THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OF OAKRIDGE

HISTORIC CULTURAL MONUMENT #484
18650 DEVONSHIRE STREET

PREPARED FOR

Lennar/ Greystone Homes, Inc.

25129 The Old Road, Suite 100

Stevenson Ranch, CA 91381

PREPARED BY

HISTORIC RESOURCES GROUP
1728 Whitley Avenue
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1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to document the history and cultural landscape characteristics of Oakridge, an historic, nine-acre estate in the Northridge community of the San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles, California. Oakridge is designated City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #484. The property was originally developed in 1936-37 as part of a larger ranch property with two residences, one for the film actress Barbara Stanwyck, and the other for her manager Zeppo Marx and his wife Marion. Comedic actor Jack Oakie purchased the property from Stanwyck in 1940 and named it Oakridge. Regarded as the unofficial Mayor of Northridge, Oakie resided on the property with his wife until his death in 1978. The design of the original Stanwyck residence is attributed to the highly regarded Los Angeles architect Paul Revere Williams. This report has been prepared for the Historic Preservation Division of the Los Angeles City Planning Department in conjunction with the review of a proposed subdivision of the property.

The site consists of the historic residence with an entrance drive, lawns, and service areas; a swimming pool and tennis court; and a field. The residence is located on a knoll, near the northeast corner of the site, with a highest point of 1,000 feet above sea level. Sloping downward to the southwest, the property's lowest elevation is approximately 950 feet, near the southwest corner. The property is bounded by Devonshire Street on the north, the property line adjacent to a commercial property (car dealership) on the east, the rear property line of the residential lots along Lemarsh Street, and the Wilbur Wash flood control channel on the west. The total area of the site is approximately 9.47 acres.

This report includes a history of Oakridge, a summary of the site's historic context, and a detailed description of the current condition of the site. Information contained in the report is based on historic research and site visits. Sources used regarding identification and evaluation of cultural landscapes include technical periodicals published by the National Park Service, specifically: "Preservation Brief 36: Protecting Cultural Landscapes;" "National Register Bulletin 18: How to Evaluate and Nominate Designed Historic Landscapes;" *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports*, 1998; and the bulletin *Landscape Lines* (issues 2, 3, 9, and 12). Other sources consulted include "Integrity as a Value in Cultural Landscape Preservation" (an essay in *Preserving Cultural Landscapes in America*, Alanen and Melnick, editors, 2000). The definitions and philosophies contained in these documents provide the framework for preservation policy regarding cultural landscapes. While original plans of the residence were not available, some historic photographs were located. The research and documentation process also included a detailed topographic survey and arborist's assessment of the site. Newspaper articles from the period of original construction were consulted as well as various maps and other archival materials. This report provides an analysis of the historic integrity of the site. A complete bibliography is included.

2. SITE HISTORY

Located north and west of downtown Los Angeles, the San Fernando Valley today is home to approximately 1.7 million people. The Valley is surrounded by mountain ranges: the Santa Monica Mountains to the south, the Simi Hills to the west, the Santa Susana Mountains to the north, the San Gabriel Mountains to the north and east, and the Verdugo Mountains to the southeast. The valley takes its name from its historic relationship to the San Fernando Mission.

2.1 THE SAN FERNANDO VALLEY

The northern San Fernando Valley has been populated for hundreds of years and is among the oldest human habitats on the West Coast. Its first residents were Tongva and Tataviam, two large groups of clans whose settlements were found throughout Southern California in what is now Los Angeles and Ventura counties. The Tongva and Tataviam peoples were semi-sedentary hunter-gatherers.

By 1769, when the first land expedition of Europeans came to California, the San Fernando Valley was home to approximately a thousand people. The Portolá expedition of that year was the first contact between the native population and Europeans. Franciscan missionaries led by Father Junipero Serra established the first mission in Alta California in San Diego in 1769. In 1797, the Franciscans established Mission San Fernando near the site of a Tataviam village called Achois Comihabit. It was located along El Camino Real or the royal road, between the San Gabriel Mission which had been established twenty-six years earlier in 1771, and the San Buenaventura Mission, established fifteen years earlier in 1782.

Francisco Reyes, earlier awarded a land grant from the Spanish crown, surrendered a portion of the land so that the new mission could be constructed. Native labor was used in the building of the mission complex, and many were converted to Catholicism. Under Spanish rule, the Tongva became known as the Gabrieliño (people of the Mission of San Gabriel) and the Tataviam became known as Fernandeños (people of the Mission of San Fernando). Many Gabrieliños and Fernandeños adopted customs, language, and clothing of the Spanish during this period. By the 1790s, people of Spanish, Mexican, and Indian descent had helped to build the mission complex and the surrounding settlement along El Camino Real.

By the early 1800s, the area around the San Fernando Mission was cultivated and the Mission was prosperous, producing olives, dates, wheat, barley, corn, and beans; and raising cattle, sheep, and horses. It was developed into a compound that included chapels, housing, and businesses. A small trading village had developed where the resident Indians sold and purchased goods. The Mission was active for the first portion of the nineteenth century until its secularization in 1834. Although agriculturally prosperous, life at the San Fernando Mission was harsh, and many Indians perished from disease.

In 1823, Mexico won its independence from Spain. As a result, the San Fernando Valley had a new government. The Mexican government removed the Spanish priests and secularized the missions. As these new initiatives limited the power of the Church, more land passed into the hands of settlers, many

from Mexico and the United States. By the mid-1840s, the region was again in turmoil, as Mexico and the United States fought for territorial control.

During this period, the Mexican government established the rancho system, based in part on earlier Spanish land divisions. A series of large land grants were awarded and the rancho system became the dominant settlement pattern. Beneficiaries of the system were former soldiers and others who had served the government. The large land grants often had somewhat amorphous boundaries (sometimes based on "landmarks" such as rock outcroppings, river beds, and large trees). Boundary disputes were common. The ranchos contained thousands of acres and the population was relatively small and highly interconnected. Most raised livestock. Native Californians worked on the ranchos, some as *vaqueros* or cowboys.

The California Gold Rush accelerated the migration of Anglos to the state. One of the first discoveries of gold in California occurred in 1842 in Placerita Canyon, not far from the San Fernando Mission. During the second half of the nineteenth century, the Valley was under American rule as California became a state. In 1865, President Lincoln returned some of the confiscated and secularized Mission lands to the control of religious authorities. The Catholic Church obtained ownership, using the land for both secular and religious purposes.

The American period regularized the large land grants of the Mexican period by imposing surveyed boundaries on land transactions. As the area transitioned from grazing to farming, plots of land assumed the familiar patterns of acreage and sections still present today. Many still owned vast tracts of undeveloped land. Systems of irrigation and transportation routes played major roles in site development.

The Southern Pacific Railroad constructed a railroad through the northeast San Fernando Valley in the mid-1870s. More than 1,500 workers are reported to have worked on the project, many of them Chinese (Bearchall, 68). At the north end of the Valley where the Santa Susana and San Gabriel mountain ranges join, a long tunnel was constructed through the mountain pass which joined the northbound and southbound routes, and Los Angeles and San Francisco became directly linked by rail for the first time. , On September 5, 1876, a ceremony marked the connection with the driving of a golden spike at the location known variously as the San Fernando or the Newhall Pass. San Fernando became known as the railroad's "gateway to the north."

The railroad connection made the small town of San Fernando and its adjacent ranches accessible to the nation, and goods could be transported long distances to distant markets. Raw materials were exchanged for manufactured goods and the town of San Fernando began to develop quickly. Wheat production and milling became major activities with the Los Angeles Farm and Milling Company producing 500,000 bushels of grain in 1880 (Pitt and Pitt, 447).

The twentieth century brought further changes to the northern San Fernando Valley. Agriculture continued to be a primary occupation; the population grew steadily. In 1911, the City of San Fernando was incorporated. San Fernando became the second incorporated city within the San Fernando Valley after Burbank.

The completion of the Los Angeles Aqueduct in 1913 led to a dramatic expansion of truck gardens, vineyards, and citrus orchards and spurred further population growth and economic development in the Los Angeles area. Several major citrus packing houses were located in the area, including the San Fernando Fruit Grower's Association and the San Fernando Lemon Association. A large canning plant known as the San Fernando Canning Company was also located in the area. Also in 1913, the Pacific Electric Railway began offering local electric rail service, connecting San Fernando and Los Angeles.

With its own municipal water supply, the City of Los Angeles became independently powerful and soon annexed most of the San Fernando Valley. More than 168 square miles of new territory were annexed to the City of Los Angeles in 1915 (Pitt and Pitt, 448). The City of San Fernando, however, maintained its own water supply and remained independent. The annexation of new territory to the City of Los Angeles resulted in the City of San Fernando being surrounded by the City of Los Angeles.

The automobile allowed residents to move around the San Fernando Valley in new ways, spurring additional residential development. Craftsman and period revival residences formed new neighborhoods. Interest in California's heritage continued to grow during this period, and the San Fernando Mission, a part of the territory annexed to the City of Los Angeles, was declared a State Historic Landmark on January 11, 1935.

Northridge was "once part of the vast ranching domain of Benjamin F. Porter."[1] In 1908, the small community, then known as Zelzah, "a biblical name meaning 'watering place in the desert," "became a shipping point on the Southern Pacific Railroad branch line.[2] The area was renamed North Los Angeles in 1933.[3]

2.2 NORTHRIDGE RANCHES AND HOLLYWOOD STARS IN THE 1930S

In the 1930s and 40s the San Fernando Valley became increasingly popular as a refuge for Hollywood celebrities. Many personalities from the film industry were drawn to this verdant agricultural Eden as an escape from the intensive pressures of their work. Flush with cash during the worst economic depression in American history, prominent actors, producers, and directors acquired tracts of land and became members of a new Hollywood landed gentry.

A typical "celebrity ranch" of the period could be anywhere from five to thirty-five acres with some being much larger. In addition to the agricultural and livestock raising activities of a ranch, these properties also incorporated large homes, landscaped grounds, tennis courts and swimming pools associated with the Hollywood lifestyle. Architectural styles mirrored the eclectic tastes of the motion picture community. Actor Francis Lederer built an ornate and sprawling Spanish hacienda on his ranch west of Canoga Park. Director Josef Von Sternberg embraced the avant-garde with a steel and glass home designed by Richard Neutra. Most celebrity ranch homes, however, were built in the popular period revival styles of the time.

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[1] Pitt and Pitt, page 361
[2] Ibid
[3] Ibid

Hollywood "ranchers" of the time included actor Gary Cooper in Van Nuys and cowboy star Tom Mix in Arleta. Director Raoul Walsh built a weekend retreat on a 25-acre ranch in the Encino hills replete with horse stables, hay barn, workshop and 250 citrus trees. This property was purchased by movie star couple Clark Gable and Carole Lombard in 1939 and became their permanent home.

Celebrities interested in breeding and riding horses were attracted to the north valley community of Northridge, often referred to as "the horse capital of the west" due to its many horse ranches and popular polo fields. A Northridge promotional brochure from the late 30's lists actors Robert Taylor and Richard Arlen, and director Josef Von Sternberg among the ranch owners in the area.

2.3 BARBARA STANWYCK RESIDENCE AND MARWYCK RANCH, 1936-40

Barbara Stanwyck was born Ruby Stevens on July 16, 1907, in Brooklyn, New York. She is remembered as one of the most successful film actresses of Hollywood's classic era, universally admired for her strong screen presence and versatility as a performer.

Beginning her career as a stage and cabaret dancer, Stanwyck had first big success as an actress in the 1927 stage play "Burlesque" on Broadway. In 1929, she moved to Hollywood with her first husband, vaudevillian Frank Fay where she found immediate success in such films as Frank Capra's "The Miracle Woman"(1931), William Wellman's "Night Nurse",(1931) and George Steven's "Annie Oakley" (1935). In 1937, she received the first of four Best Actress Academy Award nominations for King Vidor's classic melodrama, "Stella Dallas"(1937) and became a full-fledged movie star.

Design of the Stanwyck Residence

Barbara Stanwyck's 1937 residence in the Northridge was designed in an architectural style, typical of the eclectic blend of Revival styles prominent among large single-family residences in Los Angeles in the 1920s and 30s. This architectural style can be best described as a hybrid French-English influenced (sometimes called French Eclectic or Normandy) manor house. The architectural design has been attributed to Paul Revere Williams.

Paul Revere Williams (1894-1980) was one of Southern California's foremost architects, producing a remarkable number of buildings during a 60-year career. Williams is notable as a pioneering African American, whose distinguished architectural work secured a steady stream of wealthy and influential clients and high-profile commissions during a period of racial discrimination and segregation.

Williams was born February 18, 1894 in downtown Los Angeles to parents recently arrived from Memphis, Tennessee. Both parents died before Williams was five and he was raised by foster parents. After graduating from Los Angeles Polytechnic High School in 1912, Williams enrolled in an L.A. workshop of New York's Beaux Arts Institute of Design, eventually winning the Institute's medal of excellence. He attended the University of Southern California as an architectural engineering student and also attended several art schools.

Williams became a licensed architect in 1921; a year later, at age 28, he started his own firm, and had become a member of Los Angeles's first City Planning Commission, the first of many federal, state and local boards and commissions he would serve on throughout his life. In 1923, Williams joined the

Southern California chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA), becoming the first African American member of the national organization. Later, he would become the first African American elected to the AIA College of Fellows.

Williams's residential business thrived during the 1930s, with clients attracted to his contemporary updates on traditional architectural styles such as English Tudor, Regency and Mediterranean. His designs balanced elegance with informality and emphasized a close relationship between the interior and garden. "Foremost to all Paul Williams designs was his perfectionism and attention to detail," wrote his granddaughter, Karen E. Hudson.

Most of Williams's business came from well-to-do clients building homes in Los Angeles, Beverly Hills, Hancock Park, Bel Air, Pacific Palisades and Brentwood, including many entertainment industry personalities. Clients in the 1930's included actor Tyrone Power, entertainer William "Bojangles" Robinson, silent film actress Corinne Griffith, and singer Grace Moore. A June 1940 article in Architect & Engineer magazine said of him: "Perhaps no one architect on the Pacific Coast has achieved greater success in domestic architecture than Mr. Williams."

The building permit for the construction of the Stanwyck property lists Robert Finkelhor as the architect, as does an article in the Los Angeles Times from 1937. The Historic Cultural Monument nomination, Victoria Horne Oakie's memoir, Jack Oakie's Oakridge, and Paul R. Williams, Architect: A Legacy of Style identify Paul Williams as the architect. What relationship, if any, existed between the two men is not known. Both Finkelhor and Williams had a number of wealthy, film industry clients, and designed in the period revival styles popular in the 1930s. One likely premise is that Williams designed the house, while Finkelhor applied for the building permit and oversaw construction.

Commercial clients also were attracted by Williams' growing reputation in the 1930s. In 1939 Williams won an AIA Award of Merit for his design of the elegant MCA building in Beverly Hills (later the headquarters of Litton Industries). He also designed the interiors of the original Saks Fifth Avenue building in the same city. In time he would design or remodel over 300 houses and places of business in the Beverly Hills area.

The versatile Williams co-designed the first federally funded public housing project in the country, Langston Terrace, in Washington, D.C. He was also chief architect of the Pueblo Del Rio housing project in southeast L.A., the only such project during the early '40s open to African Americans.

Despite his success and accolades, Williams continually grappled with the presence of racial prejudice. In a July 1937 article in American magazine titled "I Am a Negro", Williams wrote: "Virtually everything pertaining to my professional life during those early years was influenced by my need to offset race prejudice, by my effort to force white people to consider me as an individual rather than as a member of a race."

During World War II, Williams served as a Navy architect. After the war, his firm continued to thrive, designing public schools, banks, auto dealerships, the Arrowhead Springs Hotel (in association with Gordon Kaufmann), the W&J Sloane department store, the Palm Springs Tennis Club and the Golden State Mutual Life Insurance building. His firm also re-designed the public rooms and bungalows of the Ambassador Hotel, the famed Polo Lounge of the Beverly Hills Hotel and created the United Nations Building in Paris. Celebrity clients came to include Frank Sinatra, Desi Arnaz and Lucille Ball, Zsa Zsa

Gabor, Barbara Stanwyck, Julie London, and Anthony Quinn. Design commissions also came from Hawaii, Canada, Mexico, and South America.

In addition to the AIA Award of Merit, Williams was also awarded the Omega Phi Psi Man of the Year Award (1951) and the Spingarn Medal (1953). He also received honorary doctorates from Howard and Lincoln universities and the Tuskegee Institute.

By the time of his retirement in 1973, Williams had designed over 3,000 projects. He died in Los Angeles on January 23, 1980.

Marwyck

In 1936, after a bitter divorce from Fay, Stanwyck went into the thoroughbred horse breeding business with her agent Zeppo Marx, who had quit performing as one of the Marx Brothers comedy team some years earlier. Together they established the140-acre Marwyck Ranch in Northridge for the breeding and training of race horses. Marwyck (a combination of the owner's last names) was an ambitious affair, as was made clear in a Los Angeles Times article from 1937:

> Southern California will boast a thoroughbred bloodstock farm which will be one of the show places of America when Harry S. Hart completes work now progressing on a 130-acre tract near North Los Angeles.
>
> Named the Marwyck ranch, the tract will be the most modern in the West, and surpass many old Blue Grass farms in appointments and convenience.
>
> Work is being rushed on a six-furlong training strip, large, earthquake-proof box stalls, spacious paddocks and living quarters for the help. Everything that a horse could desire is included in the equipment, while their valuable lives will be guarded against fire by automatic sprinkler equipment.
>
> The Marwyck ranch is owned by Barbara Stanwyck and Zeppo Marx. It will be operated solely as a breeding farm, the produce to be offered for sale each year. If necessary, the stock will be raced only to establish their worth.
>
> ... The Marwyck ranch is one of the most pretentious breeding projects ever undertaken in California. When their stock, and that of some other fine mares and studs recently brought to California, get to running, it is well within the bounds of reason that this state again will take a front row with Kentucky and Virginia as a producer of not only champions but honest, sturdy racers of real worth.

Stanwyck and Marx's massive investment (they were reported to have invested $200,000 in the ranch) was reflective of the enormous wealth of the Hollywood elite and the growth in horse racing as an

industry.[4] Although the Great Depression was in full effect, horse racing was booming in the late 1930s. Pitt and Pitt explain that the California State Legislature legalized gambling on horse racing in 1933, establishing "a California Horse Racing Board, limit[ing] the take of the tracks for pari-mutuel betting to eight percent, and earmark[ing] four percent to support county fairs, California Polytechnic Schools, and the University of California."[5] Santa Anita racetrack, about thirty-five miles to the east in the city of Arcadia, was built in 1934. It soon became known as a popular place for movie stars.

Describing the lifestyle of the stars, Alma Whitaker commented in the Los Angeles Times in 1936, "Mundane frugality is definitely *passé*. Bountiful acquisitiveness is joyously *comme il faut*. So Hollywood is splurging with new houses, new ranches, new cars, race horses, furniture, diamonds, and furs."

On ten acres of adjacent property north of the Marwyck ranch, Stanwyck had a twelve-room English-style manor house constructed atop a knoll overlooking the valley. Marx and his wife Marion built a ten-room house on the property immediately east of Stanwyck's.

Stanwyck could often be seen riding trails on the ranch with actor Robert Taylor who owned his own ranch in nearby Chatsworth. Stanwyck had become romantically involved with Taylor after the two co-starred in the film, "His Brother's Wife" in 1936. Stanwyck and Taylor married in 1939 and Stanwyck sold her share of the ranch to Marx in 1940. The house and surrounding ten acres at 18650 Devonshire Street were sold to comic actor Jack Oakie and became known as the Oakridge Estate.

Zeppo Marx sold the Marwyck ranch to J.H. Ryan in 1943. Re-named Northridge Farms, it continued to train and breed champion horses.

Stanwyck hit her professional peak in the 1940s, alternating between comic roles, in classics such as "The Lady Eve (1941) and "Ball of Fire,"(1941), and tough femme fatale parts in "Double Indemnity," (1944) and "The Strange Love of Martha Ivers" (1946). She divorced Robert Taylor in 1951 and her film career cooled in the late 50's. She found new audiences on television in the 1960's, winning Emmy awards with "The Barbara Stanwyck Show," (1960-61) and "The Big Valley" (1965-69). In 1983 she was lured out of semi-retirement to co-star in the popular television mini-series, "The Thorn Birds", for which she won another Emmy as Best Supporting Actress. She died on January 20, 1990.

2.4 OAKIE RESIDENCE, 1940–2003

Comic actor Jack Oakie was born in November 12, 1903. He made his theatrical debut on the New York stage in the chorus of the 1922 George M. Cohen musical "Little Nellie Kelley" and went on to appear in several productions on Broadway. In 1927, he moved to Southern California and immediately found work in films. After appearing in several silent pictures, Oakie easily made the transition to talkies and distinguished himself as featured player in comedies and musicals. At the time he bought the Stanwyck home, Oakie had had his biggest success as a Mussolini-type character in Charlie Chaplin's "The Great Dictator" (1940) for which he received an Academy Award nomination as Best Supporting Actor.

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[4] "Reseda Ranch Project Soon to be Completed," page 6.
[5] Pitt and Pitt, page 210.

Between film, radio, stage and television assignments, Oakie enjoyed entertaining friends and family at Oakridge along with his second wife, Victoria Horne Oakie. He often appeared at parades and ribbon cutting ceremonies in his role as "honorary mayor" for both Northridge and West Van Nuys.

The surrounding context of Oakridge changed dramatically in the 1960s as neighboring properties were sold for commercial and residential development. Northridge Farms was sold in 1961 and developed six years later. But besides road widening along Devonshire Street and flood control work on the creek that marked the property's western border, the house and grounds at Oakridge remained virtually unchanged throughout the years.

Victoria Horne Oakie continued living at Oakridge after her husband's death in 1978. She compiled a personal memoir of their life at Oakridge, "Jack Oakie's Oakridge," which was published by Strawberry Hill Press in 1990.

The site was designated a Los Angeles Historic Cultural Monument in March 1990. Site qualifications are summarized in this excerpt from the Arts, Health and Humanities Committee report recommending approval of the monument nomination:

> The house is largely intact and has not suffered the usual alterations endured by most homes of this period. Even the kitchen and bathrooms are original to the design, thus, this house is an exceedingly rare intact example from this era.
>
> Besides its architectural significance, the structure merits monument status due to its connection with a prominent architect. The stature of Williams contribution to the building of Los Angeles is immense; he was perhaps the quintessential practitioner of period revival buildings in the heyday of Hollywood.
>
> Additionally, the property is connected with significant Hollywood personages, Barbara Stanwyck and Jack Oakie. Therefore, its architectural and cultural significance is unquestionable.

Victoria Horne Oakie died in 2003.

Table 1: Chronology of Property Ownership and Development, Stanwyck-Oakie Residence and Surrounding Area

Date	Stanwyck-Oakie Residence	Marx Residence	Marwyck Ranch
1936-37	Barbara Stanwyck home constructed (design attributed to Paul Williams)[6]	Zeppo and Marion Marx home built on adjacent property	
1937	Marwyck ranch established for horse breeding (approx. 140 acres) Southeast ¼ Section 15, Township 2 North, Range 16 West		
1939	Stanwyck and Robert Taylor marry		
1940	Stanwyck house and 10.1 acres sold to Jack Oakie.		Stanwyck share of Marwyck sold to Marx.
1941		Marx sells house and roughly 10 acres surrounding to Thomas W. and Mary L. Quince.	
1942		Quinces sell house and surrounding land to Adrian Gilbert and Janet Gaynor.	
1943			Horsebreeding business sold by Marx to J.H. Ryan renamed Northridge Farms
1950	Jack Oakie and Victoria Horne marry in 1950.		
1961			Northridge Farms sold
1966			Former Northridge Farms property re-zoned for single-family residential development
1978	Jack Oakie dies		
1990	Property designated Los Angeles Historic Cultural Monument #484.		
2003	Victoria Horne Oakie dies		

[6] As noted above, the building permit for the construction of the Stanwyck property lists Robert Finkelhor as the architect, as does an article in the Los Angeles Times from 1937. The Historic Cultural Monument nomination, Victoria Horne Oakie's memoir, Jack Oakie's Oakridge, and Paul R. Williams, Architect: A Legacy of Style identify Paul Williams as the architect. For the purposes of this report, the attribution of the building to Williams is maintained, while noting the discrepancy between various sources.

3. EXISTING CONDITIONS

This section documents the current condition of Oakridge. Its purpose is to describe landscape characteristics, including circulation, vegetation, hardscape, and structures.

3.1 SETTING

Oakridge is located near the intersection of Devonshire Street and Reseda Boulevard in the Northridge community of the City of Los Angeles. The property consists of the historic residence with an entrance drive, lawns, and service areas; a swimming pool and tennis court; and a field. Each of these areas of the property is described in greater detail in sections 3.2 to 3.5.

The San Fernando Valley is surrounded by mountain ranges: the Santa Monica Mountains to the south, the Simi Hills to the west, the Santa Susana Mountains to the north, the San Gabriel Mountains to the north and east, and the Verdugo Mountains to the southeast. The valley is part of the Tranverse Ranges, "a region of east-west trending mountain ranges that formed as a result of compressive stress at a restraining bend in the San Andreas Fault."[1] Oakridge is located south of the foothills of the Santa Susana Mountains. Oat Mountain, approximately six miles northwest of the site, is the highest point in the range at an elevation of 3,747 feet. The San Fernando Valley Floor varies in elevation between approximately 600 and 1,000 feet above sea level, sloping gently to the east.

The community of Northridge has an interior climate, with the continental air mass influencing temperature and growing conditions to a greater extent than the ocean.[2]

The residence is located upon a knoll. The highest point on the property, near the northeast corner of the site, has an elevation of 1,000 feet above sea level. Sloping to the southwest, the property's lowest elevation is approximately 950 feet, near the southwest corner. The property is bounded by Devonshire Street on the north, the property line adjacent to a commercial property (car dealership) on the east, the property line several residential lots on the south, and the Wilbur Wash flood control channel on the west. The total area of the site is approximately 9.47 acres.

3.2 STANWYCK-OAKIE RESIDENCE, ENTRANCE, LAWNS. AND SERVICE AREAS

The Oakridge estate is organized around the only structure on the site, a 5,958-square-foot residence which faces Devonshire Street and occupies a prominent location on a knoll near the northwest corner of the property. The residence is set back approximately one hundred thirty five feet from the north property line. The area north of the structure is defined by a long curving entrance drive, which slopes upward from Devonshire Street to a motor court at the front of the residence. The driveway is paved in asphalt, and is lined on the north side by concrete and a narrow wood edge flush with the surface of the drive on the south.

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[1] Topopgraphy and Geologic Setting of the San Fernando Valley, website.
[2] Sunset Western Garden Book, page 49.

This structure contains a compound floor plan and asymmetrical façades. The garage, service areas, and former guest quarters project from a principal residential section. The height of the structure varies. Most of the façade is clad with limestone veneer in an ashlar pattern, with darker sandstone blocks placed at intervals. Wood shakes in a coursed pattern cover the gabled roof. The four square stone-clad chimneys attached to the house reach a height of twenty eight feet.

The central block occupies the easterly area of the building site. This section of the residence is two-stories in height, with a symmetrical façade. The primary entrance is located at the motor court focal point. This recessed doorway is accentuated with a slightly projecting stone surround and is flanked by two small rectangular window openings. Two window bays with steel casement windows are symmetrically placed on either side of the entrance at the ground floor. Four gabled dormers punctuate the steeply pitched, wood shake roof.

A one-story section containing the kitchen and ancillary rooms connects the central block of the residence to the westerly cross-gabled wing. Three openings with divided light windows and gabled wall dormers puncture the north elevation of the kitchen area. The north elevation of the westerly gable front is pierced only by a bay of steel casement windows at the ground level and a small attic window opening above. Service spaces are located within this north-south oriented west wing. The garage projects westward from this section in another cross-gable volume at the south end of the building. Three garages with wood doors are located in the north elevation. The former guest quarters occupy the one-story projection at the east of the residence.

The decorative scheme shifts at the south elevation, where Tudor style half-timbering adorns the upper story of the façade. The rear of the house includes a variety of exterior volumes. A second-story overhang encloses a porch. This recessed space extends along a portion of the easterly area and features wood porch supports, flagstone steps, and flagstone paving. Walls with half timbering are treated with stucco and painted a light contrasting color as is typical of the Tudor Revival style, and contains an oriel window, a doorway, and a bay of casement windows. The section of the house that encloses the porch on the west houses a slightly projecting bay of three sets of double casement windows. These ground floor windows and second-story bays with three sets of double casement windows are separated by wood trim exterior. At the second story, the half timbering accentuates this fenestration.

The architectural design has been attributed to Paul Revere Williams. It is typical of Williams-designed Period Revival style residences prominent among large estates in Los Angeles in the 1920s and 30s. The Stanwyck-Oakie residence can be best described as a hybrid French-English influenced (sometimes called French Eclectic or Normandy) manor house. The design also includes Tudor styles elements on the rear (south) elevation. The structure retains exceptionally high physical integrity. Few, if any, major building alterations appear to have been made since the late 1930s.

The entryway features a gate with two flagstone pillars approximately eight feet in height with curving walls of the same material extending to either side. A contemporary swinging gate, perhaps ten or twelve feet in length, restricts access to the site. South of the entrance, a remnant of what appears to be an automated gate mechanism stands to the side of the driveway.

The south side of the entrance drive is planted with California peppers (*Schinus molle*). A chain link fence extends approximately twenty feet along the edge of the entrance drive. Ten trees extend the length of the drive, which splits after a length of several hundred feet. The motor court and main entrance to the residence are located to the southeast. The garage and a small surface parking area are located to the southwest. A mature pepper is located near the entrance to the garage area, with a massive limb stretching eastward, embowering the top of the entrance drive with foliage. Three additional large peppers stand on the west side of the parking area in front of the garage.

Below the peppers on the south side of the entrance drive, an overgrown mass of vegetation, perhaps the remnant of an earlier trimmed hedge (*Pyracantha spp.)* reaches more than eight feet in height. A chain link fence extends approximately twenty feet along the edge of the entrance drive.

The north side of the drive is planted with lawn, Common Bermuda (*Cynodon dactylon*), and ground cover (*Lantana montevidensis*). A large California pepper is planted at the east side of the entrance, just inside the gate. The stump of a second pepper is located a few feet up the slope along the drive. Approximately half the distance from the entrance to the motor court, a flowering hedge of *Lantana* is planted along the edge. A row of Canary Island pines (*Pinus canariensis*) closely planted together begins here, extending along the north side of the motor court.

The spatial organization of the area north of the residence is defined by the topography, the residence, and circulation features. The motor court, in particular, occupies a large section of the area in front of the residence. In the center of this large oval-shaped asphalt turnabout is a fifteen-foot diameter circular planter with a foot high flagstone border. A massive oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) is planted within, covering most of the motor court in shade.

Two semi-circular planting beds flank the main entry to the residence, occupying the area between the ends of the oval-shaped motor court and the residence. On the west, a large oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) surrounded by Algerian ivy (*Hedera canariensis*) groundcover. Immediately in front of the building the ivy yields to a path of square shaped block pavers, a hedge, and four or five medium height ornamental trees (one appears to be citrus). A similar planting scheme occupies the east planting end, with a large olive (*Olea europaea*) surrounded by ivy. A similar foundation planting is present with a hedge and small ornamental trees located in front of the residence. However, unlike the west planting bed, the east planting bed extends past the east end of the residence around to the side yard. Ivy planted as groundcover around the olive reaches around the side of the residence, covering a large area. A path of concrete square block pavers is located here, also, leading around the side of the residence.

The front yard is a long and narrow, east-west oriented area of lawn bounded by the entrance drive and motor court to the south, a row of eucalypts (*Eucalyptus globulus*) and large overgrown patches of *Lantana* to the north. The arborist reports that the eucalypts, also known as blue gums, are "badly drought-stressed [which] has precipitated several Long-horned Eucalyptus Borer (*Phoracantha semipunctata*) infestations in several trees. Many are declining and dead." The area slopes downward from east to west.

At the east end of the motor court, a second service drive extends several hundred feet to the south, then curves to the east where it terminates at a concrete block wall at the east property line. The drive is paved in asphalt with an intermittent border Several California peppers are planted here, along with a seemingly random assortment of other volunteer species. East of the drive, a row of Arizona cypress (*Cupressus arizonica*) [identified as junipers by the surveyor] lines the east boundary of the property. The junipers appear to be poor condition. The remnants of a painted wood fence extend the length of the concrete block wall along the property line.

Two mature multi-trunked oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*) are planted south of residence, defining views of the residence from the south and views from the residence across the valley towards the Santa Monica Mountains. On the east, the oak is planted within a teardrop-shaped planter bordered in flagstone and surrounded by a winding flagstone path leading from a covered porch down the slope, south to a swimming pool. Ivy surrounds the base of the tree. A second flagstone path leads from the south end of the west wing of the residence to the swimming pool. A second mature oak is planted approximately ten feet east of the west wing of the residence; it is located east of the path.

The rear yard imparts a strong sense of enclosure, as oak groves have grown up to the edge of the yard on the southeast and southwest. A dense thicket of oaks and peppers covers the entire west side of the knoll, eventually merging with the peppers along the south side of the entrance drive and a wide variety of other vegetation bordering the open field. An area of open lawn is located southeast of the residence, roughly bounded by the south service drive, the swimming pool, and east flagstone path.

The rear yard slopes to allow a gradual step down from the residence to the swimming pool. A low retaining concrete wall, oriented east-west and perhaps ten inches in height is located ten feet or so from the north edge of the swimming pool. *Lantana* and star jasmine (*Trachelospermum jasminoides*) have been planted here to disguise the treatment. Both flagstone paths yield to two modest steps. *Lantana* can also be observed on the east side of the western flagstone path.

Foundation plantings adjacent to the residence are similar to those found at the north elevation: a low hedge with decorative shrubs and/or small trees behind. Throughout, the foundation planting hedge is Japanese boxwood (*Buxus microphylla japonica*). Notable among these plantings are three camellias (*Camellia japonica)* located against the west wing of the residence and a large overgrown bird of paradise (*Strelitzia nicolai*) at the southeast corner of the residence. Myrtle bushes (*Myrtus communis*), large bushes in the rear yard with very small leaves, are also located in this area. In the southwest corner, a wild profusion of ivy has overwhelmed a pepper tree, which appears to have died.

Views and vistas were an intentional and conspicuous element of this designed landscape, with the location and siting of the residence designed to maximize desirable view south from residence across the valley towards the Santa Monica Mountains. The oak groves and, especially, two Pepper trees planted between the pool and the tennis court obscure the southward view. From the second floor of the residence, the swimming pool and tennis court dominate the foreground with the ridgeline of the Santa Monica Mountains in the distance, when visibility allows.

3.3 SWIMMING POOL AND TENNIS COURT

The swimming pool and the tennis court comprise the recreation area of the site. The area has a straight forward spatial organization with the pool oriented east-west (parallel to the residence) and the tennis court oriented north-south (perpendicular). The elevation of swimming pool is lower than residence, with tennis court still lower, extending south from the toe of the slope. Retaining walls in this area create a terraced effect. The swimming pool and the tennis court are linked together by proximity, use, and a common pathway system.

The swimming pool is approximately sixty feet in length and twenty-five feet in width. A chain link fence surrounds the pool and deck. The decking is flagstone.

A pathway leads from the southwest corner of the swimming pool south along the west side of the tennis court. The tennis court is set at the toe of the south slope of the knoll. The paved area is 120 feet in length and sixty feet wide. A concrete retaining wall separates the two areas. A high chain link fence surrounds the tennis court. Six light poles surround the perimeter of the court, three on the east side, three on the west.

3.4 THE FIELD

The field is an open, undeveloped area that surrounds the knoll. Covered with a variety of tall-growing, wild grasses this area slopes gently to the southwest. The dominant grass type is most likely False Oat Grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*) which is very common in grasslands, roadsides, rough ground and as a garden weed. Large groves of primarily oak and pepper, mixed with a variety of other vegetation, have grown up along the west side of the knoll, shielding views of the residence from the field and forming a buffer. The area is bounded by the grove along the west side of the knoll, the southernmost portion of the concrete wall at the east property line (approximately 120 feet), the concrete wall along the south property line (879 feet), the chain link fence along the Wilbur Wash flood control channel at the west property line (approximately 650 feet), and the chain link fence along the western third of the north property line along Devonshire. As such, the field occupies a majority of the land area of the property, including most of the northwest and southwest quadrants and the southern portion of the southeast quadrant.

Several stands of trees have grown up within this mostly open grassy landscape. South of the entrance drive, in the northwest quadrant of the property, a variety of trees in small stands create a partially enclosed character, the most wooded of the three major sub-areas of the field. Prominent among these stands are two mature peppers (#295 surveyor- 36" and #315 surveyor- 36"). Among the peppers are numerous young oaks, including surveyor # 16, 17, 29, 31, 289, 292, 293, 330, and 331.

Most of the southwest quadrant of the site is open. At the south end of the property, about 75 feet from the property line, a linear stand of trees extends a distance of nearly 200 feet east-west. Eight trees larger than six inches in diameter at breast height are located here. Surveyor tree #303 is an 8" oak, surveyor tree #304 (arborist #204) is a 48" pepper.

Lower than the designed landscape and residence, the field exists as an ancillary open space. It does not appear to have been cultivated for agricultural use and does not contain the type of designed landscape features found near the residence. The field is defined primarily by its relationship to the residence and its strictly defined boundaries marked by concrete walls and/or chain link fence at the property line on three sides. A few narrow linear paths of tamped-down grass may be found with the field, apparently created by coyotes, which have been observed on the site. No other paths were observed; waist-high grasses cover the site. A concrete pad, approximately twenty feet in length and ten feet in width, is located in the southeast quadrant of the field, near the southeast corner. Near the edge of the wooded grove separating the residence on the knoll from the field, a few remnants of a wood fence remain.

3.5 SITE BORDERS AND EDGE CONDITIONS

The north boundary with Devonshire Street is enclosed by a chain link fence and, on the northeast side a row of blue gums (*Eucalyptus globulus*). A sharp drop in elevation can be found along the east property line. A concrete block wall is located here along with the remnants of an earlier painted wood fence. A row of Arizona cypress is poor condition, with many dead trees is located along this border. The south property border is also bounded by a concrete block wall fence, which separates the property from several lots on Lemarsh Street, part of a residential subdivision of single family homes. The east border is enclosed by a chain link fence which separates the property from the Wilbur Wash flood control channel.

4. ANALYSIS

Designated as Los Angeles Historic Cultural Monument #484, Oakridge is associated with the film actress Barbara Stanwyck, who lived there from 1936 to 1940, and comedian Jack Oakie, who lived there from 1940 to 1978. The residence is also a good example of 1930s period revival architecture, which has been attributed to architect Paul R. Williams. Relatively few changes have been made to the residence and grounds since 1940 when Stanwyck sold it to Oakie. The residence, in particular, has a high degree of historic integrity with many of its original features intact. The landscape presents a more complex subject for analysis, as limited records are available and the landscape appears to have been altered within the period of significance. Nonetheless, the landscape has a medium to high level of integrity and it continues to represent the period during which Jack Oakie lived there.

Circulation patterns and designed landscape features around the residence, including entrance drive, a turnabout motor court, a secondary (east) drive, a swimming pool and tennis court, and several mature trees represent the original features of the designed landscape. Elsewhere, the site appears to have developed with little direct intervention or landscape design by the property owners. One result has been that in some areas, vegetation has grown up dramatically, only to decline. Compared to 1936, the site has become much more wooded, primarily by groves of California peppers and coast live oaks which have spread along the edge of the knoll and across the field. At the same time, minimal intervention in the landscape has resulted in numerous dead trees due to crowding out by other species, insect infestation, structural defects, and other causes.

Historic Context

Oakridge should be interpreted within the framework of two interrelated historic contexts. During the 1930s, the Northridge area of the San Fernando Valley was associated with the equestrian-oriented landscape of horse corrals, racing tracks, and breeding operations *and* the residences of film stars, some of whom had acted in Western-themed films. The Marwyck estate included both of these elements. Constructed side by side upon a knoll, the two residences faced south across their jointly owned horse-breeding ranch. While the Marx residence has been demolished, the original Stanwyck residence still stands.

Designed in the period revival style popular in the 1930s, the residence and the designed landscape immediately surrounding it represent affluence and the Hollywood lifestyle. This initial period in the site's development did not last long, however. By 1940, Stanwyck had sold her portion of the horse-breeding operation (Marx would sell soon thereafter) and the residence was separated from the surrounding setting. Initially developed as a 140-acre property with two residences overlooking an open area lined with simple wood fences and farm/equestrian outbuildings, it was separated into its constituent parts.[1] The residence and surrounding area sold to Jack Oakie comprised a little more than 10 acres.[2]

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[1] As noted in the site history, Stanwyck and Marx owned approximately 140 acres, roughly equivalent to the area east of the Wilbur Wash within the southeast quarter of section 15, township 2 north, range 16 west. This area today

Setting

The horse-breeding operation and pastoral landscape south of the residence remained a defining aspect of the setting for more than thirty years. Jack and Victoria Oakie's experience at Oakridge was closely tied to the sense of living in a remote, rural setting. Views south from the residence included the equestrian landscape as foreground until the late 1960s. Indeed, a clear view south to Lassen Street was possible with the ridgeline of the Santa Monica Mountains in the distance.

While the property's setting in an equestrian-oriented landscape was transformed by the construction of single-family housing in the late 1960s, the total area of the estate property has remained approximately the same since 1940. Modification to the boundaries, described in the next section, explain the decrease in acreage from 10.1 to 9.47 acres.

Property Boundaries

As the Northridge area urbanized, each of the four boundaries of the estate site were modified. Devonshire Street was widened, resulting in the removal of some original landscape features at the north edge of the property, probably in the mid-1960s. At the east edge, the wood fence separating the Stanwyck and Marx estates, later the Oakie and Gaynor estates, was replaced by a concrete block wall. Remnants of this simple painted wood fence remain along the east property border. The south property line, once demarcated by similar wood fencing, was also replaced by a concrete block wall when a subdivision of new single family homes was constructed in the late 1960s. The west side of the property was altered when a flood control channel was constructed to contain the Wilbur Wash, possibly as early as the 1940s.[3]

Period of Significance

The period of significance for the property is from 1936, the year construction began, to 1978, the year Jack Oakie died.

Factors of Integrity

An analysis of integrity is a key component of any cultural landscape study. The integrity of an historic landscape is determined by undertaking a direct comparison of the historic landscape characteristics of a property and the existing landscape characteristics, including land use, circulation, topography, vegetation, and buildings and structures. The continued presence of physical characteristics from the property's period of significance is the evidence of a property's integrity. The retention of these physical

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is bounded by Devonshire Street on the north, Reseda Boulevard on the east, Lassen Street on the south, and Wilbur Avenue on the west.

[2] The precise area sold to Oakie was 10.1 acres.

[3] The channelization of the Los Angeles river and associated washes and arroyos in Los Angeles County occurred between 1938 and 1960.

characteristics is what gives historic landscapes authenticity and allows for the understanding of the property's historic identity.

Seven aspects or qualities of integrity have been recognized under National Register criteria.[4] They are defined as follows:

> *Location*—the place where the cultural landscape was constructed or the landscape where the historic event occurred
>
> *Design*—the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a cultural landscape
>
> *Setting*—the physical environment of the cultural landscape
>
> *Materials*—the physical elements that were combined or deposited during the particular period(s) of time and in particular pattern to form the cultural landscape
>
> *Workmanship*—the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period of history or prehistory
>
> *Feeling*—a cultural landscape's expression of the aesthetic of historic sense of a particular period of time
>
> *Association*—the direct link between the important historic event or person and a cultural landscape

Properties that retain historic integrity will possess "several, and usually most, of the aspects" according to National Register Bulletin 15.

In addition to these aspects of integrity, which are also used in the evaluation of historic buildings and structures, several special factors must be considered in evaluating the integrity of historic landscapes. Foremost among these factors are changes in vegetation over time due to weather conditions, maintenance, age, growth and overgrowth, and changes in available plant materials and species. As explained in Preservation Brief 36 "Protecting Cultural Landscapes," in cases involving the changing characteristics of vegetation over time, the "reversibility and/or compatibility of those features should be considered, both individually, and in the context of the overall landscape."[58]

Historic Integrity of the Oakridge Landscape

The Oakridge landscape continues to represent the latter portion of the period of significance, during which Jack Oakie was associated with the property. Although significant vegetative growth has changed the character of the knoll and the field, the setting beyond the property boundaries has been transformed, and boundary modifications have been implemented at edges of the property, the estate as a whole continues to evoke the feeling of a "celebrity ranch" of the 1930s and it continues to maintain its association with Oakie. The materials of the residence itself are substantially intact, nearly unaltered for many years. The designed landscape around the residence also represents the initial design of the property, with only minor modifications to plantings and some original trees.[5] As such, the landscape of the knoll, including the residence, service drives, motor court, and swimming pool has high integrity. The tennis court, south of the swimming pool at the toe of the slope of the knoll, also has high integrity.

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[4] The CHC uses the same factors in the assessment of integrity.
[5] Based on historic photographs and field observations.

The outlying areas, the orchard (east of the tennis court) and the open field, have low integrity. A few citrus trees remain in the area once devoted to the orchard; however, a majority of the trees are missing and it is difficult, if not impossible, to determine the exact extent or species of the historic plantings in this area or its original boundaries. The area has become overgrown with vegetation and, at the north end, along the edge of the knoll, overwhelmed by an oak grove.

After 1940, the open field, adjacent to but not directly related to the horse breeding operation, served primarily as open space. Two small outbuildings were located at the southeast corner of the property, a barn and a chicken coop according to Victoria Oakie's description. Neither building is extant. A concrete foundation, probably for the barn, is the only remnant of that structure. No evidence of the chicken coop was observed during field investigations. Another feature that once defined this area was wood fencing, similar in character to the fences found south of the property. A few remnants of this type of fencing are present along the east property line (leaning against the concrete block wall) and southeast of the tennis court. The character of the edge conditions of the field has been altered by the construction of concrete block walls on the east and south, and the channelization and fencing of the Wilbur Wash to the west.

The field has become overgrown with high grasses and several large groves of trees over time. At the edge of the field, groves of oaks and peppers have also obscured views of the residence and created a large wooded area. These changes have altered the character of the landscape, but do not diminish the site's historic integrity as they may be considered reversible. The site maintains its basic topographical features, notably a gentle slope across the field from the knoll at the northeast to the lowest point near the wash at the southwest.

The field today does not represent its historical association with the Marwyck (later Northridge Farms) horse breeding operation other than by adjacency. During the time Stanwyck owned the property, the field and equestrian area were nearly indistinguishable and she owned a share in the adjacent land. After 1940, however, with the change in ownership and urbanization of the surrounding area, the field took on a character of its own. Solid walls of concrete and chain link fence replaced wood fencing. Once part of the surrounding open landscape, the area became the only remaining open landscape. As such, it still represents the latter period of Jack Oakie's association with the property, from the mid-1960s until his death in 1978, as Oakridge became one of the last remaining celebrity ranches in Northridge.

Character-defining Features and Spaces

The chart below lists character-defining features and spaces of Oakridge. A few of these features and spaces are associated with original design of the estate, but others represent the period during which Jack and Victoria Oakie lived there. Many plantings appear to have been added by the Oakies over the more than sixty years they lived there. Some information regarding plantings or other changes in the landscape made by the Oakies is provided in Victoria Horne Oakie's tribute to her late husband and their home Jack Oakie's Oakridge. Three major changes are documented therein: eucalypts and ice plant was removed from the north edge of the property as a result of a mid-1960s road widening project along Devonshire

Street, the original entry gates were also modified at that time, and the pool area fenced to comply with a new safety ordinance. These alterations occurred within the period of significance.

Within the boundaries of the estate, significant vegetative growth, perhaps allowed to develop as a buffer between the residence and adjacent urban development, has changed the character of the estate. As an oblique photo from the late 1930s of the Marwyck ranch shows, the knoll was once sparse with trees. It appears that only the four oaks in the immediate vicinity of the residence, as well as the olive at the northeast, are original.

Table 2: Character-defining Features and Spaces

Feature or Space	**Landscape Characteristic Type**	**Location**	**Date**	**Association**	**Integrity**	**Condition or Other Notes**
Knoll at northeast corner of property with field sloping gradually to the southwest; retaining walls south of residence	Topography	Entire property	1937	Original landscape design for Stanwyck residence overlook-ing Marwyck ranch	High	No major changes to topography
Residence	Building	Knoll	1937	Stanwyck and Oakie	High	Detailed evaluation of building structure and conditions is needed.
Entrance Pillars and Gate	Structure	Devonshire Street	Portions may be original, altered in mid-1960s	Oakie	Medium	The entrance is altered, but remains historically significant. It maintains its original location, serves the same purpose by marking the Devonshire Street entrance to the property, and association with the Oakie period. It appears as if the two columns on either side of the gate are original, but were altered during the period of significance.

Feature or Space	Landscape Characteristic Type	Location	Date	Association	Integrity	Condition or Other Notes
Entrance Drive and associated vegetation (peppers and hedges)	Circulation Feature and related vegetation	From Devonshire to residence	1937	Designed landscape	High	The location and dimensions of the Entrance Drive have a high degree of historic integrity. The drive continues to define the landscaped areas of the north area of the property, separating the vehicle circulation area from the front yard. It also continues to serve its historic function as a formal entrance leading up the knoll to the motor court and the residence. The drive may have been re-surfaced and some plantings may have changed. However, these changes likely occurred within the period of significance. Some cracking observed; some peppers declining or removed and hedges overgrown. Two peppers *Schinus molle* of note: #38S/ #264A[6] and #4S/ #270A[7]
Motor Court, including stone-edge circular planter and oak tree #151S/ #272A	Circulation Feature and related vegetation	North of residence	1937	Designed landscape	High	The location and dimensions of the Motor Court have a high degree of historic integrity. The feature continues to define the entrance to the residence. It may have been re-surfaced and some plantings may have changed. However, these changes likely occurred within the period of significance. Oak is

[6] Arborist reports that this tree is 27" diameter, 60 feet height, 30 feet spread, drought stressed, broken hanging limbs, sparse foliage, cavity in tree, trunk damage or exudation, recommend safety prune (crown reduction), recommend remove deadwood, recommend raise canopy, health C, aesthetics & conformity C, balance C, age 55+ years.

[7] Arborist reports that this tree is 38" diameter, 65 feet height, 35 feet spread, cavity in tree, trunk damage or exudation, recommend safety prune, (crown reduction), recommend remove deadwood, recommend raise canopy, cable/brace 2, health B, aesthetics & conformity B, balance B.

Feature or Space	Landscape Characteristic Type	Location	Date	Association	Integrity	Condition or Other Notes
						Quercus agrifolia #151S/ #272A.[8] Canary Island pines on north side of motor court appear to have been added by Oakies.
Oak #3S/ 271A	Vegetation	North of residence, west of main entrance	Perhaps original, likely before 1945	Designed landscape	High	#3S/ #271A *Quercus agrifolia* Arborist: 26" diameter, 50 feet height, 65 feet spread, diseased, recommend safety prune crown reduction), recommend remove deadwood, recommend raise canopy, cable/brace 2, health C, aesthetics & conformity A, balance A, recommend remove ivy at base.
Foundation plantings at north elevation	Vegetation	North of residence	Unknown	Oakie	Medium	Hedges and other plantings appear to be compatible with original design, but not original
Front Lawn	Vegetation	North of residence	1937	Oakie	Medium	North and east edge conditions were altered within the period of significance. Arborist notes that eucalypts at north edge are infested.
Olive #150S/ 273A	Vegetation	Northwest corner of residence	Possibly original	Designed landscape	High	#150S/ #273A *Olea europea* Arborist: 16, 1 13, 13, 1:8 diameter (check with arborist not sure how to interpret this information regarding multi-trunked tree), 35 feet height, 45 feet spread, recommend safety prune (crown reduction), recommend raise canopy, cable/brace 4, health A, aesthetics & conformity A, balance A

[8] Arborist reports this tree is 32" diameter, 50 feet height, 65 feet spread, recommend safety prune (crown reduction), recommend remove deadwood, recommend raise canopy, cable/ brace 3, health A, aesthetics & conformity A, balance A, expose root collar, replace cables.

Feature or Space	Landscape Characteristic Type	Location	Date	Association	Integrity	Condition or Other Notes
East service drive and associated hedges and peppers	Circulation feature and associated vegetation	East edge of property	1937	Designed landscape	Medium-drive dead ends into concrete block wall due to change in property divisions	Some volunteer vegetation in this area
Remnant fence at east property line	Small scale feature	East edge of property	1937	Designed landscape	Low-significant portions missing, no longer serves as border	Poor condition
Rear yard, including retaining walls north and south of pool	Vegetation and topography	South and east of residence	1937	Designed landscape	High-some over-growth is reversible	Oak grove at southeast has enclosed this area
Oak #155S/ 166A	Vegetation	South elevation of residence	Possibly original	Designed landscape	High	#155S/ #166A *Quercus agrifolia* Arborist: multi-trunked 26 and 25" diameter, 50 feet height, 70 feet spread, recommend safety prune (crown reduction), recommend remove deadwood, health C, aesthetics & conformity B, balance B.
Oak #154S/ 165A	Vegetation	South elevation of residence	Possibly original	Designed landscape	High	#154S/ #165A *Quercus agrifolia* Arborist: multi-trunked 21", 17", 13", and 12" diameter, 40 feet height, 55 feet spread, tree declining, sparse foliage, hollow trunk or cavity, recommend safety prune (crown reduction), recommend remove deadwood, recommend raise canopy, health D, aesthetics & conformity C, balance C, partially uprooted, ivy at base, wire tie damage, recommend removal. NOTE: if removed, should be replanted with same species.

Feature or Space	Landscape Characteristic Type	Location	Date	Association	Integrity	Condition or Other Notes
Flagstone paths	Circulation feature	Between residence and swimming pool	1937	Designed landscape	High	
Swimming pool and flagstone decking	Structure	South of residence	1937	Designed landscape, recreation	High	
Tennis court and associated oak at southwest corner	Structure	South of residence at toe of slope of knoll	Circa 1940	Designed landscape, recreation	High	
Orchard	Vegetation	Southeast of residence	Unknown	Oakie	Low	Only a few citrus trees remain, little is known about this area of the site
Field	Vegetation	Majority of the site, southwest of knoll/ residence	1940, alterations to edges in 1960s	Oakie	Low	Notably more wooded over time; change of materials at edges wood fences replaced by concrete block walls and chain link fencing

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Maps

Auto Association of Southern California. San Fernando Valley area, circa 1970.

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Los Angeles County Tax Assessor Maps

Thomas Guide

USGS, Oat Moutain.

Appendix A: Building Permits

Date	Type	Description	Notes
January 27, 1937	Application for the Erection of a Building	Location: 18650 Devonshire St. Cross Streets: 2000 feet west of Reseda Blvd. Purpose: Residence Families: 1 Rooms: 12 Owner: Miss Barbara Stanwyck Certified Architect: Robert Finkelhor Contractor: Charles Nielsen Valuation: $22,000.00 Size: 4,500 square feet	
February 23, 1937	Application for the Erection of a Building	Location: 18650 Devonshire St. Cross Streets: 2000 feet west of Reseda Blvd. Purpose: Guest House Families: None Rooms: 4 Owner: Zeppo Marx Certified Architect: None Contractor: Charles Nielsen Valuation: $2,500.00 Size: 33' x 33'	
July 15, 1937	Application to Alter, Repair, Move, or Demolish	Interior tile work	

Date	Type	Description	Notes
January 18, 1967	Application to Alter, Repair, Demolish	Present Use of Building: Conc. Block Ret. Wall Owner: Jack Oakie New Work: Change legal, address & owner of 9051VN66	

HISTORIC RESOURCES GROUP

MEMORANDUM

Date: May 4, 2005
To: Greystone Homes
Attn: Alan Dunn
From: Steve Moga
RE: Large Format Black and White Site Photography (HABS Standard) for Oakridge

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The following views of the Oakridge Estate were recorded by photographer Tavo Olmos of Positive Image Photo on May 3, 2005. The 4x5 negatives are being processed today. Additional views will be recorded later this week. A total of approximately 22 8x10 prints will be produced and delivered to the Cultural Heritage division of the City of Los Angeles Planning Department by Monday, May 16, 2005.

1. North elevation, front façade, detail, view SE
2. North elevation, front façade, detail, view SW
3. North elevation and motor court, view SW
4. North elevation and motor court, view SE
5. West wing and garage, view S
6. South elevation and rear yard, view E
7. Tennis court, view NW
8. Driveway, east of residence, view NW
9. East elevation showing gables, view W
10. South elevation, view NW
11. View southwest from porch on south elevation
12. South elevation with swimming pool in foreground, view NW
13. Field with remnants of concrete building pad and fence in foreground, view NW
14. View across field towards residence from southwest corner, view NE
15. View across field toward residence from west edge of property, view NE
16. View across field towards entrance drive, view E
17. Entrance gate and drive, view S

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