UNION HOTEL, CALIFORNIA GARAGE AND VICTORIAN MANSION

LANDMARK NUMBER: 39

KNOWN AS: Union Hotel; California Garage or Scolari Station

PHYSICAL ADDRESS: Union Hotel: 362 Bell St., Los Alamos
Victorian Mansion: 326 Bell St., Los Alamos
California Garage: 346 Bell St., Los Alamos

LOCATION: South side of Bell Street on the west side of town
TYPE OF SITE: Hotel, garage, and house

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 98-208

LANDMARK DATE: June 9, 1998

DESIGNATION OBTAINED BY: Nomination application submitted by Randy Melcombe, member Historical Landmark Commission, and Christine Mary Williams, property owner

PAST OWNERS: Hotel - J.P. Loustalot (1915-?)
Dick Lagdon (or Langdon?) (1972-?)
Christine Williams
Mansion - M. Fox and family (1889-?)
Garage - Alfonso and Dora Scolari (1926-1978 or later)

CURRENT OWNERS: Hotel - Frontier Village Park LLC
c/o 814 Properties LLC, 3225 McLeod Dr. #100, Las Vegas, NV 89121
Victorian - Rod Rigole
2415 Nuez Way, Topanga, CA 90290
Garage - Estacion de Jardin, LLC (Anthony Cano)
888 W. Ventura Blvd. #13, Camarillo, CA

CHANGES/ALTERATIONS: See Description

CONDITION: Hotel and Mansion -- Good
Garage - Fair

DESCRIPTION:

Hotel - The original Union Hotel was a wooden frame building built in 1880. It burned down February 16, 1893. The lot sat empty for 22 years before reconstruction began in 1915 under the ownership of J.P. Loustalot.¹ He had a concrete structure built, two stories high, with twenty-six rooms.²

In 1972, Dick Lagdon (Langdon?) purchased the Union Hotel and restored it to its original 1880s appearance. He covered the exterior with old wooden planks.

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¹ Attachment #9, nomination application
² News item, Santa Maria Times (Feb. 6, 1915)
from barns and shed. With the help of an expert cabinetmaker he meticulously rebuilt the façade as a to replicate the original. He refinished or replaced the entire interior from floors to beamed ceilings from the front entrance to the kitchen.  

The furnishings are entirely Victorian antiques. The saloon is decorated with 1880s western memorabilia. The lobby includes a hand cared fireplace, front desk and private office. The dining room seats approximately 71 people and is home to two chandlers used in the movie Gone With The Wind. The backyard sports a Victorian setting along with a swimming pool and barbecue. 

Mansion - The home was built of the Queen Anne style in 1889 for M. Fox and family. It was located on the Oso Flaco property in Nipomo. After sitting abandoned in open farmland since 1959, Dick Lagdon (Langdon?) purchased it in 1981. The house was moved to its present location where craftsman worked for 9 years to restore it. The mansion was then opened in 1989 as a bed and breakfast. 

The interior was gutted and converted into six theme rooms. The only original interior structure to remain is the staircase. Outside a yawl built for the King of Denmark and used in the 1932 Los Angeles Olympic Games sits in the backyard. 

Garage - the garage was built in 1926 and resembles a typical service station for the time period. It also included an office. At one time the coast highway came through Los Alamos where the station is located. Two gasoline pumps are the originals and the third was added later. 

The garage was built by brothers Alfonso (Al) and Pietro Scolari. Al was living out “on the range” when he came into town and built the garage from the ground up. The business functioned until 1982. The addition of an attendant’s office and the garage expansion were probably added about 1940. 

An application was submitted in 2008 to convert the garage into a retail location for a future wine tasting business. The alterations were approved by HLAC.

RESOURCES:
News item, Santa Maria Times (February 6, 1915)
Nominations submission for Historical Landmarks or Places of Historic Merit (September 4, 1997)

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3 Andrew Rose article
4 Attachment #10, nomination application
5 Attachment #9, nomination application
6 Attachment #10, nomination application
7 Attachment #9, nomination application
8 Newspaper interview with Al Scolari
9 Attachment #12, nomination application
10 Application for work affecting landmarked property
Andrew W. Rose, “Union Hotel is a Storybook Inn,” (date and publication unkown)

Published article about Al Scolari, “He Can’t See a Reason for Leaving Los Alamos,” Aqui ’78, page 159

Application For Review and Approval of Work or Activity Affecting Landmarked Property, Santa Barbara County Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission (May 21, 2008)
Resolution of the Board of Supervisors of the  
County of Santa Barbara, State of California

A RESOLUTION DECLARING THAT
"THE 1880 UNION HOTEL",
LOCATED AT 362 BELL ST.
LOS ALAMOS CALIFORNIA
& "THE CALIFORNIA GARAGE",
LOCATED AT 346 BELL ST.
LOS ALAMOS CALIFORNIA
(A.P.N. 101-181-10, 101-181-02),
ARE WORTHY OF PROTECTION UNDER
ORDINANCE NO. 1716, AND PRESCRIBING
CONDITIONS TO PROTECT AND PRESERVE THE
LANDMARK #39

WHEREAS, the Union Hotel and the California Garage, located in Los Alamos, in the County of Santa
Barbara, has great historical significance and interest to the general public as a landmark and a reminder of the
erly history of Santa Barbara County; and

WHEREAS, the Union Hotel has been an integral part of the Los Alamos community under a multitude of
configurations, names, owners and managers over the past one hundred and seventeen years beginning with the
original Union Hotel, built in 1880 by J.D. Snyder, and though destroyed by fire in 1897, rose again from the ashes
in 1915 in a Mission Revival style as the Hotel Los Alamos and, in the 1970’s was remodeled back to its original
appearance and regained its birth name and today, under the ownership of Christine Williams, it continues as it
has over these many years and changes to provide lodging, libations and culinary delights in the grand style; and

WHEREAS, the California Garage, constructed in 1925 to tend to the needs of the pioneer motorists of
Highway 101 (which originally ran through the center of town), remains an unaltered relic of our State’s Motoring
Past, providing a glimpse of the time when ’service’ was the key word in service station; and

WHEREAS, on May 11, 1998, the Santa Barbara County Historical Landmark Advisory Commission
declared The Union Hotel and The California Garage qualifies for recommendation to the County Board of
Supervisors as an historical landmark pursuant to the provisions of Ordinance No. 1716 of the County of Santa
Barbara; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Barbara deems that The Hitching Post is
worthy of protection and preservation as an historical landmark;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED as follows:

1. The Board of Supervisors, having duly set a public hearing, has heard all interested parties and has
closed said public hearing, adopting the conditions set out in Paragraph 2 of this Resolution.

2. The Board of Supervisors hereby declares the Union Hotel and the California Garage to be historical
landmarks pursuant to Ordinance No. 1716 and hereby imposes the following conditions on the
Union Hotel and the California Garage pursuant to said ordinance.
a. Demolition, removal or destruction, partially or entirely, is prohibited unless express consent in writing is first had and obtained from the Santa Barbara County Historical Landmarks Advisory Commission. Such consent may impose all reasonable conditions deemed appropriate by the Commission to accomplish the purposes of Ordinance No. 1716.

b. No alterations, repairs, additions or changes (other than normal maintenance and repair work) shall be made unless and until all plans therefore have first been reviewed by the Santa Barbara Historical Landmark Advisory Commission and approved, or modified and reasonable conditions imposed as deemed necessary, and all such work shall be done under the direction and control of the Santa Barbara County Historical Landmark Advisory Commission or other qualified persons designated by it.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Barbara, State of California, this 9th day of June, 1998, by the following vote:

AYES: Supervisors Schwartz, Marshall, Staffel and Urbanske.

NOES: None.

ABSTAIN: None.

ABSENT: Supervisor Graffy.

ATTEST:
MICHAEL F. BROWN
CLERK OF THE BOARD

APPROVED AS TO FORM:
STEPHEN SHANE STARK,
COUNTY COUNSEL

By Deputy County Counsel