



**HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION  
DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE (DRC) MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2009**

**1:00 – 2:00 P.M.**

**City Hall Tower**

**200 East Santa Clara Street**

**ROOM T-334**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**Patricia Colombe, HLC Chair**

**Dana Peak, HLC Vice Chair,  
and Steven Cohen**

**Design Review Committee Meeting Goal:** Discuss project design conformance to applicable City of San Jose historic design guidelines, based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties

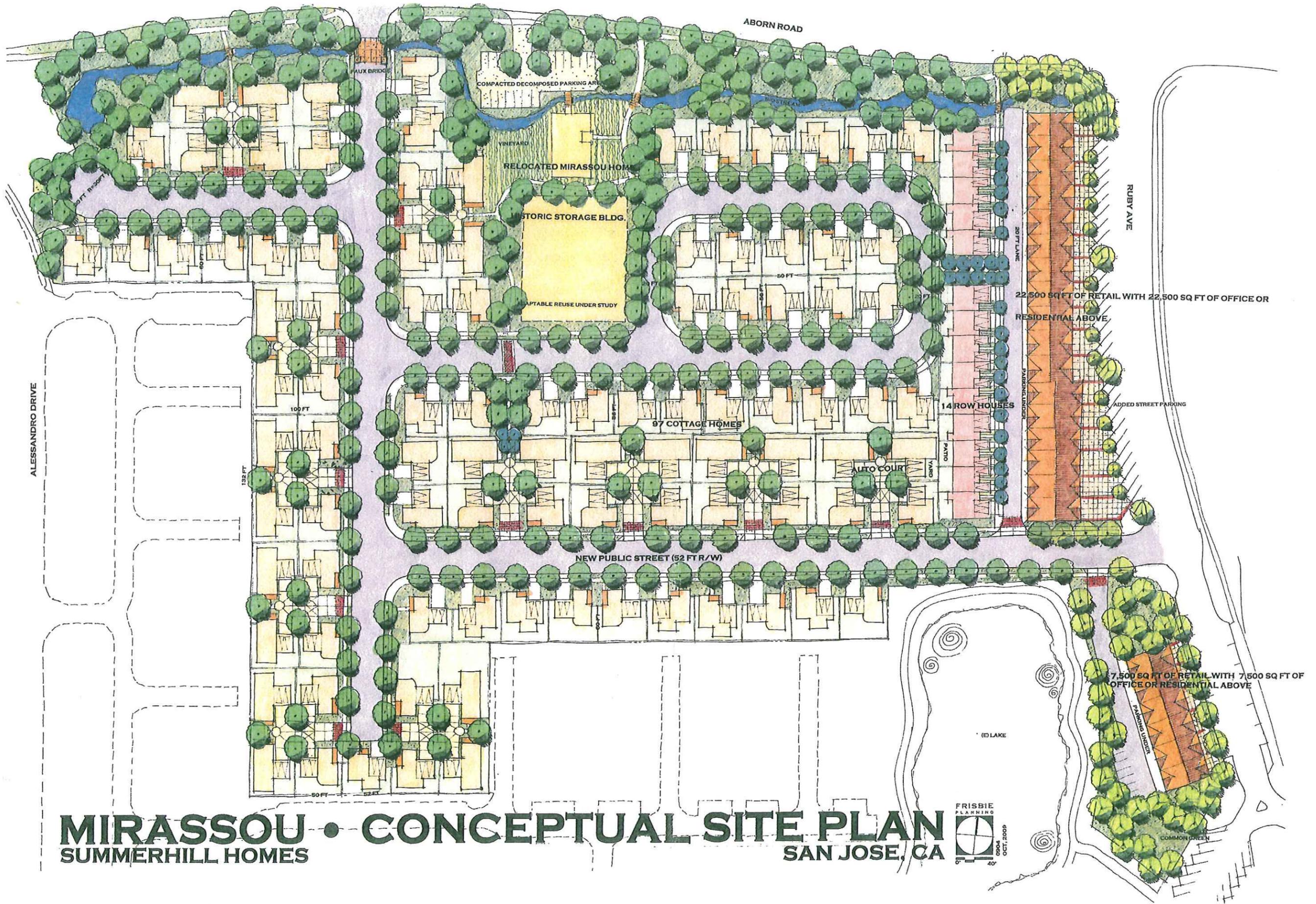
**Proposed projects for consideration:**

**Mirassou Winery Mixed Use Project** – PRE09-107, Enhanced Preliminary Review application to allow up to 150 dwelling units and up to 25,000 square feet of general commercial and up to 25,000 square feet of office and up to 40,000 square feet of retail on a 14.6 gross acre site. The site includes two structures, a winery and residence, on one parcel which is listed as a historic resource:

- Mirassou Winery – 3000 Aborn Road – Listed on the Historic Resources Inventory as a Candidate City Landmark (documentation attached).

Lesley Xavier, *Project Manager*.

**JOSEPH HORWEDEL, AICP, DIRECTOR  
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, BUILDING AND CODE ENFORCEMENT**



# MIRASSOU • CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN

## SUMMERHILL HOMES

### SAN JOSE, CA

FRISBIE  
PLANNING  
2004  
OCT. 2009



13. **Condition:** Excellent (  ) Good (  ) Fair (  ) Deteriorated (  ) Nonexistent (  )
14. **Alterations:** none apparent
15. **Surroundings:** (Check more than one if necessary) Open Land (  ) Scattered Buildings (  )  
Densely Built-up (  ) Residential (  ) Industrial (  ) Commercial (  )  
Other:
16. **Threats to site:** None Known (  ) Private Development (  ) Zoning (  )  
Vandalism (  ) Public Works Project (  ) Other:
17. **Is the Structure:** On its Original site? (  ) Moved? (  ) Unknown? (  )
18. **Related Features:**

## SIGNIFICANCE

19. **Briefly state historical and/or architectural importance (include dates, events, and persons associated with the site):**

This property was acquired from the Alfred Chew estate by Herman, John and Peter Mirassou in 1911. These men were the grandsons of Pierre Pellier, the first commercial vintner in the Evergreen valley. They took over the operation of the family winery forming the Mirassou Brothers partnership in 1909, purchasing this property in 1911. Peter Mirassou married in 1912 and moved into the old Chew ranchhouse. With the onset of prohibition in 1919 the partnership was dissolved and Peter retained the Aborn Rd. vineyards. Peter was joined by his sons, Edmund and Norbert, and the winery facilities were constructed in 1937. In the 1960s another generation of Mirassous took over the business, expanding into Monterey County and mass marketing their product throughout the nation. The winery is now the third largest in Santa Clara County and continues to be operated by the Mirassou family.

Based on the integrity of the winery complex and the long history of the Mirassou family's involvement in the winemaking business in Santa Clara County, this resource is a candidate for City Landmark status.

20. **Main theme of the historic resource:** (If more than one is checked, number in order of importance.)

- Architecture (  ) Arts & Leisure (  )  
Economic/Industrial (  ) Exploration/Settlement (  )  
Government (  ) Military (  ) Religion (  )  
Social/Education (  )

21. **Sources** (List books, documents, surveys, personal interviews and their dates.)

Field survey, September 1990. (guided tour)  
Payne, Stephen. *Harvest of Change*, 1987.  
Edmund Mirassou. Personal communication, 1990.  
P. Mirassou. *The Heritage of Mirassou Vineyards*, 1965.  
C. Damskey. *The Vineyard Venture of Missions and Men*  
*The Story of Viticulture in the Santa Clara Valley*, 1965.

22. **Date form prepared:** September 1990

**By:** Glory Anne Laffey

**Organization:** Archaeological Resource Management

**Address:** 496 N. Fifth Street

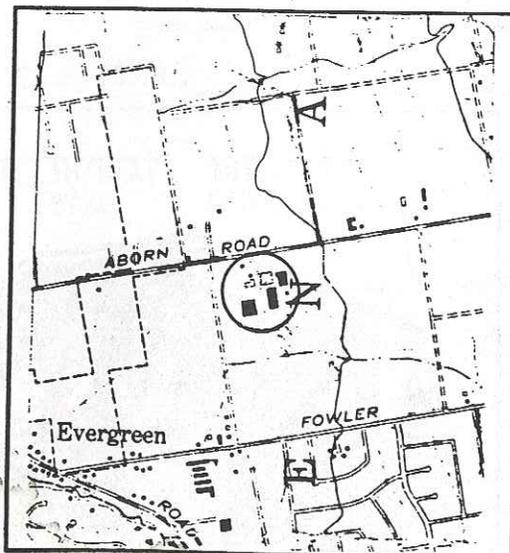
**City:** San Jose

**Zip Code:** 95112

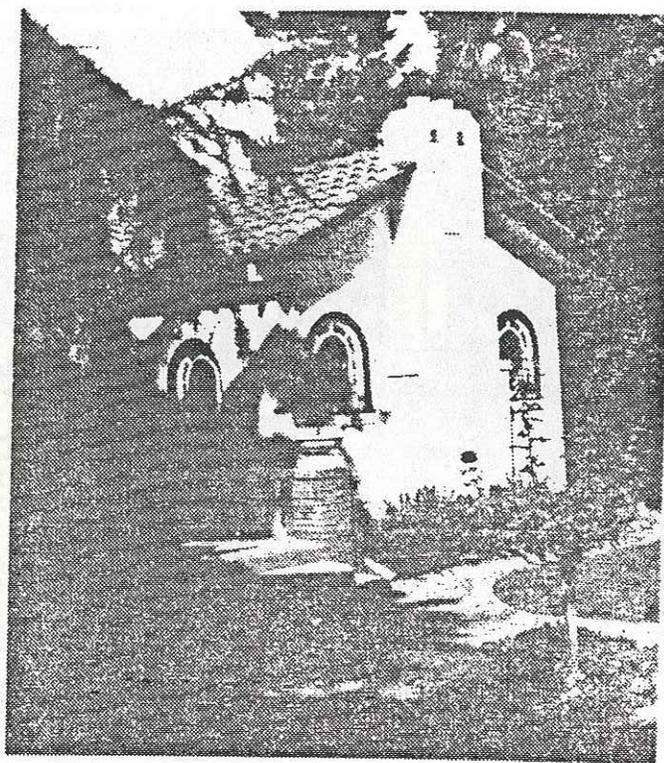
**Phone:** (408) 295-1373

**Location sketch map**

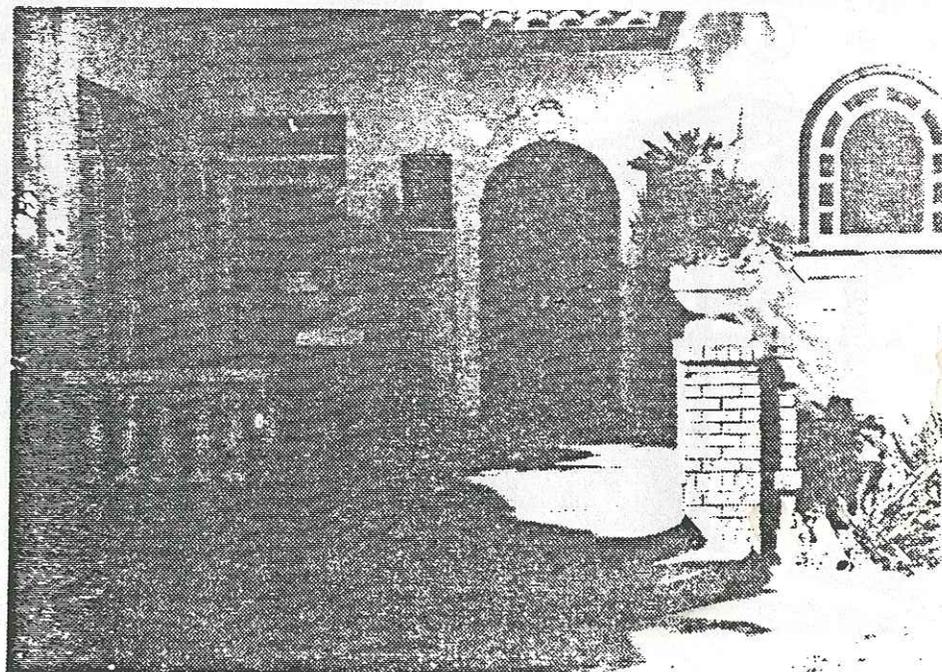
(draw & label site and surrounding streets, roads, and prominent landmarks)



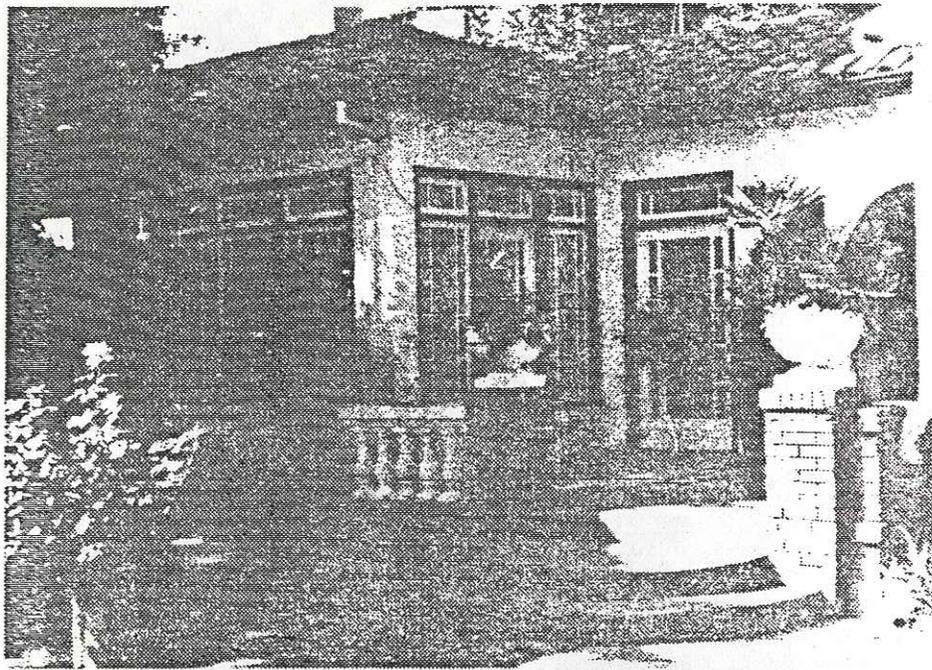
3000 ABORN ROAD



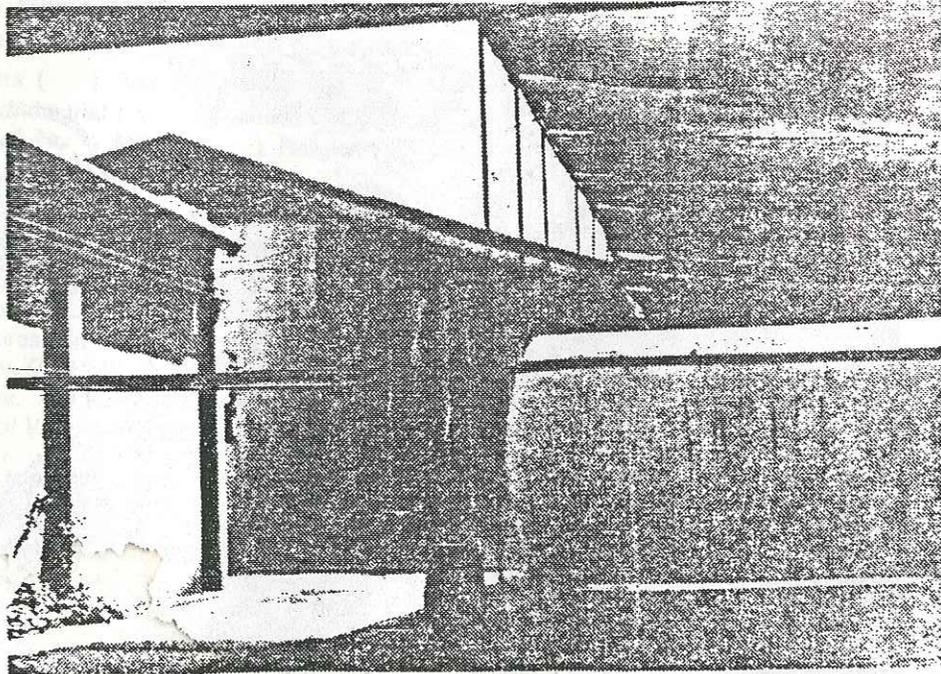
HERITAGE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM WING



HERITAGE HOUSE - ENTRANCE



HERITAGE HOUSE - ENTRY PATIO



MIRASSOU VINEYARDS - FERMENTATION TANKS

EVALUATION SHEET

STORIC RESOURCE NAME Mirassou Winery--3000 Aborn Road

A. VISUAL QUALITY/DESIGN

- 1. EXTERIOR \_\_\_\_\_ (E) VG G FP
- 2. STYLE Mediterranean Revival E (VG) G FP
- 3. DESIGNER possible Wolfe & Higgins E VG G FP
- 4. CONSTRUCTION \_\_\_\_\_ E (VG) G FP
- 5. SUPPORTIVE ELEMENTS \_\_\_\_\_ E VG (G) FP

B. HISTORY/ASSOCIATION

- 6. PERSON/ORGANIZATION Mirassou family (E) VG G FP
- 7. EVENT \_\_\_\_\_ E VG G (FP)
- 8. PATTERNS viticulture/wine making industry (E) VG G FP
- 9. AGE 1924 - 1990 E VG (G) FP

C. ENVIRONMENTAL/CONTEXT

- 10. CONTINUITY \_\_\_\_\_ E (VG) G FP
- 11. SETTING \_\_\_\_\_ E (VG) G FP
- 12. FAMILIARITY \_\_\_\_\_ E VG (G) FP

D. INTEGRITY

- 13. CONDITION \_\_\_\_\_ (E) VG G FP
- 14. EXTERIOR ALTERATIONS \_\_\_\_\_ (E) VG G FP
- 15. STRUCTURAL REMOVALS \_\_\_\_\_ (E) VG G FP
- 16. SITE \_\_\_\_\_ (E) VG G FP

E. REVERSIBILITY

- 17. EXTERIOR \_\_\_\_\_ (E) VG G FP

F. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS/BONUS POINTS

- 18. INTERIOR/VISUAL \_\_\_\_\_ (E) VG G FP
- 19. INTERIOR/HISTORY \_\_\_\_\_ E VG (G) FP
- 20. INTERIOR ALTERATIONS \_\_\_\_\_ E VG (G) FP
- 21. REVERSIBILITY/INTERIOR \_\_\_\_\_ E VG G (FP)

REVIEWED BY Glory Laffey

DATE: 10-15-90

EVALUATION TALLY SHEET

	Value		FP
	VG	G	
(16)	7	6	0
10	(8)	4	0
6	4	2	0
10	(8)	4	0
8	6	(3)	0

A. VISUAL QUALITY/DESIGN

1. Exterior
2. Style
3. Designer
4. Construction
5. Supportive Elements

VISUAL QUALITY/DESIGN SUB-TOTAL 35+

	Value		FP
	VG	G	
(20)	15	7	0
20	15	7	(0)
(12)	9	5	0
8	6	(3)	0

B. HISTORY/ASSOCIATION

6. Person/Organization
7. Event
8. Patterns
9. Age

HISTORY/ASSOCIATION SUB-TOTAL 35

	Value		FP
	VG	G	
8	(6)	3	0
6	(4)	2	0
10	8	(4)	0

C. ENVIRONMENTAL/CONTEXT

10. Continuity
11. Setting
12. Familiarity

ENVIRONMENTAL/CONTEXT SUB-TOTAL 14

A & C SUB-TOTAL 49+  
 B SUB-TOTAL 35

PRELIMINARY TOTAL (SUM of A, B, & C) 84

E	Value		FP
	VG	G	
(--)	.03	.05	.10
(--)	.05	.10	.20
(--)	.03	.05	.10
(--)	.20	.30	.40
(--)	.10	.20	.40
(--)	.10	.20	.40

D. INTEGRITY

13. Alterations
  - From A, B & C Sub-Totals \_\_\_\_\_ x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_
14. Exterior Alterations
  - From A & C Sub-Totals. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_ x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_
  - From B Sub-Total . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_ x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_
15. Structural Removals
  - From A & C Sub-Totals. . . . . \_\_\_\_\_ x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_
  - From B Sub-Total . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_ x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_
16. SITE
  - From B Sub-Total . . . . . \_\_\_\_\_ x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

INTEGRITY DEDUCTIONS (SUB-TOTAL) \_\_\_\_\_

ADJUSTED SUB-TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_ - PRELIMINARY TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_ = 0  
 INTEGRITY DEDUCTIONS

E	VG	G	FP
(3)	3	2	2

E. REVERSIBILITY

17. Exterior 3

===== TOTAL 87

E	Value		FP
	VG	G	
(3)	3	1	0
3	3	(1)	0
4	4	(2)	0
4	4	2	(0)

F. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS/BONUS POINTS

18. History/Association of Interior 3
19. Interior Visual Quality 1
20. Interior Alterations 2
21. Reversibility/Interior 0

BONUS POINTS SUB-TOTAL 6

ADJUSTED TOTAL <sup>43</sup> (with Bonus Points) 91

S.J. HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

HABS	HAER	Loc	Ser. No.	SHL No.	NR Status
UTM				C	
	B			D	

Identification

1. Common Name: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Historic Name: MIRASSOU WINERY
3. Street or Rural Address 3000 ABORN ROAD  
City SAN JOSE, CA Zip 95135 County S.C. CO.
4. Parcel Number: 659-03-002 - 659-03-013
5. Present Owner: MIRASSOU LANDS LTD. Address: 3000 ABORN ROAD  
City SAN JOSE, CA Zip 95135 Ownership is: Public  Private
6. Present Use: WINERY Original Use: WINERY-VINEYARD

Description

7a. Architectural Style: MISSION STYLE - INDUSTRIAL - WAREHOUSE -

7b. Briefly describe the present physical appearance of the site or structure and

describe any major alterations from its original condition: CEMENT BLOCK & BRICK CONSTRUCTION OF WINE CELLAR - ADDITIONS FLAT ROOF TASTING ROOM IS ONE STEP BELOW GROUND LEVEL - TWO STORY - FIRE PLACE WITH BLOCK CHIMNEY - THE LARGE EARLY WINERY IS ARCHED AT THE ROOF - A FALSE FRONT MISSION STYLE FLAT TRIANGULAR IS CAPPED WITH MISSION TILE, THE TASTING ROOM IS OFF CENTER MAIN DOUBLE DOOR <sup>IS</sup> ON THE RIGHT END OF BUILDING. AT THE SECOND FLOOR LEVEL TWO ~~FLAT~~ RECTANGULAR SHAPED WINDOWS FACE THE FRONT - THESE WINDOWS HAVE A BOTTLE GLASS TREATMENT - FRONT SHED ROOFS ARE MISSION TILE COVERED.

Attach Photo Envelope Here

8. Construction Date: VINEYARDS & WINERY Estimated 1911-1920  
WINERY Factual 1927-1937
9. Architect \_\_\_\_\_
10. Builder MIRASSOU BROS.
11. Approx. property size (in feet)  
Frontage \_\_\_\_\_  
Depth \_\_\_\_\_  
or approx. acreage \_\_\_\_\_
12. Date(s) of enclosed photograph(s)  
1987-1990

13. Condition: Excellent  Good  Fair  Deteriorated  No longer in existence
14. Alterations: ADDITIONS
15. Surroundings: (Check more than one if necessary) Open land  Scattered buildings   
Densely built-up  Residential  Industrial  Commercial  Other:
16. Threats to site: None known  Private development  Zoning  Vandalism   
Public Works project  Other:
17. Is the structure: On its original site?  Moved?  Unknown?
18. Related features: VINEYARD - GARDENS - 1920'S SPANISH REVIVAL HOUSE  
WINERY & DISTRIBUTION WAREHOUSE - OFFICE

**Significance**

19. Briefly state historical and/or architectural importance (include dates, events, and persons associated with the site.)

148.26 ACRES ON QUIMBY ROAD BOUGHT 1861 - LOUIS PELLIER - MAY 10, 1867  
LOUIS SOLD TO BROTHER, PIERRE PELLIER - DAUGHTER, HENRIETTA, MARRIED.  
PIERRE H. MIRASSOU - 1889. HER SONS PETER, HERMAN & JOHN MIRASSOU SOLD  
EARLY HILL SIDE PELLIER VINEYARDS. - PURCHASED 100 ACRES ON A BORN  
ROAD (CHEW LANE) FROM ALFRED CHEW, AN EARLY 1860'S EVERGREEN SETTLER.  
1911 - 1920'S WINERY AND VINEYARD AT NEW A BORN LOCATION - PURCHASED  
ADDITIONAL LANDS IN EVERGREEN - WINERY DEVELOPED WITH EACH  
MIRASSOU GENERATION THROUGH 1970'S.

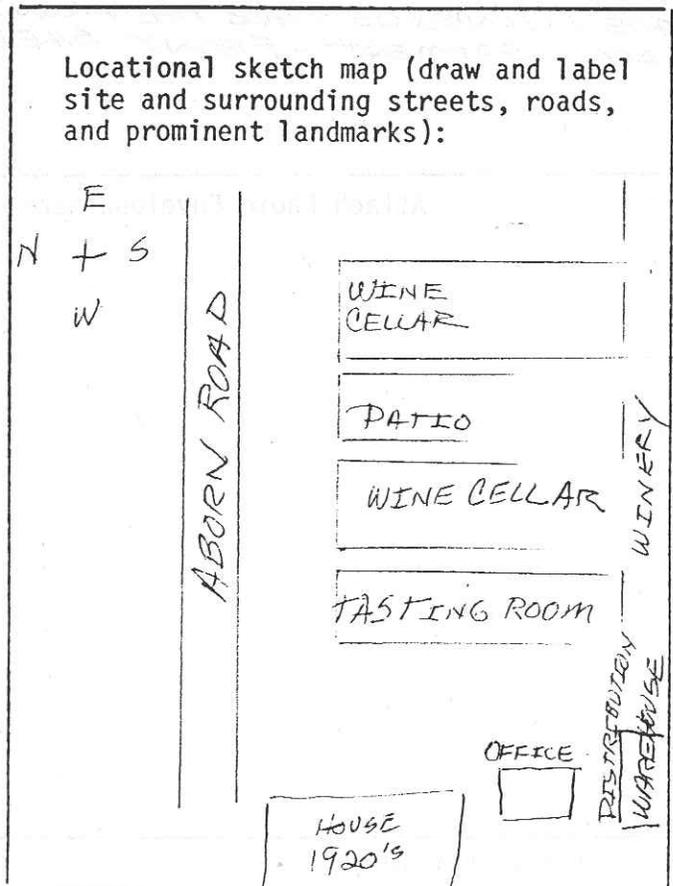
20. Main theme of the historic resource:  
(If more than one is checked, number in order of importance.)

Architecture: \_\_\_\_\_  
Arts & Leisure: \_\_\_\_\_  
Economic/Industrial: \_\_\_\_\_  
Exploration/Settlement:  \_\_\_\_\_  
Government: \_\_\_\_\_  
Military: \_\_\_\_\_  
Religion: \_\_\_\_\_  
Social/Education: \_\_\_\_\_

21. Sources (List books, documents, surveys, personal interviews and their dates).

MIRASSOU FAMILY  
CASALEGNO FAMILY  
T. & W. ATLAS 1876  
BORELLO FAMILY  
C. CORTESE.

22. Date form prepared 4-15-91  
By (name) CORTESE - GARBOSKE - MITCHELL  
Organization Historic Landmarks Comm.  
Address: 801 North First Street  
City: San Jose Zip 95110  
Phone: (408) 277-4576



S.J. HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

HABS	HAER	Loc	SRL No.	NR Status
UTM			C	
	B		D	

entification

- Common Name: MIRASSOU WINERY
- Historic Name: PETER MIRASSOU RESIDENCE
- Street or Rural Address 3000 ABORN ROAD  
City SAN JOSE, CA. Zip 95135 County S.C.CO.
- Parcel Number: 659-03-010
- Present Owner: MIRASSOU LANDS LTD Address: 3000 ABORN ROAD  
City SAN JOSE Zip 95135 Ownership is: Public  Private
- Present Use: SPECIAL EVENTS Original Use: RESIDENCE  
PRIVATE USES FOR WINERY

Description

- Architectural Style: MISSION REVIVAL
- Briefly describe the present physical appearance of the site or structure and describe any major alterations from its original condition: BRICK & PLASTER STRUCTURE MODIFIED L SHAPE - ARCHED WINDOWS WITH LEADED GLASS TRIM - ARCHED ENTRY - EXTERIOR FIREPLACE. CLOSE EAVES - MISSION TILE ROOF, THE OFF SET MAIN ENTRY IS REACHED BY THREE SEMI-ELLIPTICAL STEPS TO A FRONT PATIO - BRICK PILLARS ON EACH SIDE HAVE DECORATIVE CEMENT PLANTERS ON TOP OF THE SQUARE PILLARS - THE FRONT PATIO ENTRANCE HAS TURNED POST RAILINGS. ON RAISED FOUNDATION

Attach Photo Envelope Here

- Construction Date:  
Estimated 1924  
Factual \_\_\_\_\_
- Architect \_\_\_\_\_
- Builder PETER MIRASSOU
- Approx. property size (in feet)  
Frontage \_\_\_\_\_  
Depth \_\_\_\_\_  
or approx. acreage \_\_\_\_\_
- Date(s) of enclosed photograph(s)  
\_\_\_\_\_

13. Condition: Excellent  Good \_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_ Deteriorated \_\_\_ No longer in existence \_\_\_
14. Alterations: \_\_\_\_\_
15. Surroundings: (Check more than one, if necessary) Open land  Scattered buildings \_\_\_  
 Densely built-up \_\_\_ Residential  Industrial \_\_\_ Commercial \_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
16. Threats to site: None known \_\_\_ Private development  Zoning  Vandalism \_\_\_  
 Public Works project  Other: \_\_\_\_\_
17. Is the structure: On its original site?  Moved? \_\_\_ Unknown? \_\_\_
18. Related features: THREE CAR GARAGE - GARDENS.  
SPECIMEN TREES & SHRUBBERY

**Significance**

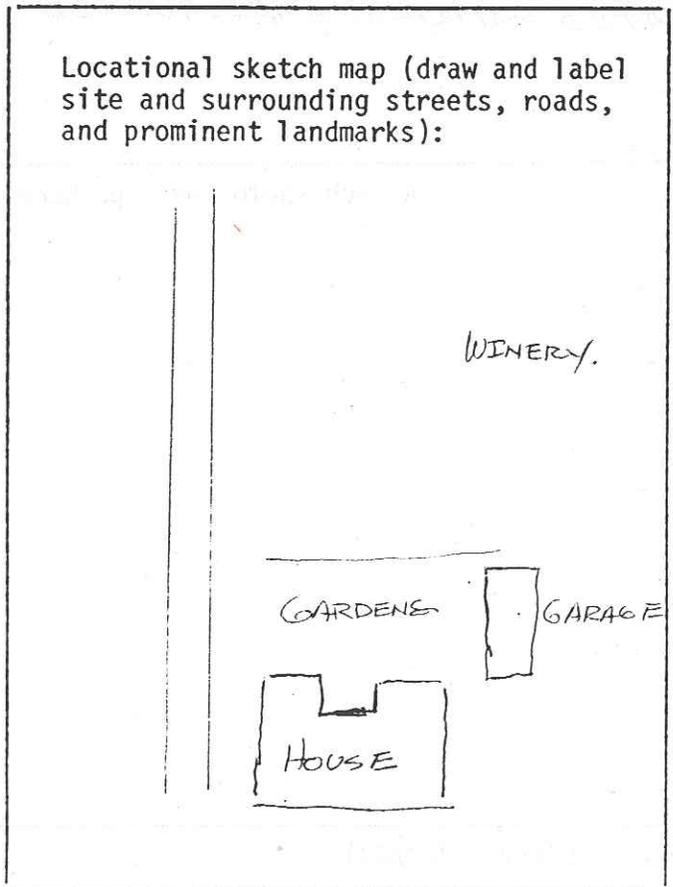
19. Briefly state historical and/or architectural importance (include dates, events, and persons associated with the site.)

PRIVATE RESIDENCE BUILT BY PETER MIRASSOU  
 SON OF HENRIETTA PELLIER MIRASSOU - EST. 1924-1928

20. Main theme of the historic resource:  
 (If more than one is checked, number in order of importance.)
- Architecture: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Arts & Leisure: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Economic/Industrial: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Exploration/Settlement:  \_\_\_\_\_  
 Government: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Military: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Religion: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Social/Education: \_\_\_\_\_

21. Sources (List books, documents, surveys, personal interviews and their dates).

22. Date form prepared 4/15/91  
 By (name) CORIESE-GARBUSKE-MITCHELL  
 Organization Historic Landmarks Comm.  
 Address: 801 North First Street  
 City: San Jose Zip 95110  
 Phone: (408) 277-4576



Louis Pellier, one of the "Forty-Niners", first heard news of gold in Valparaiso, Chili. At 32 years old, he had left home in 1848 from St. Hippolyte, France to see something of the world. He sold dry goods to support himself. He arrived in San Francisco with one French sou in his pocket. Louis found work in the city even then famous for restaurants. After making enough money to equip himself with the proper supplies, he headed for Weaverville, Trinity County. Arriving back in San Francisco in 1850, apparently earning enough money in the gold fields.

By October, 1850 he came to San Jose with a partner, Joaquin Yocco, and began, for the next five years, to purchase property in downtown San Jose.

By 1855 Pellier bought out his partner and became the sole owner of over twelve acres in the heart of Santa Clara Valley, which would soon become downtown San Jose.

He began a nursery at the corner of San Pedro and Chabolla Alley. There, starting with seeds from the local apples, peaches and pears, his nursery was already in demand.

His brother, Pierre Pellier, six years younger, arrived in 1853 to assist him with his busy nursery.

Needing additional nursery stock, Pierre gladly returned to France in 1854 where he had left a young lady, Henriette Renaud, who had promised to wait for Pierre's return. Pierre's trip home would be financed by the nursery if, in addition to being wed, he would search all over France for fruits and plants that

would be suitable in Santa Clara Valley.

With the assistance of his brother, Jean, they collected pears, apples, plums and table and wine grapes. Finally and most important in the orchards of Agen, Pierre obtained cuttings of a prune that would make its history here in the valley.

Five hundred pounds of this precious collection were carefully packed for shipping. Each variety wrapped and labeled for identification. The fruit scions, especially those of the prune, were stuck into potatoes and packed in sawdust or moss. Pierre and Henriette were married, all business completed they departed in 1856 for the return trip to San Francisco.

Jean, Pierre, his bride and her younger brother, Julien Renaud, along with two Delmas children, age 11 and 9 who were being sent to their father, Antonio Delmas, another San Jose nurseryman.

The introduction of la petite prune d'Agen into California, December 1856 was a turning point in the valley's agricultural history. Louis Pellier grafted the French prune onto the root stock of the wild plum and produced the famous Santa Clara Valley prune. At the peak of the prune planting in 1929, California had 171,330 acres - 267.7 sq. miles of prune orchards.

As early as 1853 Pellier helped organize the first Santa Clara Valley Agricultural Society, later to be known as "Pioneer Horticultural Society."

Louis married at age 40 in 1861, Constance Baube, age 29. They had no children. Louis Pellier died June 13, 1872.

The brother, Jean Pellier, returned to France in 1862 leaving his son, Louis, as ward of the elder Louis Pellier. Jean did not return again until a visit in 1874. The young Louis became owner of the Market and San Pedro property. In Jean's absence, the young Louis handled all his father's business.

Here begins the history of America's oldest wine-making family when, in 1854, Pierre Pellier brought the grapes known as "Black Burgundy, French Colombar, Chasselas, Fountainebleau, Pinot Noir, Madeline", and others. With these new varieties, Pierre Pellier founded the valley's wine industry.

Pierre, a hard-working man, learned many techniques of viticulture while working at the Mission San Jose for a short time. Meanwhile, Henriette had her first child, a boy in 1858 called Louis and a girl named after her mother in 1860. Two other children would follow; Marie Helene in 1863 and Rose Elise in 1865. The baby of the family, Josephine was born in 1876.

Louis bought 148.26 acres off Quimby Road in Evergreen, 1861, which was part of the Chaboya Land Grant.

On May 10, 1867, Louis sold the ranch to Pierre for \$1,000. Pierre added to the property in Evergreen until, ~~by~~ 1869 the Pellier ranch became one of the largest in Evergreen.

It is said from Pierre's home, he could see both west and north with a view of Oakland and the hills of San Francisco.

As was typical of the European grape grower, Pierre located his vineyard on the side hills, leaving the valley floor for such crops as wheat and barley. The house stood on a level lot. On the south side the ground dropped down into a dry creek bed, the "Arroyo Onore." The hill behind the house swung sharply upward to the east. Running parallel to the creek a steep one-mile road joined Quimby Road. Unnamed in 1861, today we know it as Chaboya Road.

There Pierre built a two-story winery nestled into the side of a hill. For almost twenty years, isolated and alone in this new land, speaking only their native language, Pierre had only himself, wife and family for labor.

The family was struck by the sudden tragic death of Pierre's only son. The boy, Louis P. Pellier, died at age 16 of typhoid in 1874. Just seven years later in April 1881, Pierre lost his wife which forced his oldest daughter, Henriette, to assume the duties of homemaker.

Henriette married that same year, a handsome man who had recently arrived from France. Pierre Huste Mirassou was well-educated, experienced in viticulture and a willing, hard worker. Joining the family ranch business, he and Henriette had five small children in nine years of their marriage. Pierre Mirassou died on May 26, 1889 of Brights disease.

During this period, Santa Clara County began to take the lead in California wine-making and the Pellier family began to lay the foundation for later achievements. A large two-story

winery was built where grapes were crushed, juice processed and allowed to ferment, then drained down to storage tanks on the lower level for aging. The finished product was sold locally or put into whatever odd-sized bottles that were available.

In the late 1880's Pierre Pellier was now a frail man. He had been seriously injured when his horse ran away. Falling, he broke both his legs, leaving him in a wheelchair for the rest of his life and in the care of his daughter, Henriette. Enfeebled by a stroke, he died shortly thereafter leaving the land to his daughter.

Henriette Mirassou, a spirited woman of determination despite sorrow and loneliness, continued to hold the family together.

She met Thomas Casalegno, a Piedmontese Italian, who had arrived in the early 1880's. He was employed on the Quilty dairy ranch, just above the Pellier ranch. She accepted his proposal and they married September 13, ~~1890~~.1890? ←

Thomas was raised in the wine country near Torino, Italy. The Piedmonte region was renowned for its red wines. His father was a winemaker.

Just four years later, a new vine disease "phylloxera" destroyed the entire vineyard. For almost ten years, the family survived by trading livestock and fruit for groceries and provisions.

New developments were announced for the planting of vine varieties resistance to the "phylloxera". Thomas Casalegno,

hearing of the news, left San Jose in 1900 and sailed to France. There he ordered 20,000 rooted "Rupestris" vines to be shipped to the Evergreen ranch. By the next summer, struggle and poverty behind them, they summoned the courage to begin again.

Henriette saw to it that her sons would learn the winemaking skills that had been their Grandfather's, Pierre Pellier. She became the link between the generations.

Her two oldest sons, Peter and Herman, were sent to business school in San Jose, Their knowledge grew, along with the vineyard. As Herman became the winemaker and Peter a sharp and decisive manager, John, the youngest, being the mechanical genius of the family, kept everything operating in good order.

Farming a hillside vineyard was both exhausting and dangerous. The years of plowing the soil, on a side hill, finally reached an end. In the fall of 1905 nature stepped in with answers. The "1905 Cloudburst" which dumped several inches of rain in only a little over an hour, caused mud avalanches and landslides and filled the Arroyo Onore. A wall of water damaged their home, broke bottles and barrels and new wine washed down into the valley, along with the mud.

Once again, nature knocked at the Mirassou door only this time it was the famous 1906 earthquake.

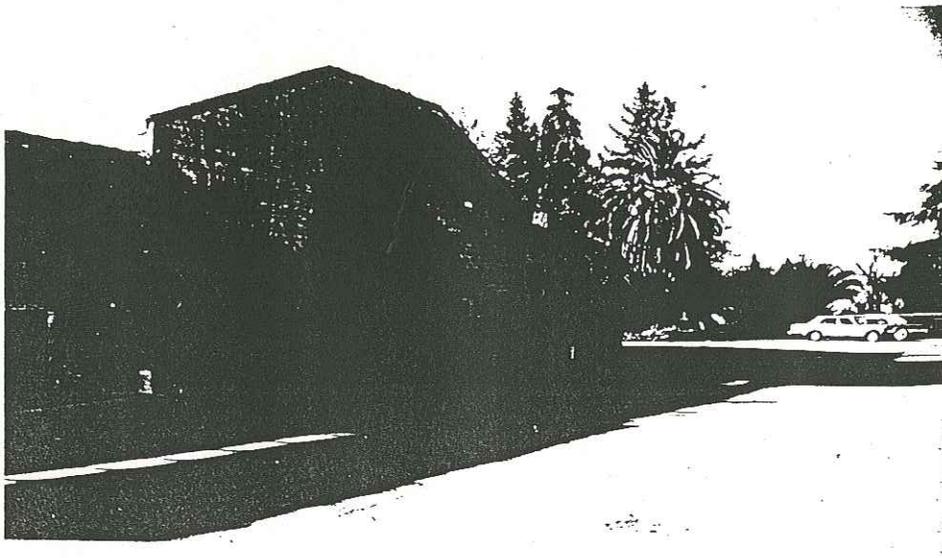
Herman Mirassou thought he was having a nightmare when the ground under him began to violently shake. He was in the blacksmith shop with a worker, standing on the other side. As the building went up and down, they could see each other over

the smithy.

Everyone now agreed that the hill was not the place to continue. The old Pellier Ranch was sold in 1911 and to replace the hillside vineyard, they bought the one hundred acre Alfred Chew farm on Aborn Road.

The Mirassou Vineyards continue today. Peter's sons, Edmund and Norbert, carry on the tradition of their ancestors by handing down this heritage to the fifth generation. Today Daniel, Jim and Peter Mirassou, sons of Edmund, continue the Pellier tradition. The spirit of the past lives on in the present generation.

A visit to the winery on Aborn Road where tours and wine-tasting in the old vine-covered buildings are conducted by well-trained, young wine experts makes for a very pleasant afternoon.



Mirassou Winery

"America's oldest wine-making Family"

Photo: Vince Cortese, 1987

Mirassou Winery

View from Fowler Road

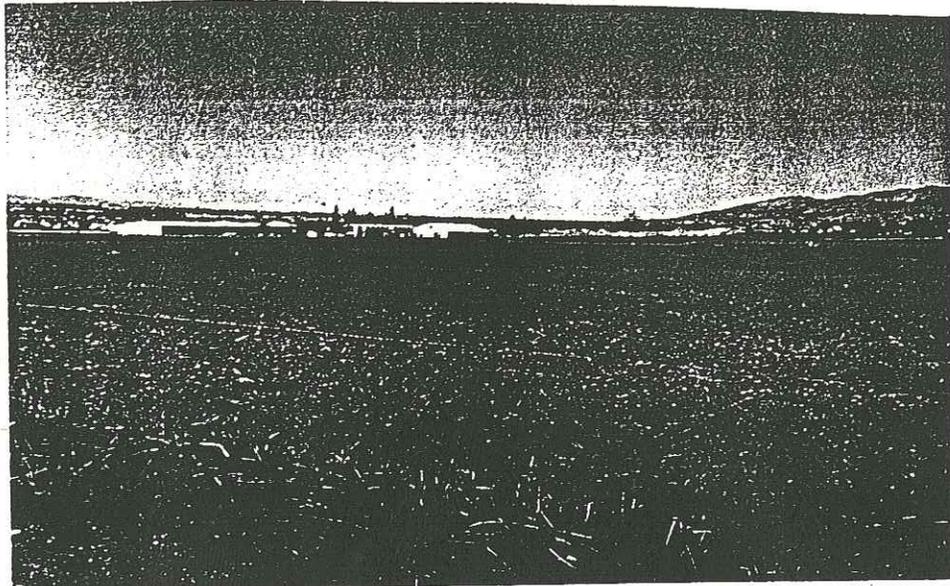
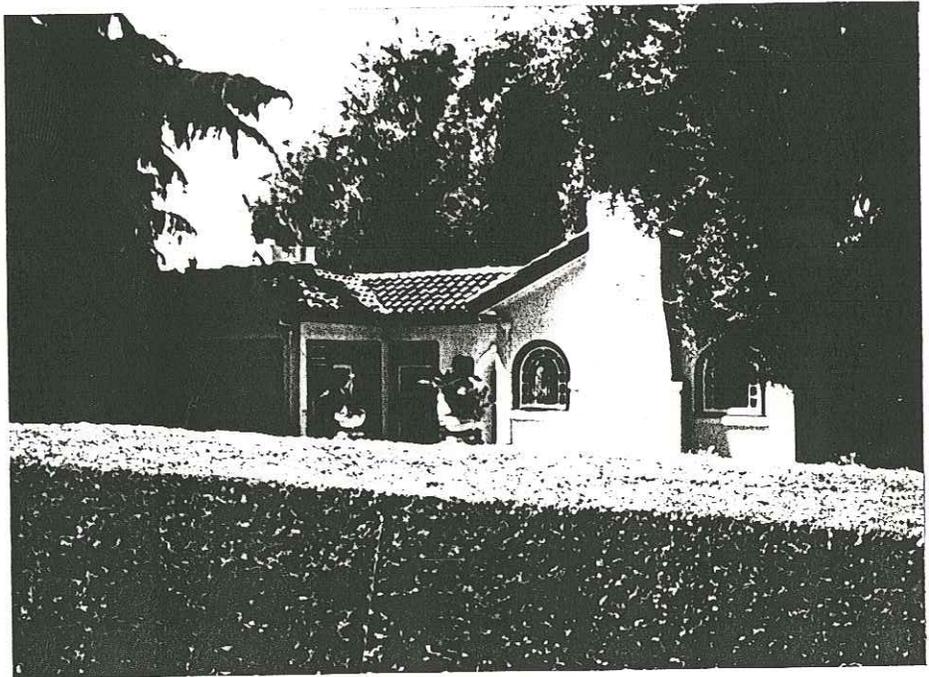
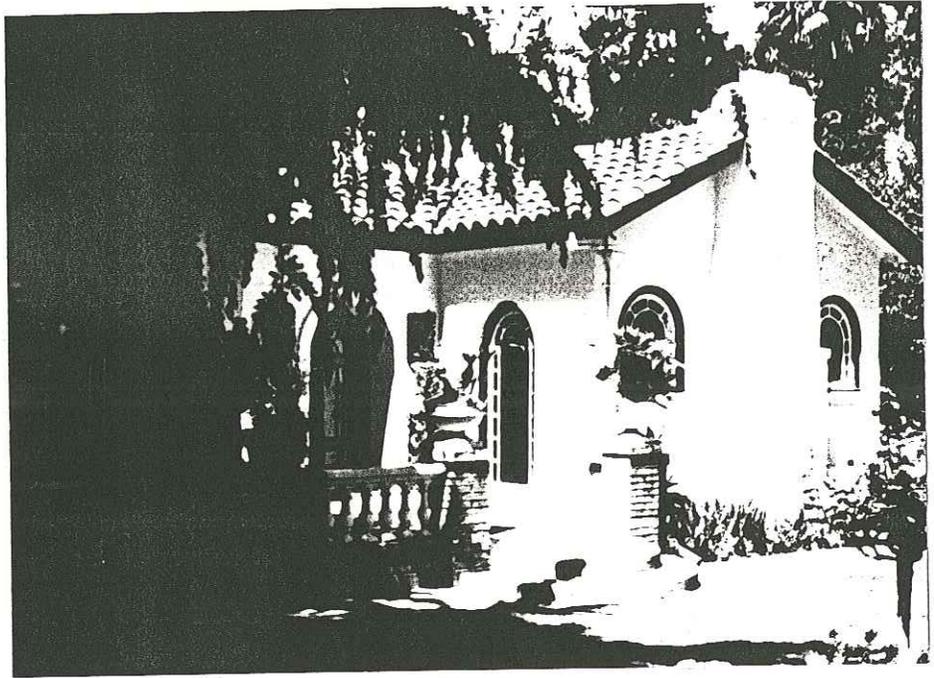
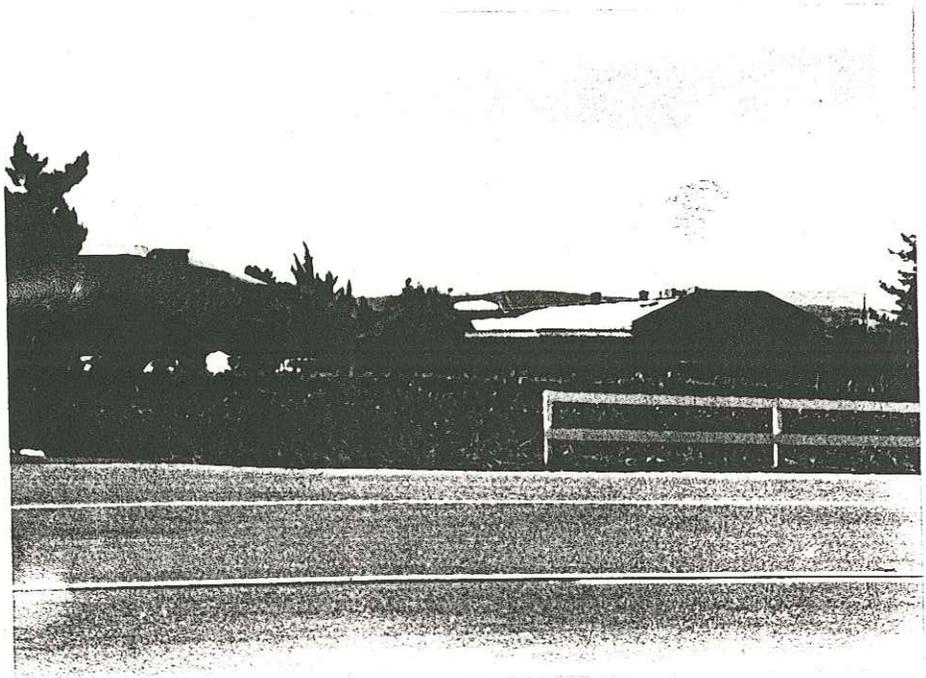


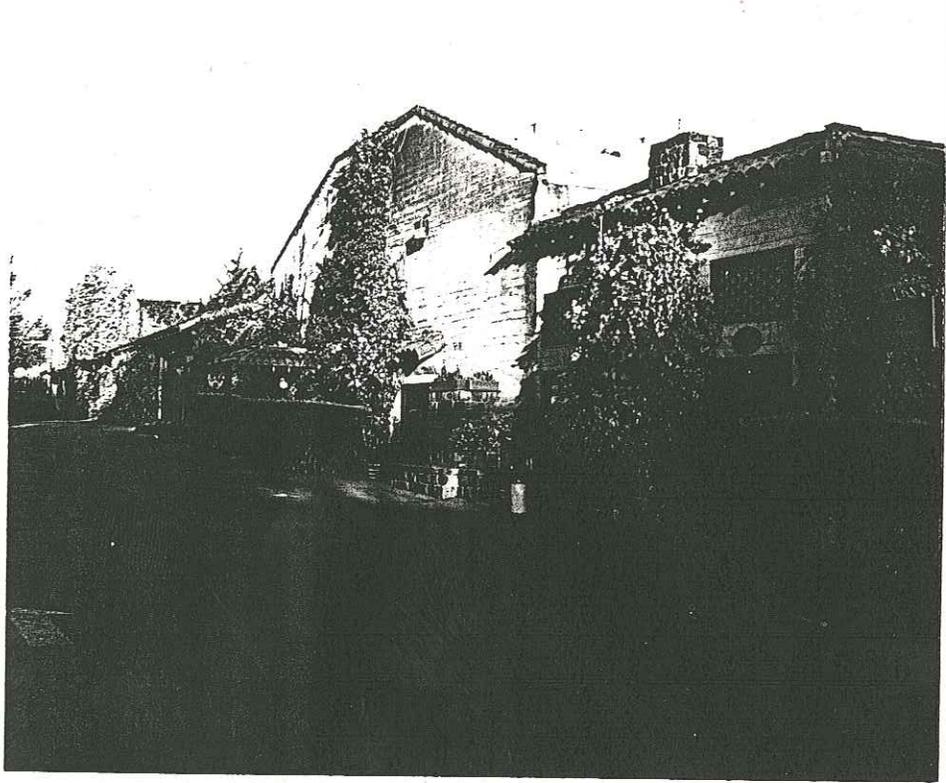
Photo: Vince Cortese, 1987

Leaving the winery one can take a moment to look down across Santa Clara Valley and recall the history of Louis and Pierre Pellier who first settled here in 1861, beginning a struggle with land and nature which would continue for the next one hundred and twenty-five years.









WINERY