

United States Department of the Interior

DRAFT

National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Carl Stroschein House

other names/site number The Little Yellow House

2. Location

street & number 31682 El Camino Real not for publication N/A

city or town San Juan Capistrano vicinity N/A

state California code CA county Orange code 059 zip code 92675

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

California Office of Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the
National Register

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the
National Register

removed from the National
Register

other (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2		buildings
0		sites
0		structures
0		objects
2		Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

None

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation wood/ concrete
roof asbestos shingle
walls wood/ false bevel drop siding

other _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
B removed from its original location.
C a birthplace or a grave.
D a cemetery.
E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
F a commemorative property.
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
previously listed in the National Register
previously determined eligible by the National Register
designated a National Historic Landmark
recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Social History

Politics/Government

Period of Significance

1938-1953

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Stroschein, Carl

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Architect/Builder

Stroschein, Fred and Carl

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property : less than one acre- see property detail report

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	—	—	—	3	—	—	—
2	—	—	—	4	—	—	—

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ilse M. Byrnes

organization Historian date June 30, 2008

street & number P.O.Box 1029 telephone (949) 493-4222

city or town San Juan Capistrano state CA zip code 92693

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets**Maps**

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

Name : Thomas J. Meadows Trust

street & number: 31241 Andres Pico Rd. telephone (949) 493-2606

city or town: San Juan Capistrano state CA zip code 92675

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Carl Stroschein House
Orange County, California

Summary:

The Carl Stroschein House is a single story, 650 square foot residential building with false bevel drop siding. Its roof pitch and porch arrangement has some Tudor elements but the building does not have a particular architectural style. The house and the garage were built in 1927 by Carl Stroschein and his brother, Fred Stroschein. Both buildings are original and have no exterior alterations and are in excellent condition. It is located on a rectangular lot (60 x 120) that was part of the original 40 acres that William F. Stroschein Sr. bought from the Archdiocese of Los Angeles in 1887. The property faces West onto El Camino Real, on the North side is Spring Street. Next to the house on the back of the property (East) is a small garage with a storage room that is attached on the West side.

Exterior:

The basic shape of the house is rectangular with prominent cross-gables in the front and rear. The exterior walls on both buildings (house and garage) are false bevel drop siding. The roof is modified cross gabled. The front entrance of the house (West side) has a small porch that is flared to one side. A brick chimney is located along the north wall. The kitchen wing (East side), under the rear cross-gable, has a door that opens to a small landing with stairs to the yard. On the South side attached to the kitchen is the door to the basement that runs the length of the kitchen. The windows are original wood sash windows. On the front of the house, 3 windows are six over one. Windows on the North side are four over one. The rest of the windows on the East and South side are one over one. All windows are double hung. On the South side, below the gable is a small louver that ventilates the attic.

The garage is set apart from the house (East side). The roof has a moderate pitch. One side of the roof extends over the space of the utility room. The exterior walls are the same false bevel drop siding as the house and its architecture is complementary to the design of the house. The total width of the garage including the utility room is 20'. The utility room by itself is 8' wide and 20' long. The garage door is approximately 7 feet wide and has 2 doors that swing out. On the South side is a small window for ventilation. On the East side of the utility room are 2 small windows –one over one, on the South side is one window, one over one. The garage, the door and the windows are unaltered and original.

Interior:

The front door of the house opens directly onto the living room that has a brick fireplace. One bedroom is off the living room on the south/west corner. A second small bedroom and the bathroom are on the south side and connect with a very small hallway to the kitchen.

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The kitchen has a small dining area located above the basement on the South/East corner. The cabinets and hinges in the kitchen are original. One of the cabinets on the North side has a "cold cupboard" that allows air to circulate from basement through a screen into that particular kitchen cupboard. Cold air from below kept food in the cabinet cool. On the wall in the kitchen is the original fuse box. A small crawl hole to reach the attic is in the hallway by the bathroom. The attic is for ventilation only. The floors are wood with the exception of the bathroom and kitchen that have vinyl flooring.

Landscape:

The yard surrounding the Stroschein House has several very old trees.
On the South/West corner on El Camino Real is a large Brazilian Pepper Tree.
On the North/West corner of El Camino Real and Spring Street is a very large Magnolia Tree. Two large Cypress Trees are on the Northside on Spring Street
On the North/East corner of the house is a very old Camelia Bush.

Between the kitchen and the garage (Eastside) is an English Walnut Tree that dates back to the 1920s when walnuts were one of the main crops in the San Juan Capistrano area. Next to the Walnut Tree is an old Orange/Tangerine Tree.

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Statement of Significance:

Summary:

The Carl Stroschein House is a candidate for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion B. It was the home and office of Carl Louis Stroschein during his tenure as the last elected Constable in the San Juan Township. As the last elected constable of San Juan Township, Stroschein represents the end of an era in Orange County's law enforcement and judicial system. The transition from elected citizen constables to a professionalized municipal law enforcement system was an example of San Juan Capistrano's transition from a remote farming community into a town more integrated into Orange County. Carl Stroschein served from 1938 until 1953, longer than any other Constable of San Juan Township. As Constable, he was responsible for the safety of the community of San Juan Capistrano and a large area of Southern Orange County, especially during the Second World War. After he retired he continued farming and lived at the house until his death in 1957. The house was built in 1927 on a small piece of property that was part of the Stroschein Ranch that dates back to 1887. It is unaltered and in its original location. The period of significance, from 1938 until 1952, reflects the period when it was used as the Constable's office in addition to his residence.

Historical Background:

Carl Louis Stroschein was born in San Juan Capistrano Nov. 25, 1902, the son of William and Frederika Stroschein. He attended the local schools and after graduating went to work for his father on the 40 acre ranch the Stroscheins owned. He married Reducinda (Ruth) Nieblas (born Sept. 8, 1906) in San Juan Capistrano, July 23, 1923. During their first few years of marriage, Carl and Ruth lived in a small house in the Los Rios Historic District, next to her parents Joseph and Francesca Nieblas. They had two daughters: Marie Charlotte (1924) and Virginia Jean (1926).

In 1927 Carl Stroschein with the help of his brother Fred who was a contractor, built the Little Yellow House for himself and his wife Ruth. In later years, Fred Stroschein built most of the Spanish Colonial Revival homes that are located on Mission Hill in San Juan Capistrano.

The site where the Little Yellow House is located was carved out of the 40 acre Stroschein Ranch that his father William F. Stroschein owned since 1887.

While active in farming with his father, Carl decided to run for the position of Constable for the

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San Juan Township and was elected in 1938, a position he held until 1953. According to records in the Orange County Archives, Carl ran unopposed and was elected with 808 votes. The Orange County Records show that he was in office from 1938-1953.

The San Juan Township boundaries, which Constable Stroschein patrolled, included El Toro on the North, San Juan Hot Springs on the East, the County line on the South, (except for San Clemente, which was incorporated) and the ocean on the West as far as South Laguna.

The Orange County Sheriff's Department traces its history back to 1889, when Orange County was formed from the southern portion of Los Angeles County. The townships of Santa Ana and San Juan were established. Constables were elected to assist with the day-to-day business of the Justice Courts and the Justice's of the Peace.

Constables were governed by direction of the Civil Code and Code of Civil Procedure. In larger townships, the work of the Constable is similar to that of the Sheriff. They were charged with the duties of preserving the peace, preventing and suppressing riots, and investigating public offenses which have been committed within the township. An elected Constable's term of office was six years.

By 1943, eleven Constables and corresponding Justice Courts existed in the eleven townships of Orange County. These eleven existed until January. 1, 1953 when Santa Ana, Orange and Tustin courts were combined to create the Santa Ana – Orange Municipal Court and Anaheim, Fullerton and Brea Townships were consolidated to create the North Municipal Court District. The remaining Justice Courts were consolidated to leave three courts with three Constables that later were absorbed into the County of Orange Sheriff's or Marshal's office.

Carl Stroschein, being the last of the elected Constables, terminated his career in 1953 after serving the San Juan Township for over 15 years.

Carl had his office in the "Little Yellow House." He was well respected in the town and well known not to take "No" for an answer. His work as a Constable included solving family disputes and quite often he had to take unruly drunks in his car to the Santa Ana Jail. Only once was he physically attacked by a drunk with a knife, Carl knocked the knife out of his attackers hand- while the locals watched and promptly took him to the Santa Ana Jail.

During WW II Carl was in charge of all the police work in his large district and he worked closely with Marco Forster the Justice of the Peace. On December 19, 1941 Carl Stroschein and

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4 other San Juan residents organized a civilian defense council. Under his leadership an observation tower was constructed, fashioned from an old water tower. Classes were held to instruct people in first aid and how to disarm bombs. At the same time a government edict ordered him to search every Japanese family in the area to confiscate weapons- it did not matter if he knew them and could vouch for their loyalty.

An exciting day happened for Carl Stroschein on September 25, 1942. He and other sheriff units were informed that the President of the United States, Franklin Delano Roosevelt would arrive on a special train in San Juan Capistrano and were told that it was top secret. Carl Stroschein being the local Constable was in charge. Rumors of the Presidents visit started circulating around town when a large contingent of soldiers jumped off trucks and began to station themselves along the railroad tracks, at road crossings and other strategic points in San Juan Capistrano. By the time the secret visitor pulled into the station and entered his limousine everybody in town had lined the streets to catch a glimpse of the President. From San Juan Capistrano the President continued to Camp Pendleton. The reason for the Presidents trip was to visit Camp Pendleton that is very close to San Juan Capistrano. In July of 1942 the U.S. Navy acquired the 133,000 acre Santa Margarita Ranch to be used as a Marine Corps Center.

After his career as Constable ended in 1953, he continued with farming until his death on February 5, 1957, having been in charge of the farm since his father's death in 1915.

Carl's father originally came from Germany and came to California in 1885 locating first in Anaheim, Orange County. There he met his future wife Frederika Schneipp. They were married in 1886. Neither William nor Frederika had any relatives in the USA. William first found employment working on local farms in the Anaheim area and later rented a twenty acre vineyard that at first was very successful until blight ruined the entire vineyard. After losing the vineyard, he and his wife moved to San Juan Capistrano. In 1887 William Stroschein purchased 40 Acres from the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, recorded as Mission Tracts 4 and 5. This purchase was only possible with the help of a friend of William, who was a Catholic Bishop. William and his wife were Lutherans and it was most difficult for non-Catholics to buy land from the Archdiocese.

They built their house on what is today the northeast corner of Ortega Hwy. and El Camino Real. The house was big to accommodate the Stroscheins and their 10 children: Arnold (who died at a very young age), William Sr., Fred, Frank, Carl, Herbert, Wilma, Clara, Flora and Pauline. William died in 1915. Frederika continued living in the house until her death in Feb. 1955. The house no longer exists- it was demolished in 1959.

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Carl Louis Stroschein was a farmer most of his life, assisting his father William F. Stroschein to grow walnuts on his property. San Juan Capistrano was well known as one of the major walnut growing areas in Southern California. The turn of the century showed a decline in the walnut industry and many growers in San Juan Capistrano like William F. Stroschein replaced walnut trees with oranges and avocados. What is left today of the former 40 Acre Stroschein Ranch that was located in the center of town and adjacent to the Mission is the "Little Yellow House" that still has a couple of the original Valencia Orange Trees and one English Walnut Tree in the yard.

After Carl's death in 1957, his widow Ruth moved from the "Little Yellow House" to a home in San Juan Terrace and when she died the properties were inherited by her daughter's husbands T.J. Meadows and David Gunter. The San Juan Terrace home went to David Gunter and the "Little Yellow House" to the family of T.J. Meadows who still own this historic house today.

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Los Angeles, 1911

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Lehmann Publishing Co. , 1975

Hallan-Gibson, Pamela, Two Hundred Years in San Juan Capistrano, A Pictorial
History, The Paragon Agency Publishers, Orange, CA. 1990

Hallan-Gibson, Pamela, Don Tryon, Mary Ellen Tryon and the San Juan Historical
Society, Images of America, San Juan Capistrano, Arcadia Publishing , 2005

McAlester, Virginia & Lee, A Field Guide to American Houses,
Alfred A. Knopf, New York 1997

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Articles:

Coastline Dispatch, San Clemente, CA September 2, 1938
Coastline Dispatch, San Clemente, CA September 6, 1941
Coastline Dispatch, San Clemente, CA December 19, 1941
Coastline Dispatch, San Clemente, CA December 26, 1941
Coastline Dispatch, San Clemente, CA July 18, 1952
Coastline Dispatch, San Clemente, CA January 1953
Coastline Dispatch, San Clemente, CA February 7, 1957

Phil Brigandi, Santa Ana Court House, Archives: "Township Officers"

History of the Orange County Marshal's Department, 1947

Orange County Directory, 1939
Orange County Directory, 1941

Oral Interviews:

Meadows, T.J., San Juan Capistrano, CA (2008)

Gunter, David L., San Juan Capistrano, CA. (2008-2009)

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Verbal Boundary Description:

The house is located on a lot that is 60' on the West Side, 120' on the North Side, 60' on the East Side and 105' on the South Side.

The house faces El Camino Real on the West Side, the North Side of the property is along Spring Street. The rest of the property is surrounded by undeveloped property and a parking lot on the South side.

APN: 124-170-08

Legal Description: TR 103 LOT 12 POR OF LOT 59
Country FIPS: 60
Census Tract/Block 0423121
Legal Lot: 12

The lot is a rectangular parcel (0.153 Acres)
Lot Frontage and Rear: 60'
Lot Depth: Northside: 140'
 Southside: 105'

Verbal Boundary Justification:

The nominated property includes the entire parcel associated with the Carl Stroschein House.