Wilson signed Assembly Bill 2881. Like the National Register, the California Register is used by state and local agencies, private groups and individual citizens to identify and list historic resources and to help determine which resources are to be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible, from substantial adverse impacts.

The California Register consists of all California properties that are listed on or determined eligible for the National Register and all California Landmarks from No. 770 up, which are automatically listed, as well as others that are directly nominated by an application processed through a public hearing process and are determined eligible for listing by the State Historic Resources Commission (SHRC). In addition, those California Points of Historical Interest that have been evaluated by the Office of

Historic Preservation (OHP) and have been recommended to the SHRC are automatically listed.

To be eligible for listing in the California Register, the resource must normally be at least 50 years of age and must possess significance in local, state or national, under one or more of the following four criteria:



- 1.) It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States; or
- 2.) It is associated with the lives of persons significant to local, California or national history; or
- 3.) It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values; or
- 4.) It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important in prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.

Historic resources eligible for listing in the California Register may include buildings sites, structures, objects and historic districts. Resources less than 50 years of age may be eligible if it can be demonstrated that sufficient time has passed to understand their historical importance. While the criteria for the California Register is less rigorous with regard to the issue of integrity, there is the expectation that the resources reflect their appearance during their period of significance.

#### Ventura County Cultural Heritage Landmark

Historic resources as defined by CEQA also includes properties listed in “local registers” of historic properties. A “local register of historic resources” is broadly defined in Section 5020.1 (k) of the Public Resources Code, as “a list of properties officially designated or recognized as historically significant by a local government pursuant to a local ordinance or resolution.” Local are defined in essentially two forms:

- 1.) Historic resource surveys conducted by or for a local agency in accordance with the procedures and standards set by the State Office of Historic Preservation and are adopted by that agency. These surveys are to be periodically updated in order to maintain the most current list of potential historic resources.
- 2.) Landmarks designated under local ordinances or resolutions. These properties are “presumed to be historically or culturally significant.” (Public Resources Code Sections 5024.1, 21804.1 and 15064.5)

The County of Ventura first adopted its first Cultural Heritage Ordinance in 1968. The ordinance was re-enacted in 1973, amended in 1991 and subsequently repealed and reinstated in 2000. This current ordinance No. 4225 amends Division 1, Chapter 3, Article 5 of the Ventura County Ordinance Code, covering Sections 1360 to 1373 of said code. It gives the Cultural Heritage board the authority to designate Landmarks within the unincorporated area of the County as well as within the boundaries of those incorporated cities whose Councils have authorized the County Board to serve as their Cultural Heritage Board.

Section 1365-5 of the Ventura County Cultural Heritage Ordinance delineates the following criteria for the designation of a Ventura County Landmark:

- 1.) It exemplifies or reflects special elements of the County's social, aesthetic, engineering, architectural or natural history;
- 2.) It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Ventura County or its cities, regional history, or cultural heritage of California or the United States;
- 3.) It is associated with the lives of persons important to Ventura County or its cities, California, or national history;
- 4.) It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of Ventura County or its cities, California or the nation;
- 5.) It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master builder or possesses high artistic value;
- 6.) Integrity: Establish the authenticity of the resource's physical identity by evidence of lack of deterioration and significant of the characteristics that existed during its period of importance. This shall be evaluated with regard to the retention of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship.

## *Section IV*

### *Architectural Description*

The subject structure is a 1-story 7-room stone block residence, built on an L-shaped plan, located on a portion of the Southwest ¼ of the Northwest ¼ of Section 19, Township 4 North, Range 18 West, SB&M, aka Parcel 2 of Parcel Map filed in Book 15, Page 2 of Parcel Maps in Ventura County. The Norman Revival structure is built with a nominally attached stone two-car garage, connected by an open porch, at the West end of the structure. The main architectural features include a tall hipped slate roof with copper gutters and downspouts. The roof has copper flashing along the ridges. The house is constructed entirely of native stone with the exception of a brick chimney located near the apex of the two wings of the structure, which is topped with an elaborate metal spark arrestor that utilizes a leaf type design.

The recessed main entrance is centrally located in the front façade, behind a large circular pond and fountain, surrounded by a stone walkway to a set of steps to the porch. The multi-paneled wooden front door is surrounded by a simple wooden frame with a wooden ceiling extending under a small scalloped metal porch covering. A simple triangular metal and glass porch light in the center of the ceiling. The doorbell button is surrounded by a brass lion, with the button being held by the lion's mouth.

The large rectangular windows are multi-pane metal casements, recessed within the thick walls on both interior and exterior. A row of dentals is situated immediately under the boxed eaves. The larger casements are all topped with multi lighted clerestory windows which rise to the base of the dental row with the smaller casement windows being topped by large stone lentils. A row of the larger windows on the rear façade has a single large stud between each with a small metal bracket under the closed eaves. These windows flank the rear entry, which consists of a recessed multi-light wooden door, topped by a single light transom type window. A small porch light matching the one at the front entry is attached to the eaves.

Along with the front fountain, the landscaped grounds include circular tree wells, stone paths a low stone wall along the unpaved driveway, mature trees and a stone paved patio at the rear flanked by the garage on the West, the main house to the South and the bedroom wing to the East.

Major interior features include plastered walls, a free standing plastered fireplace with a stone surround for the firebox, with capstone, and a red tile hearth, cut stone floors in the living room, halls and dining room, a high bracketed ceiling in the main section, custom iron chandeliers, arch stone entries to halls with keystones, brass hardware on the steel casement windows, black stone interior window sills, solid wooden beams on dining room and bedroom ceilings, custom wooden paneled doors, matching design of front door, wood floors in bedrooms and custom wooden cabinetry in bedrooms and kitchen.

The stone garage, which is really a separate structure, is connected to the main house with a covered porch, has two 24 panel wooden doors, the second panel from the top having glass inserts. The garage contains a half loft with a retractable.

## *Section V*

### *Construction History*

The house was designed by the well known Santa Paula architect Roy C. Wilson, who was the first licensed architect to be based in Ventura County, using mostly local materials and custom lighting fixtures specifically designed for the house. Wilson, who was born in Nebraska and grew up in Los Angeles, was well known for his precision of design and commitment to every detail. In the case of the Warring Stone House, he went to Europe to study the classic country house design in France, Spain and Italy at the behest of Floyd Warring, who wanted a unique guest house on the grounds of the Cook Mansion, which his parents had bought in 1912.

The stones used in the construction of the walls were locally quarried and the house was completed in 1935. Little change occurred to the house over the years, but the roof had to be reconstructed after a 1984 fire.

Wilson may have also designed the fountain that is located in front of the house.

The house appears to have little change with the exception of the replacement of the roof after the 1984 fire, which was done to match the original design.

## *Section VI*

### *Architectural Significance*

The Warring Stone House is an intact, elaborate and finely detailed example of a French country house style that was popular during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries. The design was during a period of popularity for period revivals that spread over the United States in the years leading up to the Second World War.

As the Arts and Crafts period began to wane, various European styles began to take hold, bringing the many Revival styles such as English Tudor, the various French styles, as well as the Story-Book styles that were popular in the 1920s. However, it was the Spanish and Mediterranean designs that captured the largest proportion of this period in residential construction, mostly due to the local Mediterranean climate that made these designs so much reflect the historic designs in that Southern part of Europe. The French designs were never anywhere near as prevalent as the Spanish.

The French Revival designs, in particular, were utilized in both modest and elegant homes throughout the region. The Warring Stone House is an example of the high end use of the French Revival design, more in the quality of the design and workmanship than the elaborate scale and luxury that is frequently associated with homes of this style, for it displays much in custom work that was designed to transport one to the Old World itself.

Locally the house is significant as one of a handful of lavish residences to be built in the Piru community, when most of the homes being built there were modest bungalows. The architect, Roy C. Wilson, was especially adept at reading his client's desires.

This property is not currently listed at either the National, State or local level. However, due to the high level of design as well as a high level of integrity, the structure appears to architecturally meet the criteria at all three levels as an individual architectural resource.



## *Section VII*

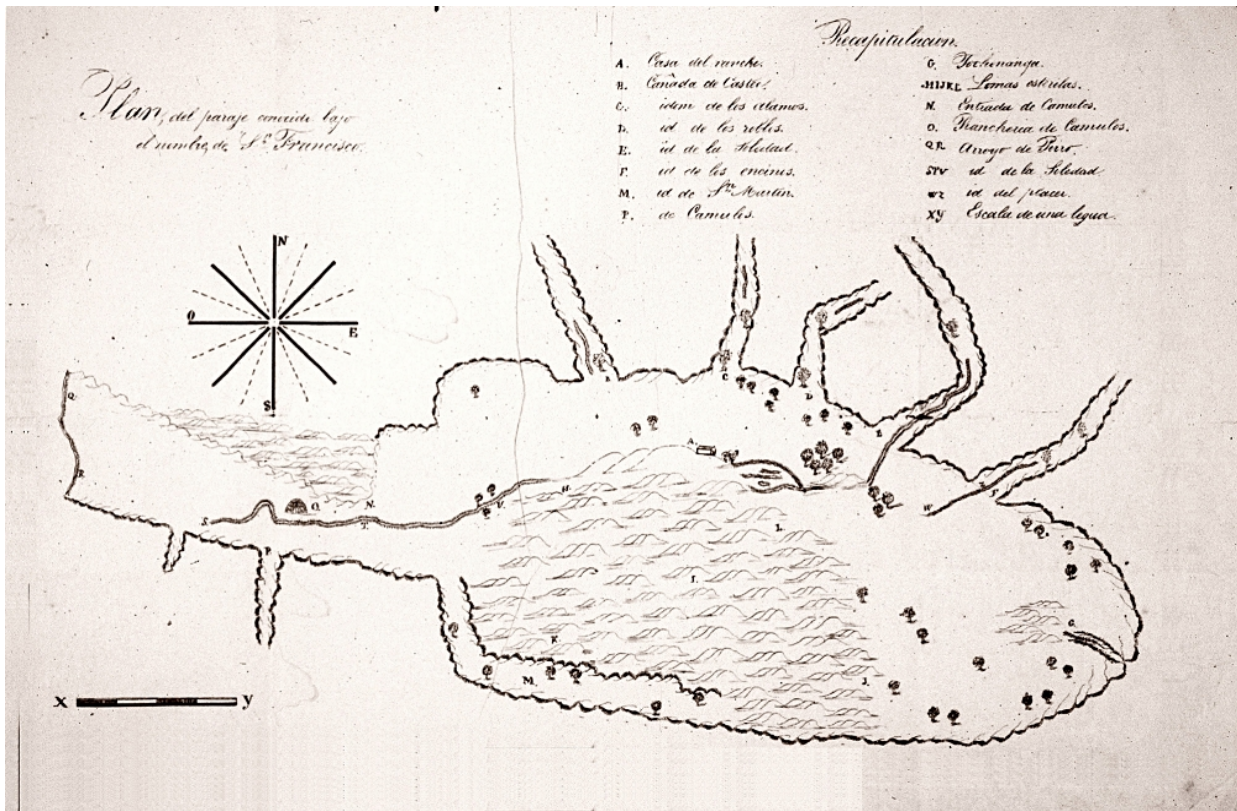
### *Historical Outline*

The Warring Stone House was built for Floyd Sylvan Warring, son of Hugh and Alice Warring as a guest house on the grounds of the adjacent Victorian style Piru Mansion, originally constructed in 1890 for publisher David Celeb Cook. That Mansion, the design of which is attributed to the architect Joseph Cather Newsom, is listed as Ventura County Historical Monument No. 4. The Cook Mansion is also believed to meet the qualifications for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places as a reconstructed building, as it was rebuilt after being over 80% destroyed by a fire caused by a painter's torch in 1981. However, there has never been a National Register nomination submitted, so no formal determination has been made.

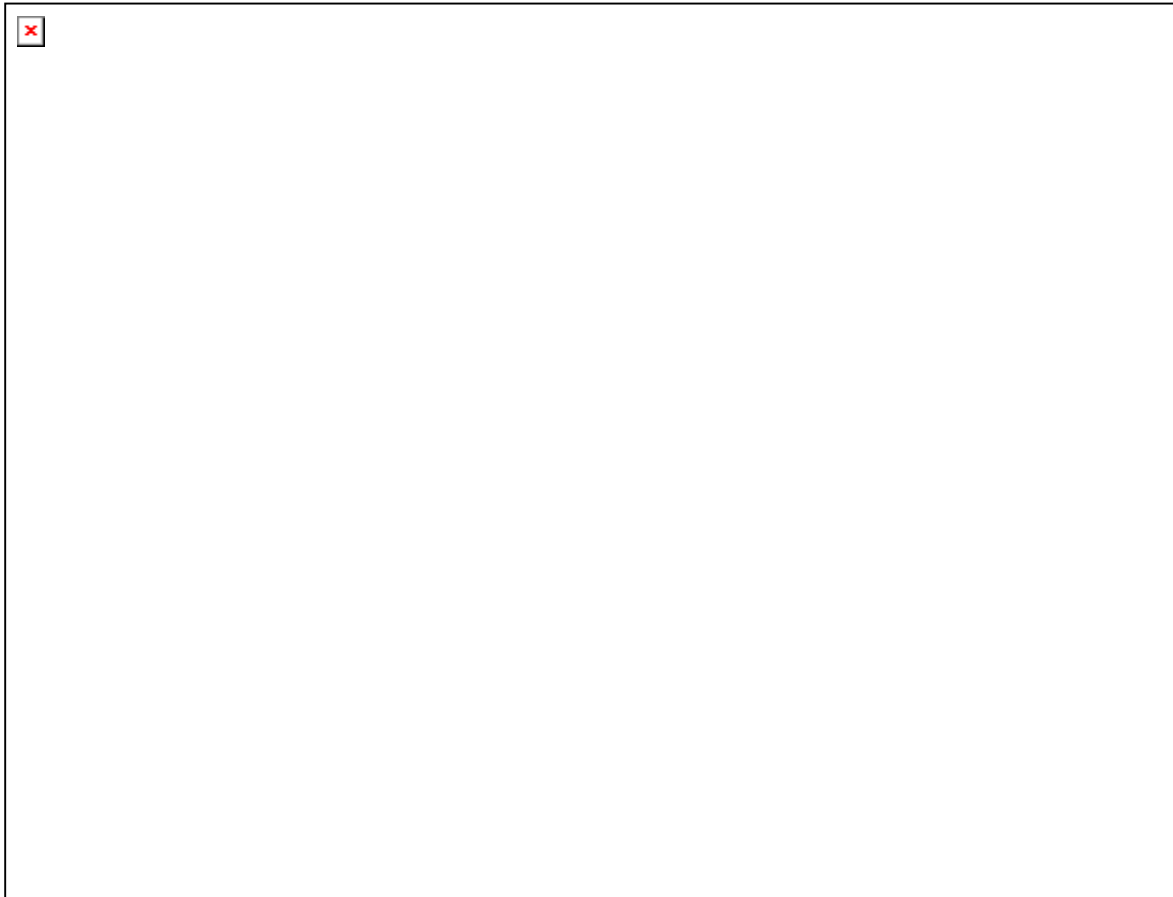
Both houses are situated in the Northern part of the Santa Clara Valley, just North of the town of Piru and immediately to the West of the original Rancho San Francisco, which was granted to Antonio del Valle in 1839. Records also show that Jose de la Guerra y Noriega, of Santa Barbara, had applied for a grant at Piru in 1821, but his claim was rejected by the Spanish authorities. It appears that some of this land (shown as "public Land" on the official map of the Rancho San Francisco, was acquired by Ygnacio del Valle prior to 1861 and later sold by his estate to Cook on June 24, 1887 as a part of 20 acre portion of the Rancho Camulos, which Cook acquired along with 80 acres of Rancho San Francisco and all of the Rancho Temescal, which was adjacent to the North of the valley for a total of \$66,695.00.

The Santa Clara Valley, which had been originally settled by the Tataviam Tribe, came under the influence of the Mission San Fernando Rey de España, after its founding on September 8, 1797. Following the secularization of the Mission under the Mexican Government, the Rancho San Francisco was granted to Antonio del Valle on January 22, 1839 by Governor Juan Alvarado.

After Antonio's death in 1841, Ygnacio inherited Rancho San Francisco, but this was challenged in court by his father's second wife. Nevertheless, by 1853 he constructed a four-room adobe house and a corral at Camulos. By 1857, the land title dispute was settled, with Ygnacio getting the western portion and the remainder was split among Antonio's children and his second wife. He purchased back some of the other portions from his family as well as the Rancho Temescal, and began livestock operations on the expanded area. Del Valle and his family did not live on the ranch initially, instead settling in house on what is now Olvera Street in Los Angeles. The Del Valle family did not move back to Camulos, which he had expanded, until 1861. During this time, the ranch was overseen by José Antonio Salazar, Ygnacio's majordomo. Thus, despite its close association with Helen Hunt Jackson's book, "Ramona" and Mexican California, the house was constructed after California statehood and the family never lived there during the Mexican period.



Original Deseño of the Rancho San Francisco dated 1843.



Plat of Rancho San Francisco as recorded in Patent Book 1, Pages 521 and 522 notes the sectional corners of Sections 19 and 20 of Township 4 North, Range 18 West just to the West of the Rancho boundary

The Rancho San Francisco was confirmed to Del Valle by the United States Land Commission and patented on February 12, 1875. The Rancho Camulos was carved out of del Valle's land in San Francisco and appears to have also included additional land to the West of the original San Francisco boundary.

David C. Cook laid out the Town shortly after his purchase of the land from the del Valle Estate, centering the town site on the quarter corner of Sections 19 and 20 of Township 4 North, Range 18 West, San Bernardino Base and Meridian. The town's "Center Street" follows the East-West quarter section line for the two sections. He allegedly built a house in the town (source undocumented), which he later moved and converted to the Piru hotel. He also established the Methodist Church in the town. Both of these buildings remain extant and are listed as Ventura County Historical Monument Numbers 125 and 51, respectively.

Cook was born on August 28, 1850 in Wheaton Illinois to Ezra Sprague Cook and Pamela Milks Cook. His father had been a Methodist minister, but quit preaching when he bought a woolen mill, which became a financial failure. He then took up farming, but sold to farm to enter into the printing business, specializing in banking supplies. David and his younger brother, Ezra Asher Cook worked in their father's plant for a time before forming their own printing companies, both specializing in religious literature. Ezra married a daughter of Jonathan Blanchard, the founder of Wheaton College, who was strident in the anti Freemasonry movement and he soon took up his father-in-law's cause. Ezra's firm became one of the leading publishers of anti-Masonic propaganda in the United States.

David began to run a mail order business, specializing in sewing machine parts. He also began working with others to establish Sunday schools in poor areas of Chicago. Finding that Sunday school materials were expensive and unimaginative, he took his printing shop in that direction, writing and publishing his own materials. He eventually sold the mail order concern in order to concentrate on the growing printing business. The David C. Cook Publishing Company was established and began publishing his first magazine, "The Sunday School Gem" in 1875. His wife, the former Marguerite Murat, became the company's secretary.

Cook came to California in 1887 to recuperate from being on the edge of a nervous breakdown as his business rapidly grew. He had been to Southern California previously and may have already owned a house in Los Angeles, The Cooks chose Ventura County as a place for a temporary home to rest and recover. He opted to buy the land from the del Valle Family and then laid out the Town of Piru in 1888. The family stayed there most of the year, but they also had a Summer house in Sagatuck, Michigan.

Cook had the large mansion built in 1890, to plans that are believed to have been drawn up by Bay Area architects Samuel and Joseph Cather Newson. J. C. Newsom

had an office in Los Angeles during the land boom of 1885-1889, closing it in late 1890 when business grew too slow. The design of the house is reminiscent of the Newsom Brothers other designs of the period with many of the homes features matching up to similar designs on other Newsom houses. J. C. Newsom opened a new Los Angeles office in 1900 and remained there until 1906, when he once again returned to Oakland, where he passed away in 1930.

Cook planted orchards on his land as well as many exotic plants in the immediate garden of the house, which was described in the Los Angeles Times as ‘the finest residence in Ventura County with every convenience’. Many of Cooks plants were found in the Bible and he sometimes said he was creating a new “Garden of Eden” Cook continued in the publishing business and sold his Piru property to a group of Los Angeles oil capitalists for \$500,000.00 in 1900 to finance the construction of a new publishing house in Elgin, Illinois as the company went global. His company is today one of the worlds largest religious publishing companies.

The new owners set up the Piru Oil and Land Company, which then put the house and town land up for sale, advertising the mansion and its surrounding land for \$45,000.00, stating that it would “make a most attractive Summer home or sanitarium”. The latter point was aimed at it becoming a place for recuperation from tuberculosis, which made Southern California the place to go for its warm dry climate. The property was sold to Max Kuehnrich of Los Angeles on March 21, 1904. Kruehnrich deeded the property to Ellen B. and Charles Carruth, also of Los Angeles, on February 9, 1906. On September 17<sup>th</sup> of the Following year, the Curruths sold it to William and Addie Ramsay. It was the Ramsays who deeded the property to Hugh and Orie Warring on November 11, 1912.

Elihu Hugh Warring was born in San Jose, California on September 23, 1857 to Benjamin and Dorcas Missouri Warring. His parents were farmers and came South in 1869 to homestead 160 Acres of Public Land near the Rancho Camulos. At that time the land was in Los Angeles County, as Ventura County was still four years from incorporating. Eventually the younger Warring bought 50 acres of his own nearby, naming it the Buckhorn Ranch. He married Alice Conaway, also a California native, on September 4, 1881 and the couple had four sons, Edwin C. (Born May 28, 1882), Floyd Sylvan (Born April 10, 1886), Alfred Adney (Born August 10, 1887) and Lester Jerome (Born February 7, 1891) before Alice died on June 18, 1896 at the age of 35. Hugh Warring married his second wife, Ora “Orie” Josephine (Comfort) Eaton, who is listed as the family’s housekeeper in the 1900 United States census, on January 15, 1903. That marriage produced two more sons, Benjamin F. (Born September 27, 1909) and Chester Arnold, who was born at the mansion on February 7, 1914.



*Elihu Hugh Warring (1857-1939)*

Born in Fremont, Nebraska on June 15, 1887, he was the second son of George W. and Anna E. Wilson. His father moved the family to Los Angeles during the 1890s and George Wilson began a successful career in real estate and oil speculation. In 1899 he acquired a large house in the town of Garvanza, which had just been annexed to Los Angeles. The house had been built two years earlier from a design by Theodore Eisen and Sumner P. Hunt (The Pierpont Inn in Ventura, was designed by Hunt and his later partner Silas R. Burns, in 1910, as was the Santa Paula Ebell Clubhouse, in 1917, which is Ventura Historic Monument No. 76 and the Glen Tavern Hotel in 1910, which is Ventura County Monument No. 65. The Hunt firm is also noted for the Lummis Home, The Southwest Museum, both the Los Angeles and Highland Park Ebell Clubhouses and the main headquarters for the Automobile Club of Southern California, all of which are Los Angeles City Historic Cultural Monuments.). In 1906, George W. Wilson hired the architects Robert Train and Robert Edmund Williams to design a classical front porch for the family home. Roy was 19 at this point and may have already opted to study architecture. The influence of Train and Williams, who were heavily involved in the Arroyo Guild of Craftsman, appears to have left a profound impression on the younger Wilson, whose work was to reflect this influence in many of his designs (Williams lived just up the street from the Wilsons). The Wilson home was declared Los Angeles Historic Cultural Monument No. 418, but was destroyed by an arson fire in the early morning hours of December 14, 1989. Today only a portion of the Train and Williams designed porch remains.

Orie had previously married A. C. Eaton, a Los Angeles contractor, on November 18, 1893 and had a son from that marriage, Dallas (Born January 20, 1898). She was listed as married in the 1900 census but it is unknown at this point whether she was widowed or divorced at the time she married Warring.

Benjamin Warring passed away in 1903 and left his son an additional 120 acres. In 1912, in a separate transaction from the mansion, he purchased another 395 acres from the Piru Oil and Land Company. In 1924, he acquired an additional 500 acres from the Piru Company.

Hugh Warring's son, Floyd, contracted with Roy Calvin Wilson, Sr. to design a guest house for the mansion in the early 1930s. With an office in Santa Paula, Wilson was the first licensed architect to base his operations in Ventura County.

Wilson first settled in Santa Paula in 1914 and tried his hand at farming while before returning to Los Angeles to study architecture while living with his in-laws. He returned to Santa Paula in the mid 1920s, and opened his office there after perfecting his skills by working in the architectural office of his father-in-law, Edwin C. Thorne, in Los Angeles for several years. Wilson's first wife, the former Agnes E. Thorne, passed away in 1957. He later married his second wife, Frances, who was to survive him. There were four children, Hilda E. {Condit}, Roy Calvin, Jr. (who later joined his father's architectural firm), Dorrie W. and George E. from his first marriage.

He designed a number of private homes, schools, commercial and industrial buildings in Ventura County, as well as Santa Paula's Presbyterian, Methodist, Catholic (St. Sebastian) and Christian Science Churches (He was a member of the latter), as well as packing houses throughout the county. His designs for the fruit packing houses were noted as being both architectural and practical, partly due to his own avocado and citrus fruit business which he had retained since his farming days.

Wilson had toured Europe, studying the construction of traditional country stone farm houses in several countries, including France and Italy. This trip may have been in conjunction with the Warring commission, although the timing of the tour is not certain at this point. Wilson designed the Warring house using large open interior spaces to make it stay cool in the hot Piru Summer. The freestanding fireplace was to help warm it efficiently in the cold Piru Winter. He used the thick walls as insulation, creating an energy efficient home in the manner that the European houses had done the same thing for centuries. He liked to work with the details of construction when he designed a custom home. The Warring House wasn't his only stone structure. Before he died, he built a cluster of small round stone houses on his own ranch.

An article by Dan Mac Masters in the Los Angeles Times, published on November 17, 1974, a few months after the architect's death, had this to say: "Roy Wilson Sr. was a patriarch in the Old California sense of the word. He loved his ranch on the bottom lands of Santa Paula Creek, near Ventura, where he lived close to his family of two sons and eleven grandchildren. He was a worker with his hands, an innovative scrounger and a compulsive creator. He had little formal education but he became Ventura County's first licensed architect. He went on building until he died last July 15, 1974, at either 87 or 89 (He was 87). The family isn't sure, because he didn't believe in keeping a record of his age. His monument is this cluster of three round building among the oaks and citrus trees, with a plaque above the entry that reads: 'Familie Wilson Casa Trulli'.

Long ago, Wilson ha made a trip to Italy, and there he was entranced by the stone houses-the trulli-of the Apulia region in the heel of Italy's boot. He brought back a scale model of one and extolled it to his family..." The narrative continues to describe how Wilson, with the help of his family built the conical dwellings using



stone from the bottom of Santa Paula Creek for the walls, concrete tiles made at the ranch for the conical roofs and even creating finials using an angel food cake pan as the form. Of particular note was that his son, Roy Jr., bent the tubing for the chandeliers, much in the way that his father probably bent the iron bars used in the Warring House chandeliers.

This article shows the care by which Wilson saw to it that his designs were executed. The Warring Stone House exhibits that care in every detail. When he was hired by Floyd Warring, his client knew exactly what he wanted and that Wilson could deliver it.

Floyd Warring had continued to live in Piru after he married Elizabeth M. Reasoner, who was six years his senior, in 1912. They had two daughters, Alice Louise {Giddings} (born February 22, 1913) and Frances Floy (born July 23, 1914). He had been operating as the overseer of his parent's farming business and it was only natural for him to live on site, which is why he commissioned the house.

His father was involved with other projects, including serving on the Ventura County Board of Supervisors, as well as the boards of the Ventura County Cooperative Association and the Piru Citrus Association and the Board of Trustees for the Filmore Union High School. Among the first to grow citrus in the area, Hugh Warring was instrumental in building the packing house for the Piru Citrus Association. He was also active in both the local Masonic Lodge and the Elks.

Hugh Warring passed away on October 15, 1939, at the age of 81. Orie remained in the Victorian house, with help from her son, Chester and his wife, Honor, along with their two children, Dick and Susie, who moved into the mansion to care for her around 1952. She died on March 20, 1954, at the age of 83.

The Warring had put the property into a trust, which was left intact until 1963. The property was then divided up among the surviving heirs as follows with the Buckhorn Ranch going to Chester Warring and the Mansion and Stone House, grounds let to Alice L. Giddings and Frances Talbot (Daughters of Floyd and Elizabeth Warring.)

Floyd, by then a widower (Elizabeth had died in 1958), appears to have remained in the Stone House until his death on December 4, 1965. He was the second to the last of the Warring children. Chester and his wife, Honor, were killed in a traffic accident on May 6, 1964, while they were driving to the Buckhorn Ranch from Ventura. Floyd's younger brother, Lester, died in Filmore, on May 20, 1979.

The Warrings rented out the main house to Tom and Marilyn Nielson, who lived there with their three children until the property sold to Scott and Ruth Newhall in 1968.

Like Warring, the Newhall Family had made much of its fortune in farming. Scott Newhall's great-grandfather, Henry Mayo Newhall, had built up a fortune as an auctioneer and in railroad development during the 1860s in San Francisco. His fortune enabled him to purchase six of the old ranchos between 1872 and 1875, one of which was 42,216 acres of the Rancho San Francisco, in 1875. Newhall founded the town bearing his name in 1878 to serve as a stop for the Southern Pacific Railroad, which connected San Francisco to Los Angeles three years earlier.

Henry Newhall died in 1882 and his sons incorporated the Newhall Land and Farming Company the following year. Most of the farming of citrus and walnuts were done on the Western end of the ranch, as the Eastern area around Newhall was too windy for farming, so it was used to pasture cattle. By 1960, the company had evolved into a development enterprise for the 45,000 acre cattle ranch surrounding Saugus and Newhall, especially with the construction of Interstate 5 over the route of U. S. Highway 99 giving easy access to the communities.

Scott Newhall was born in San Rafael, California on January 21, 1914 to Almer Mayo and Anna Nicholson (Scott) Newhall. He had married his wife, Ruth Waldo in 1933, while still living in the Bay Area, where he worked as a photographer for the San Francisco Chronicle, eventually becoming an editor.

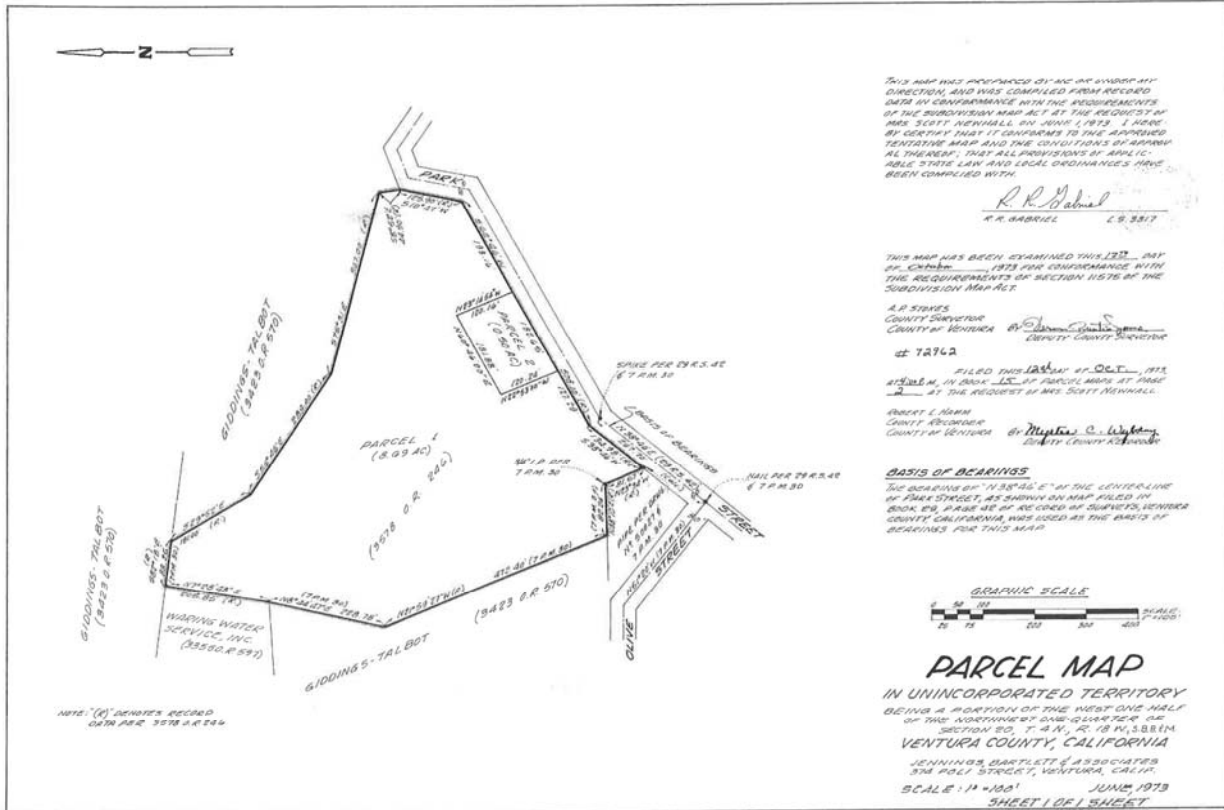
Ruth was born on July 3, 1910, in Berkeley, California to Ralph and Dessie Etta (Rich) Waldo. She and Scott had met while she was an art major at University of California at Berkeley, where she served as student body vice president before graduating in 1931. She was the secretary to San Francisco Chronicle editor Chester Rowell and later to the columnist Herb Green. She also taught journalism at Mills College and U. C. Berkeley. Ruth continued to work as a reporter at the Chronicle while they raised their son, Nicholas Scott "Skip" (Born April 15, 1938), twins Anthony "Tony" and Jonathan "Jon" (Born March 18, 1941) and their daughter, Penelope "Penny" (Born June 18, 1943), who was killed in a truck accident in Alameda on December 15, 1955.

The family moved South in 1960, when Scott Newhall bought the Newhall Signal. He also served on the board of the Newhall Land and Farming Company, overseeing the development of Valencia, which he founded and named. The new direction under Scott was to subdivide the land as a planned community and build the homes before selling it. They continued to operate the Signal after their move to Piru, with Ruth serving as editor of the paper from 1970 to 1979 and again from 1985 to 1988, when they established the Santa Clarita Valley Citizen newspaper and sold the Signal.

Ruth Newhall also wrote several books on the Newhall Ranch as well histories on as Folger's Coffee and the Spreckels Sugar Company.

On February 12, 1970 the Newhalls filed a parcel map for the 9.19 acres of land surrounding the Cook Mansion and the Stone House, in Book 7, Page 30 of Parcel Maps. The map had originally been prepared for Alice Warring Giddings just prior to the sale to the Newhalls, but was not filed until two years later. A second parcel map was filed at the request of Ruth Newhall on October 12, 1973, in Book 15, Page 2 of Parcel Maps, based on a survey done by R. R. Gabriel on June 1<sup>st</sup> of that year. This map created a new parcel for the Warring Stone House in anticipation of a sale of that house to Frank R. and Beverly J. Lamping that was recorded on September 25, 1973.

15 PM 2



Parcel map prepared for Ruth Waldo Newhall on June 1, 1973 places the Warring Stone House on Parcel 2 of the map.

Frank Robert Lamping was well known as a trainer of exotic animals. Born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin on October 8, 1928, he was the son of Frank and Katherine (Neitzer) Lamping, who were both born in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. His father worked as an auto mechanic. The younger Frank served in the U. S. Marine Corps at the end of World War II.

Lamping was married in the early 1950s and had two sons while still living in Wisconsin, Frank Jr. (Born September 19, 1951) and Dan R. (Born November 7, 1955). Tragically, both sons died in a drowning accident while swimming in Lake Piru on March 19, 1972.

Lamping had begun training animals while still in Wisconsin. He was as the head animal trainer for “Africa USA” in Boca Raton,, Florida, which was owned by fellow Wisconsin native, Jack Pederson, during the late 1950s until 1961, when that park closed. He then moved to Southern California to work with animals in the movie industry. By 1962, he was the head trainer for “Nature’s Haven”, where he specialized the affection training method. The family had settled in Newhall by that time, at least until he and his first wife were divorced. He married Lorena May Sanford on March 19, 1965, but that marriage also ended in divorce in February of 1968.



Frank R. Lamping in 1962 (Chicago Tribune photo)

His third marriage to Beverly J. Brown (or Manning, there are two surnames on record.) took place on December 13, 1969. The couple probably knew the Newhalls prior to the property transfer, considering the fact that Lamping lived and worked in the Newhall area for over a decade before the purchase, plus the Newhall Family being involved with the opening of the Magic Mountain theme park in 1971.

Frank Lamping was hired by the amusement park to take charge of the wild animal program. The family had been living in a house in Chatsworth when his two sons drown. It was the following year

that they bought the stone house from the Newhalls.

Frank Lamping designed and managed a one acre animal and petting zoo for Magic Mountain, as well as a Bayou swamp environment for the “Enchanted Cottage” attraction which opened in 1972. Beverly worked with him on a part time basis until an elephant named Bamboo severely gored her with his tusk and stepped on her on July 16, 1975, as she was leading him from the barn to an exhibit area. She survived her wounds in a 1½ operation at a local hospital. She stated afterwards that the elephant may have stepped on a nail and took it out on her. She also asked people not to blame the animal for the attack. She stated in the hospital that she doubted that she would go back to training elephants but that “I might do one in needlepoint though”.

Meanwhile, in February 1981, a painter’s torch touched off a fire that destroyed over 90% of the original Piru Mansion, which was the home of the Newhalls. Only the

foundation, tower and chimneys remained on site. Scott and Ruth Newhall hired the architectural firm of Flood, Meyer, Sutton & Associates to produce plans to reconstruct the mansion.

The work was completed by 1984, leaving that house still considered eligible for the National Register, as a reconstructed building and for its association with David C. Cook, as the founder of the Town of Piru. However, a fire struck the Stone House that same year, damaging the roof. The Lampings had the damage repaired, making the one major change to the house by replacing the wooden roof with the present slate roof to make it less susceptible to future fires.

The Lampings also hired a caretaker, Carlos Garcia, to maintain the house after the fire. Over the next three decades, decades, Garcia, who is a master craftsman, has taken care of the house, including maintaining, and replicating historic fixtures and either upgrading or installing the water fountain and other circular enclosed areas, did almost all of the plantings around the house. He built all of the exterior walls, around the driveway and the backyard, and the surrounding area to the water fountain. He put in all of the slate decking, highlighted with white marble, all around the house and built some of the interior stone door frames and the believe the fireplace stone mantle. Garcia has continued to meticulously maintain the property through ownership transfers right to the present period.

The animal program was phased out after Six Flags bought Magic Mountain, but the Lampings appear to have left the park prior to that date. They deeded the Stone House back to the Newhalls on June 21, 1985. Frank Lamping continued to work with animals in the movie industry until he passed away in Los Angeles on August 14, 1990, at the age of 61.

Scott Newhall died in Los Angeles on October 26, 1992, at the age of 78. He was buried in the Newhall family plot in Colma, California. After his death, Ruth Newhall put the property into a living trust on November 4, 1996. The following year, however, the Newhall Family was to split the ownership into a mass of percentages between Ruth Newhall, her twin sons, Anthony and Jonathan, the Newhall Family Partnership and the XX Newhall Ranch. The property was deeded to a cousin, David Newhall Hill, on October 23, 2003. Ruth Waldo Newhall passed away a month later, on November 24, 2003, at the age of 93. She was buried next to Scott in Colma.

David Newhall Hill had some work done to some of the Piru Mansion out-buildings, which triggered the California Environmental Quality Act and subsequently commissioned a Historic Resources Assessment Report, which was completed on

February 5, 2007. This report served as the source for some of the background information for this writing.

Hill deeded the Stone House to Kenneth R. and Betty-Lou Wiseman on March 9, 2012 and has more recently sold the Piru Mansion to James Tashjian, ending the Newhall Family period with the property.



## *Section VIII*

### *Historical Significance*

The Warring Stone has significance as one of the few European style stone houses to be found in Southern California. It was designed by Roy C. Wilson, who is noted for being the first architect to base his practice in Ventura County. Wilson is also acknowledged for many of his innovative designs and his unique perspective of the Ventura County countryside, which allowed him to design structures that would enhance their surroundings.

Wilson's portfolio is preserved at the Ventura County Museum and it provides a unique look at this significant local architect. One of Wilson's earliest designs is the Mission Revival Timber School of 1924, which is Thousand Oaks City Landmark No. 12, along with the schools 1948 auditorium, which was also designed by Wilson.

The Warring Stone House is significant due to its association with the Warring, Newhall and Lamping Families, as well. But its primary significance is that of an architectural type specimen of a rare style of housing and construction for the United State, particularly in Southern California, even though the area has for years been a Mecca for different housing designs. The association with the pioneer architect Roy C. Wilson is also of significance.

## *Section IX*

### *Conclusion*

The Warring Stone House is an unusual design for anywhere in the United States, being borrowed from the French Countryside and it's exterior walls built of locally excavated stone.

The architect of the building, Roy Calvin Wilson, was well known throughout Ventura County with a portfolio of work that is of the highest level of design and craftsmanship. Wilson's work, as that of the first licensed architect to base his operations in Ventura County, is recognized well beyond the local area as some of the best architecture found in the United States.

As a representative type specimen of the French stone farmhouse style domicile of the period prior to the Great Depression, the house displays both a high level of artistic merit as well as an outstanding level of integrity in both its original design and materials. The structure has all of its original fixtures, including lighting and plumbing, making it one of the well preserved homes of its era.

The design is both representative of the type of Old World craftsmanship that was romanticized in the United States through movies and travel books of the French countryside.

Therefore, based on its merits as an architectural type specimen and the high level of artistic merit, the Warring Stone House qualifies to be individually eligible for the National Register under criterion "B" and "C", with a California Historic Resource Code of 3S.

As such the property would also qualify for local listing under criteria 5 and 6 of the Ventura County Cultural Heritage Ordinance in that it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period and method of construction, may represent the work of a master builder and possesses high artistic value. It also retains a high level of integrity in both the structure itself and its immediate surroundings.

In addition the resource appears to qualify under Ventura criteria No. 3, 5 and 6 in that it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Ventura County or its cities, regional history due to the association with three prominent local families as well as the association with the David Cook Mansion.

*Section X  
Photographs*



*Warring Stone House, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*



*Warring Stone House, 837 Park Street, Piru, c 1935*





*Warring Stone House, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*



*Warring Stone House, 837 Park Street, Piru, circa 2008 (Google Earth)*





*Warring Stone House, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*



*Warring Stone House, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*





*Warring Stone House, chimney, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*



*Warring Stone House, tree bed, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*





*Warring Stone House, garage, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*



*Warring Stone House, roof between house and garage, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*





*Warring Stone House, rear patio, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*



*Warring Stone House, rear doors, roofline and brackets, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*





*Warring Stone House, closed eaves and dentils, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*



*Warring Stone House, large casement windows, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*





*Warring Stone House, small window with lentil, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*

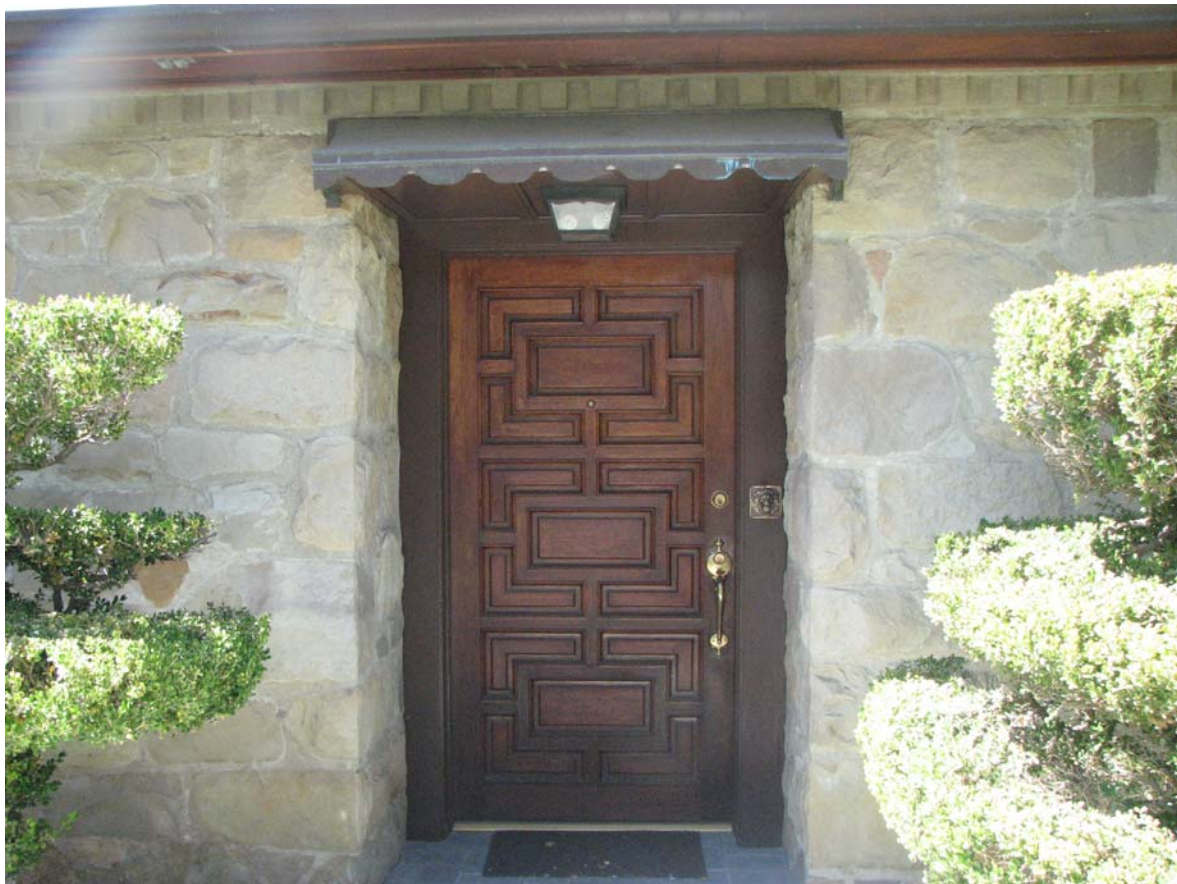


*Warring Stone House, front fountain, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*





*Warring Stone House, slate roof, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*



*Warring Stone House, front door, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*





*Warring Stone House, front porch cover, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*



*Warring Stone House, door bell, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*





*Warring Stone House, front entry, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*



*Warring Stone House, living room, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*



*Warring Stone House, living room chandelier, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*



*Warring Stone House, living room slate floor, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*





*Warring Stone House, fireplace, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*



*Warring Stone House, dining room, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*

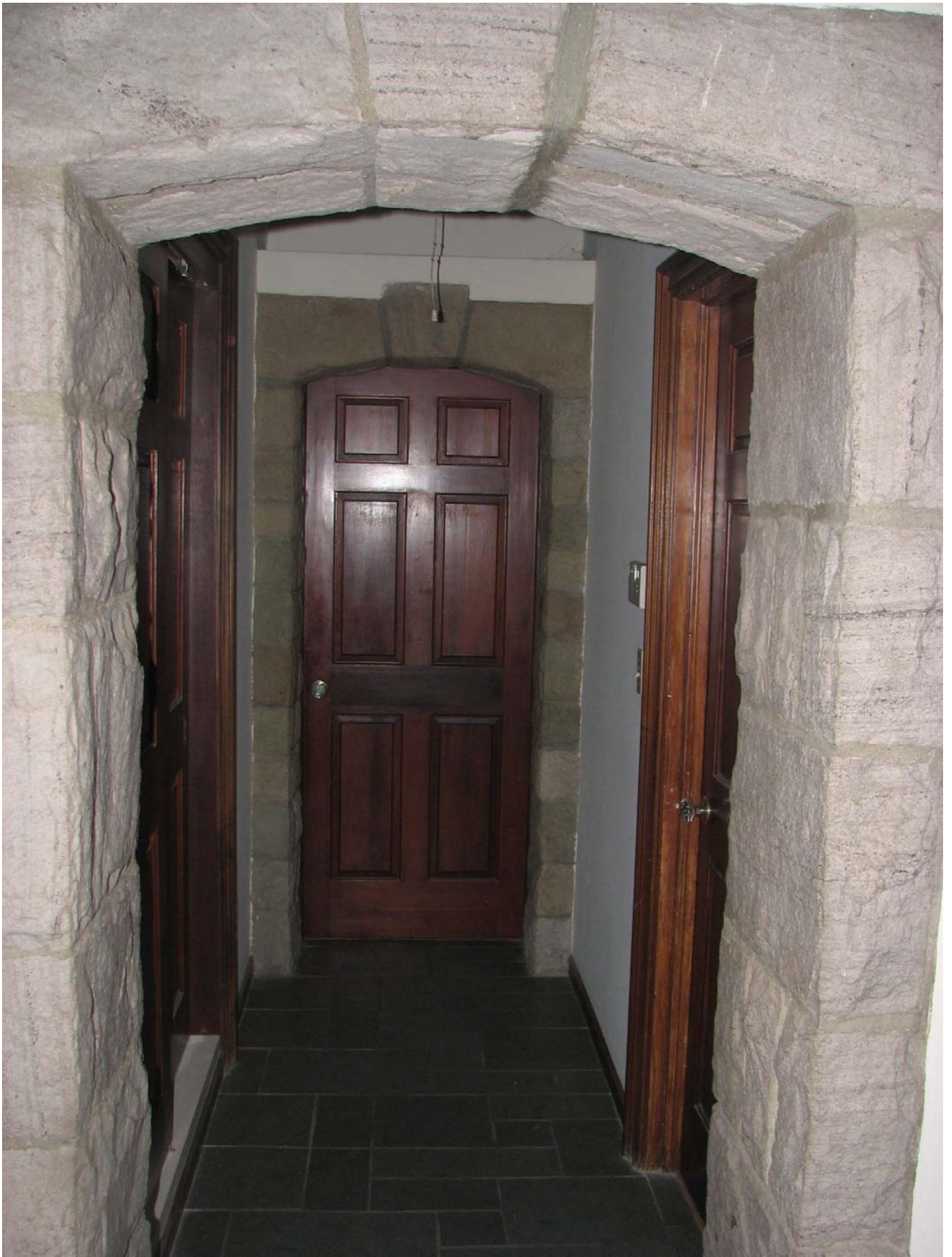


*Warring Stone House, dining room entry, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*



*Warring Stone House, entry to butler's pantry, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*





*Warring Stone House, hallway, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*



*Warring Stone House, roof beams, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*



*Warring Stone House, living room roof beams, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*





*Warring Stone House, brass lighting fixture, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*



*Warring Stone House, bedroom window sill, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*



*Warring Stone House, bedroom ceiling, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*



*Warring Stone House, window hardware, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*





*Warring Stone House, stone wall to West of house, 837 Park Street, Piru, June 6, 2012 (Charles J. Fisher photo)*



*Warring Stone House, 837 Park Street, Piru, Spring 2012 (Real Estate photo)*

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