

Nevada County Historical Landmarks Commission
P.O. Box 1014
Nevada City, California 95959
info@nevadacountylandmarks.com
530-274-7118

20 October 2020

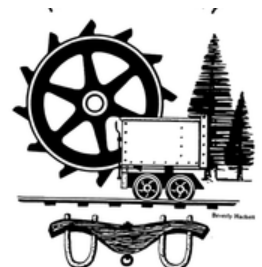
Nevada County Board of Supervisors
950 Maidu Avenue
Nevada City, CA 95959

Honorable Chair and Board Members:

At last Friday's meeting of the Nevada County Historical Landmarks Commission, the Commission voted unanimously to recommend to the Board that the application for landmark designation of the St. Paul Cemetery and Church Site be approved.

The St. Paul German Lutheran community was instrumental in founding and developing Chicago Park. The Saint Paul Lutheran church building was dedicated in 1904 and destroyed by fire in 1971. The land for the church was donated by Anna Pusheck, the mother of Dr. Charles Pusheck, one of the Chicago Park Colony's developers. The historic cemetery, which is still in use, contains the graves of many of the Chicago Park pioneering families, such as the Bierwagens.

The applicant is the Grace Lutheran Church which owns and maintains the cemetery. It has consented to having a plaque placed on the site. It is to be designated as Nevada County Historical Landmark NEV 20-05, unless the McGlashan Butterfly Collection is registered first.



The applicant has provided a thorough and compelling level of research and documentation to accompany its application, which has been reviewed by the Commission for historical accuracy. The application and supporting documentation is enclosed. Commissioner Elinor Barnes is to be credited for her dedicated effort in shepherding this application through.

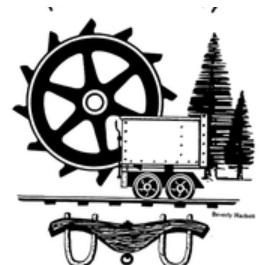
If you approve the application, please forward the resolution and accompanying documents to the County Recorder.

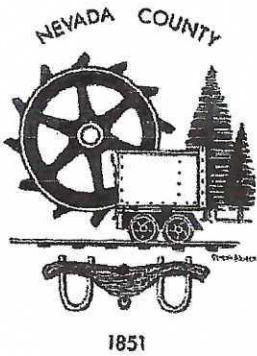
If you have any further questions do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request.

Yours truly,


Bernard Zimmerman
Chair

cc. Debbie Bierwagen w/o enc.





County of Nevada
State of California

Nevada County Historical Landmarks Commission
Application for Registration of Historical Landmark

Name of proposed landmark St. Paul Lutheran Cemetery and
Church Site

Location 18936 St. Paul Place, Grass Valley CA 95945

Name of applicant Debbie Bierwagen, representing Grace Lutheran Church

Address P.O. Box 36, Chicago Park CA 95712

Home or work phone [REDACTED] cell phone [REDACTED]

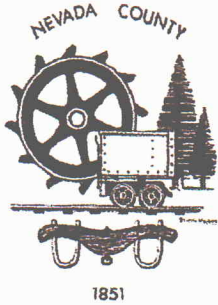
Name and address of landowner upon whose property proposed landmark
is located, if owner is not applicant Grace Lutheran Church

1979 Ridge Road, Grass Valley CA 95945

I authorize the placing of a plaque or marker on site.

Deborah A. Bierwagen
Landowner's signature

8-31-2020
Date



Brief history and description of proposed landmark

(attach additional sheets as necessary)

See attached pages (from The Chicago Park Connection by Pat Jones)

Unique aspects or properties of proposed landmark

See attached pages - as noted above

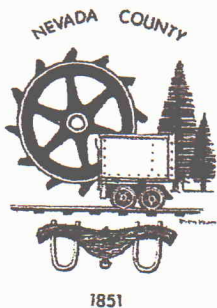
How will the landmark be protected and maintained?

The cemetery is maintained & protected by the members of Grace Lutheran Church in Grass Valley. Jim Bierwagen is in charge of the cemetery and manages it currently.

Bibliography. Cite or attach available books, records, articles or other materials pertaining to the proposed landmark.

Books and articles:

- *The Chicago Park Connection by Pat Jones*
- *Grace Lutheran Church has many of the artifacts, pictures, articles, etc. that survived the fire on Mother's Day, 1971. We can arrange to meet and look over these items at some future date.*



Historical or civil records: (e.g., ownership, assessments etc.)

Other: (e.g. photographs, prints or drawings. Please list and attach separately)

Noted on previous page

Deborah A. Bierwagen
Applicant's signature

8-31-2020
Date

=====

This completed form and all related documents shall be sent to the:

Nevada County Historical Landmarks Commission
Attention: Chairman
P. O. Box 1014, Nevada City, Cal. 95959

An application must be considered solely on its historic or architectural merits and not for commercial gain, political benefits, or other non-historical reasons.

An individual Commissioner can advise and counsel an applicant, but all applications must be considered by the full Commission, meeting in regular session.

And Let Them Make Me a Sanctuary

Lutherans in Auburn, Weimar, Reno and Grass Valley were at one time served by ministers from St. Paul Lutheran Church at Chicago Park.

Among early backers of Chicago Park Colony were Dr. Charles Pusheck of Chicago, Illinois and his mother, Anna. She dreamed of founding a Lutheran colony in the west and, with her son, attracted many of their mid-western friends and relatives to this area.

Anna had been a member of First St. Paul's Church in Chicago, where the German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and Other States was founded in 1847. Later the name was shortened to Missouri Synod for brevity and to avoid confusion with another synod.

With so many Lutherans among the settlers, it was only natural that they would want a church established near. Although the building was not completed until December of 1904, the congregation was organized on March 23, 1902.

Signers of the constitution were: Friedrich Brandt, D. Wiechman, Herman Sonntag, Dr. Pusheck, George Friedrichsen, Edward Schultz, Heinrich Frerichs, Martin Friedrichsen and Carl Frerichs.

As early as 1900, before the official organization, Rev. John William Theiss came from his regular pastorate at Santa Rosa on an average of once every two months and held services in Chicago Park School. In addition to being a dedicated minister, Theiss was a talented poet and artist.

He was extremely popular with local people of all denominations. Fred Brandt recalled going fishing with him. Reading services were held between the pastor's visits with men of the congregation acting as reader.

The ten acres of land on which the church and cemetery stand were donated by Pusheck and his mother. Rev. Max F.W. Kuessner, a 1902 graduate of the seminary at St. Louis, was called as the first resident minister. He conducted the first funeral of the congregation, that of Ludwig Bierwagen in April of 1903.

Bierwagen and his wife, Anna Elizabeth Bierwagen, arrived here in 1902 and purchased the Briot house.

The funeral took place at the family residence, a handsome Victorian that stood in the curve of Highway 174 across from the Happy Apple Kitchen until the house was razed in 1975. Ludwig's request that his coffin be carried from the house to the new cemetery by the pallbearers was honored. Brandt recalled that the unpaved road was hard to traverse because it was muddy and that the men carrying the coffin kept slipping to their knees.

The articles of incorporation of the "German Evangelical Lutheran St. Paul Congregation" were filed on March 28, 1903. Application for Missouri Synod membership was made on June 19, 1904.

The first lumber pile assembled for construction of the church burned. Fred Brandt Sr. and Fred Roper built the building which was dedicated on Dec. 4, 1904 with Rev. Kuessner officiating. Reno was served by him as a mission from Chicago Park.

Rev. Herman Jonas was the first resident Lutheran pastor at Reno. After Kuessner went to Lodi late in 1905 the tables were turned and St. Paul was served by Rev. Jonas from Reno.

The next regular pastor was Rev. Frank G. Gundlach, who was installed on Nov. 18, 1906. The parsonage (present church) was completed on that date and Reno again became a mission served from St. Paul Church.

The first child baptized in the congregation was Margaretha M. Sonntag (Margaret Ullrich) on Oct. 26, 1902. Paul Sonntag, on April 12, 1903, became the first young person confirmed. The first wedding was that of Carl Fredrichs and Grace Rishel on Jan. 11, 1903.

In the first 60 years of the church there were 217 baptisms, 97 confirmations, 31 marriages and 80 funerals.

The longest pastorate in the history of St. Paul was that of William Adam who came from Delano and Porterville in 1929. He served Chicago Park for 20 years. In addition to his regular services he covered missions in Auburn, Grass Valley and Weimar.

Rev. Adam made this notation in church records on June 30, 1943:

Due to the closing down of the gold mines by the government, Grass Valley has suffered great losses in population. But these have been replaced by soldiers and their families from Camp Beale. Because of this, our church attendance has so increased as to warrant church services every Sunday. This is the first time in the history of Grass Valley mission that regular services have been held every Sunday.

Prior to 1924, most services and records were in German. From 1924 until 1942 both English and German were used in compiling important data. On Sept. 28, 1924 *The Lutheran Hymnal*, English edition, was used for the first time.

German language was used on Sept. 14, 1924, when the first service was held in Grass Valley, then services there seemed to alternate between German and English. In Chicago Park English was used once a month until the late 30s when the greater number of services were in English.

During both World Wars the loyalty of German residents was questioned.

In mid-December of 1917 the *Colfax Record* gave the German-born residents of Chicago Park a vote of confidence. They were declared to be loyal and it was announced that Carl F. Merkle had collected \$50 from them for the Red Cross. Merkel married Ludwig Bierwagen's daughter Minnie and lived in the family home in the curve of Highway 174.

Lena Leuteneker Beebe recalled how the Germans were hated during World War I.

"Before that time we all went to school on Saturday to learn to read and write German." We even studied our catechism in German.

"My mother and her friends did a lot of knitting for the American soldiers and bought bonds to show their loyalty."

Some Germans Anglicized their names to escape the stigma.

The first English Communion service at St. Paul was on Oct. 23, 1938. On Jan. 11, 1942 the congregation resolved to discontinue use of the German language altogether.

The original pulpit was raised above the altar with stairs leading down to the sacristy where the minister sat out of sight of the congregation. The organ was in front of the congregation. Rev. Adam took down the pulpit and built a back on it. The elevated position was uncomfortable as the heat rose.

In the 1920s the Catholic Church in Auburn was remodeled. St. Paul Church purchased the old pews and a Mr. Wroessler remodeled them in the packing house. The congregation sat on chairs prior to that time. When the church was remodeled and enlarged in 1951, it was necessary to gather additional pews from porches and yards of members.

Robert Yohr of the Grass Valley church was instrumental in having the St. Paul sign carved. He obtained square redwood telephone poles, had them cut and two prisoners at Iron Mine Camp in Christian Valley in Placer County did the carving.

In the late 1970s, before the present fire house was built, the original drive was blocked and the present one made.

St. Paul's sister church, Grace Church in Grass Valley, was dedicated on May 6, 1951, with Prof. Walter C. Rubke as minister of both. St. Paul was remodeled that year and rededicated on May 28. The Grass Valley church then became the focal point for Missouri Synod work in this area.

The original Grace Lutheran Church on South Auburn St. is now the Wesleyan Church. In 1966 the present church on Ridge Road was dedicated.

Pear orchards were planted around St. Paul circa 1914, but were removed on Feb. 22, 1960 because of the blight. The space was fenced and used temporarily for pasture by the Robert Paasch family for their prize-winning sheep.

Children playing with matches set a fire in the church on Mother's Day 1971 and the building burned to the ground. The parsonage, no longer occupied by ministers and their families, was converted into the present church.⁷

Catholics in the community were served by priests from St. Patrick's Church in Grass Valley for many years. They held mass at Bear River School once a month for four years before property was purchased on March 6, 1917 for a Catholic Church on lot 8 of the White Ranch at Buena Vista from John L. Sale for \$1400.

Rolfe and Carpenter were the builders. The April 7 *Morning Union* observed: "Doubtless this new visitor, the little church standing by the wayside in the midst of such enchanting natural scenery, and reminding travelers of higher things, will receive a hospitable welcome, not only from Catholics, but from all people of that enterprising section."

On Sept. 30, 1917 the Right Rev. Bishop Thomas Grace of Sacramento conducted the dedication of the church. Articles about it in the *Union* refer to the Catholic Church at Buena Vista or Chicago Park, but it is believed it was called St. Joseph's.

Often orphans from Mount St. Mary's would be brought on the NCNG to the services. Afterwards they enjoyed a picnic lunch provided by Maggie Orzalli.

The Gothic style church was sold to Helen M. Heyen on March 28, 1942 and eventually converted to a home, the tan house with brown trim in the bend of Highway 174 near the Greenhorn access to Rollins Lake.

Other religious services were held in the area. In the fall of 1917 A.J. Osborne conducted a revival meeting in a tent at Chicago Park. His final service was held in the school after the tent was dismantled.

After her arrival in Chicago Park in 1915, Edythe Rolph conducted bible classes in her home for local protestants who did not attend the Lutheran Church.

Otherwise, area residents of other faiths traveled to Colfax or Grass Valley-Nevada City to attend the church of their choice as they do today.



The

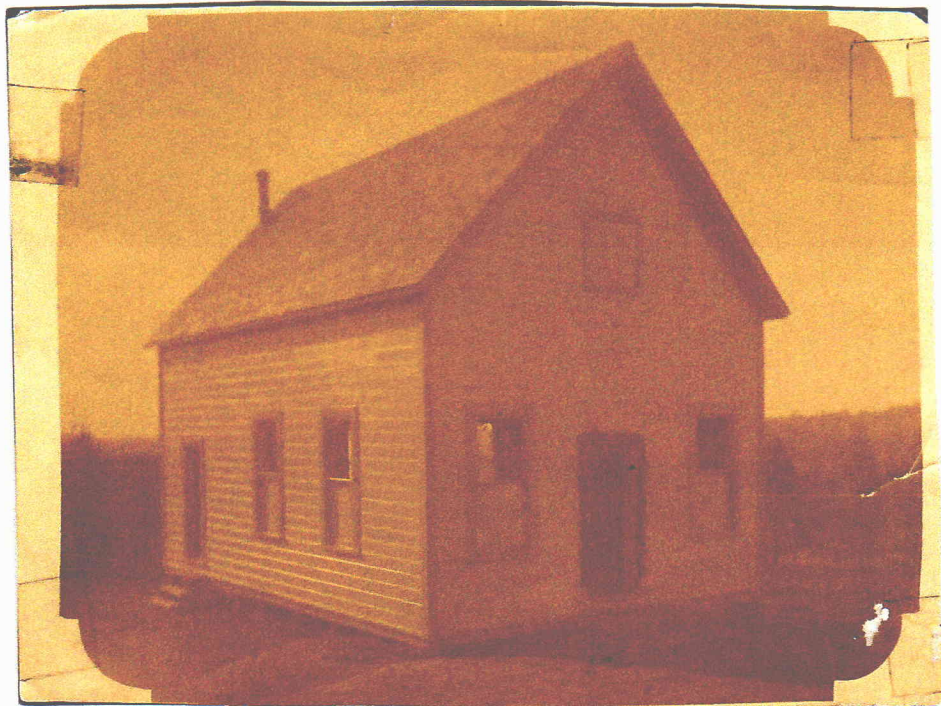
TALE *of*

Two

Churches



[http://
gracelutherangv.org/
docs/
Tale_of_2_Churches.pdf](http://gracelutherangv.org/docs/Tale_of_2_Churches.pdf)

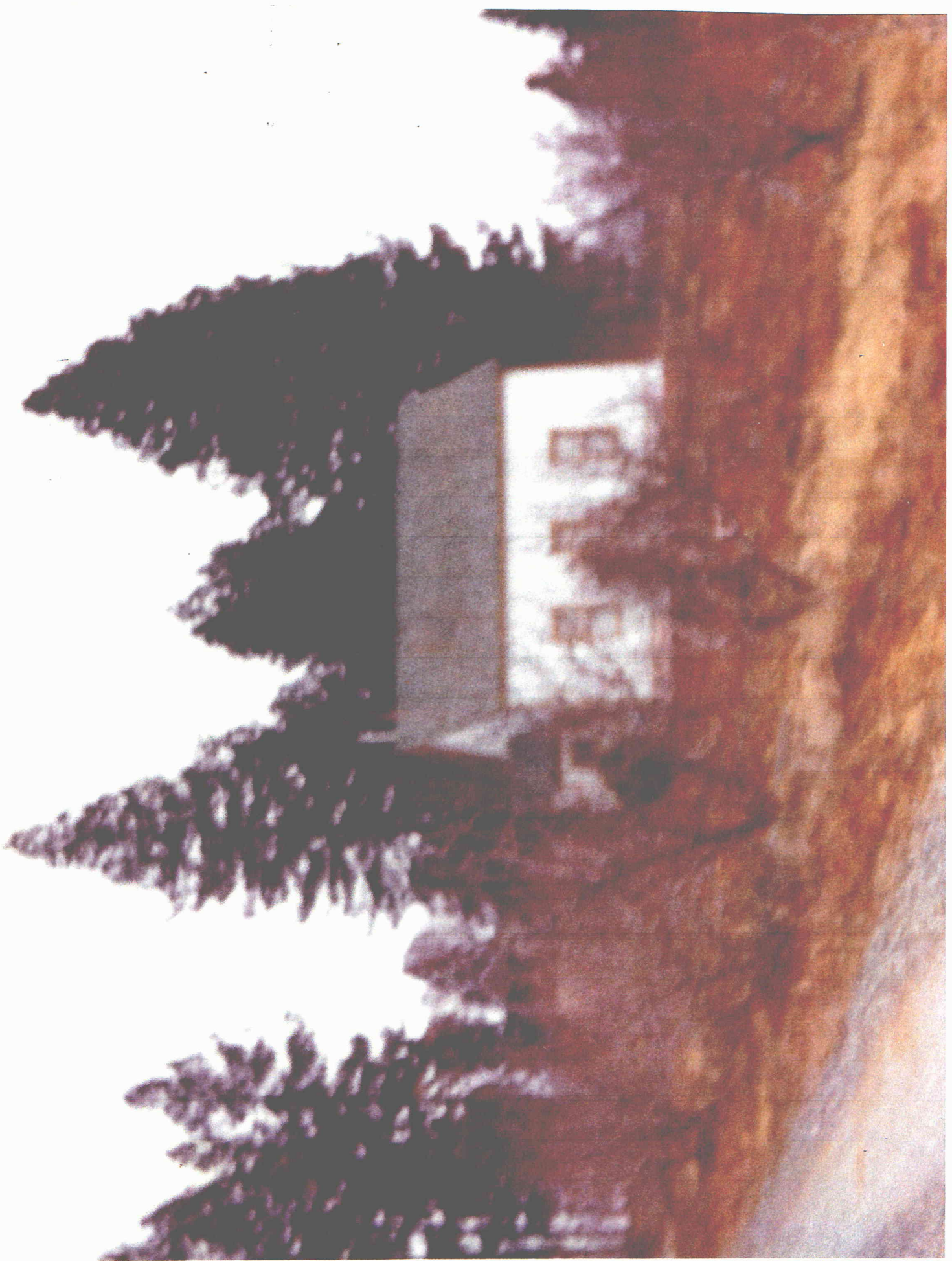


ST PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
(early photo)



INTERIOR OF ST PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

ST PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH



Mr. Anna Pascheck,
donor of the 10 acres of
St. Paul Lutheran Church
Chicago Park, Cal.

ADDRESS ONLY

CORRESPONDENCE HERE

POST CARD



ON THIS SITE DONATED BY

ANNA PUSHECK

THE GERMAN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
ST. PAUL CONGREGATION WAS ESTABLISHED
IN 1902 FOR WORSHIP
AND PRAISE TO GOD, CONTINUING UNTIL 1984.

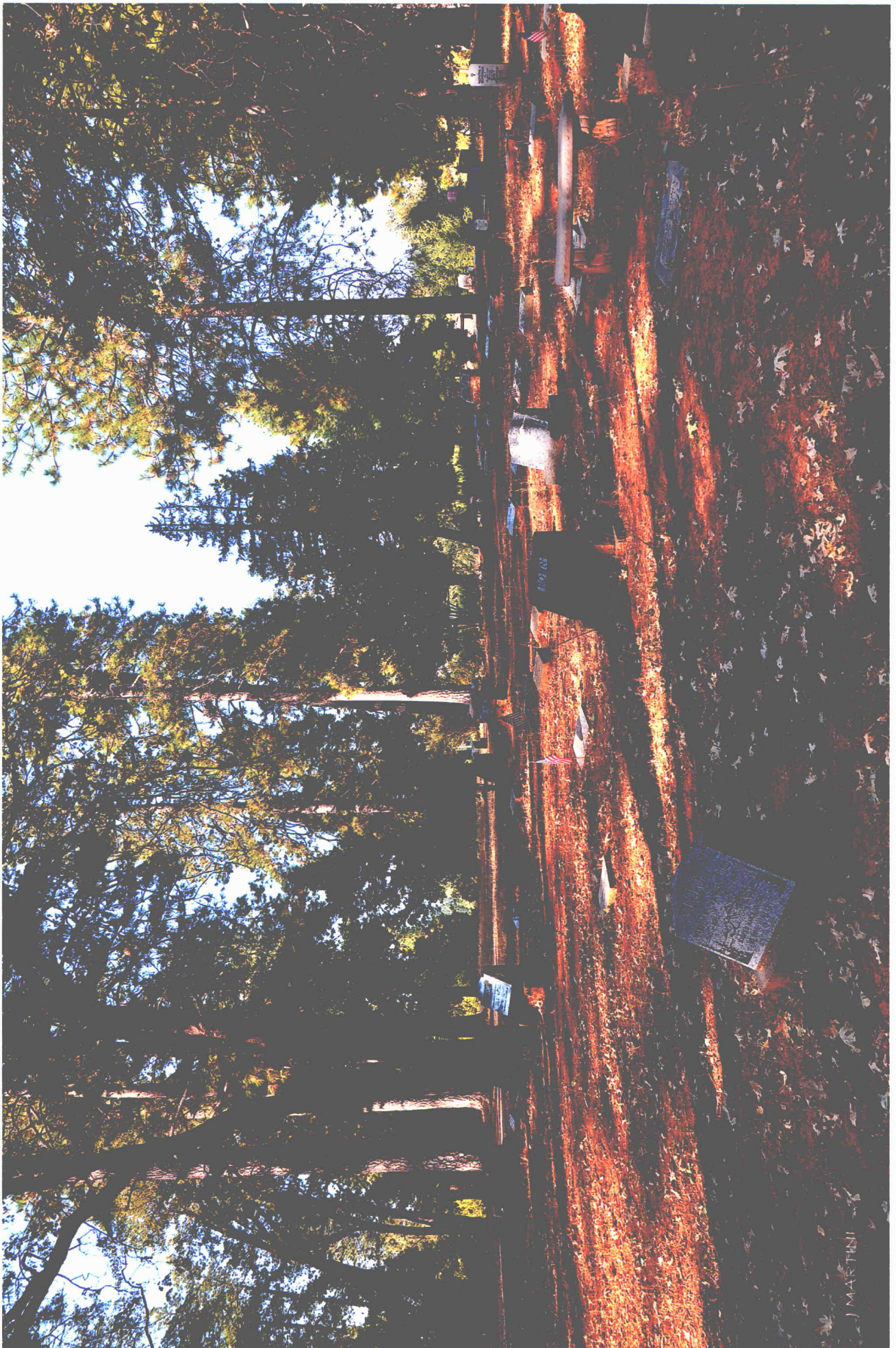
WILHELM BIERWAGEN

FEB. 21, 1854 NOV. 17, 1922

CAROLINA BIERWAGEN

JULY 22, 1860

NOV. 25, 1934



J. MARTINI



BLOCHE
CARL W. BLOCHE
MAY 14 1882 - 1955

KELPIN
MINNIE WILHELM
1859 - 1977 1857 - 19



MARTINI





SURVEYOR'S STATEMENT

This map was prepared by me or under my direction and is based upon a field survey in conformance with the requirements of the Subdivision Map Act and local ordinances at the request of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in March, 1991. Monuments are of the character and occupy the positions indicated and are sufficient to enable the survey to be retraced. I hereby state that this parcel map substantially conforms to the approved or conditionally approved tentative map, if any.

Kenneth E. Baker L.S. 3959
registration expires : 6-30-92

COUNTY SURVEYOR'S STATEMENT

This map conforms with the requirements of the Subdivision Map Act and local ordinances.

Ellwood W. Heisey L.S. 3823
registration expires : 6-30-92
Deputy County Surveyor

Dated: 10-1-91

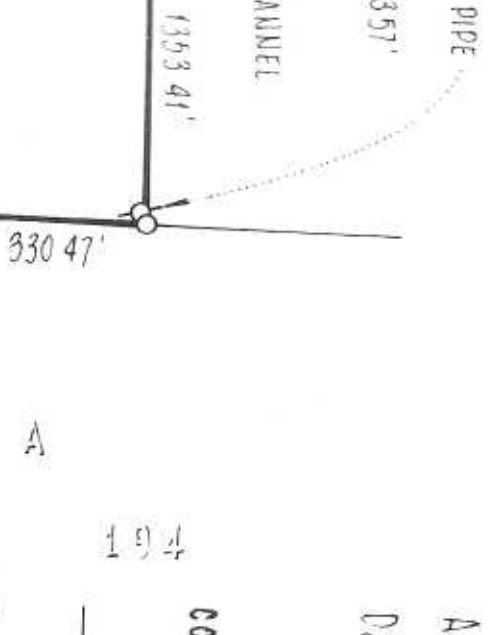
COUNTY RECORDER'S STATEMENT

Filed this 17th day of October, 1991 at 11:30 A.M. in Book 18 of Parcel Maps at Page 120 at the request of Ken Baker.

Bruce C. Bolinger
County Recorder
by: W. J. Quinn
Deputy

Document No: 91-32307

Fee Paid: 6.00 PA



SEE SEE
420 OR 249

A

1991

P.M.

2. The 5' pipeline easement granted to C. Locatelli, 1972, per 599 O.R. 317 IS NOT defined by record.

PARCEL MAP 90-71 FOR

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

BEING
PARCELS A & B OF P.M. 10 @ 209

WITHIN A PORTION OF THE
S.W. 1/4 OF SECTION 15, T. 15 N., R. 9 E., M.D.M.
IN THE UNINCORPORATED TERRITORY OF
NEVADA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

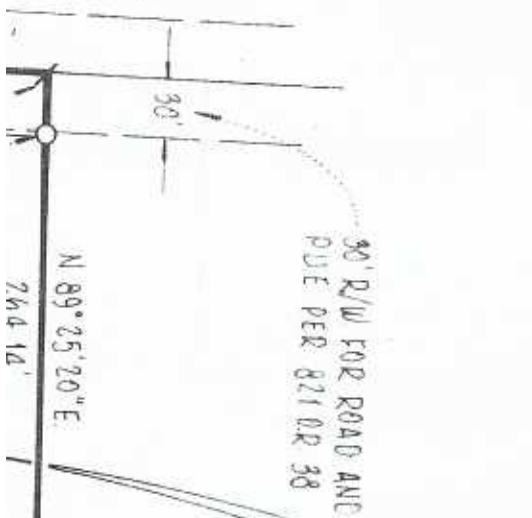
SCALE: 1" = 100'

MARCH, 1991

NEVADA CITY ENGINEERING, INC.
416 BROAD STREET · P.O. BOX 1437 · NEVADA CITY · CALIFORNIA

SHEET 1 OF 1

2 43



HEIBERGER
DOC # 90-000429

GERMAN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN ST. PAUL CHURCH
TO PEARDALE - CHICAGO PARK FIRE DISTRICT
PER DOC. NO. 91-32311

264 1/2'

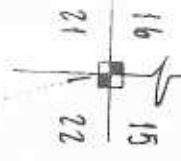
FND 1" IRON PIPE
NO TAG

1/2" 10' PIPELINE EASEMENT
PER 774 OR 675.

J O N E
DOC # 82-024

374

TIE S 01°15'04"W 661.85'



60

S 89° 24' 13" W

670.41'

PEARDALE - CHICAGO PARK

FIRE DISTRICT

824 OR 131

PEARDALE - CHICAGO PARK FIRE DISTRICT
TO GERMAN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN ST. PAUL CHURCH
PER DOC. NO. 71-3230

TIE: 105.24'

AREA "A" - RIGHT OF WAY ACCESS AND DUE APPURTENANCE
TO PARCELS 1, 2 & 3 AND OFFERED TO THE COUNTY OF
NEVADA PER DOC. NO. 91-32308

SELHAUS
DOC # 84-011175

683.46'

FIND 1 1/2" BRASS CAP
ILLEGIBLE EXCEPT FOR
SECTION DESIGNATION 16|15

21|22

HW